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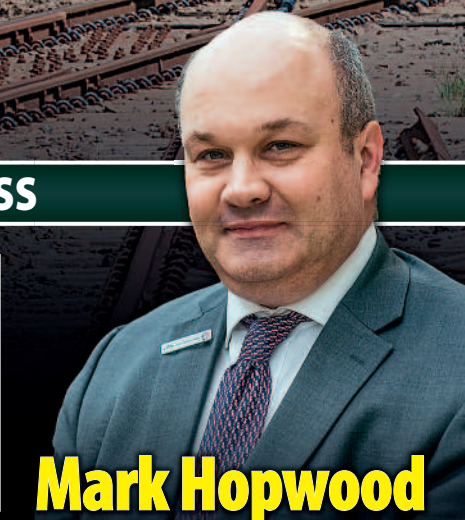
THE CUBAN CONNECTION

CLASS 58: MORE THAN FREIGHT



Mark Hopwood
From enthusiast to managing director

LLANGOLLEN RAILWAY TARGETS SUMMER REOPENING

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The End of Southern Steam
Friday 9th July
Departs London Waterloo, Woking and Basingstoke.
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Departs Slough, Reading, Newbury, Westbury, Taunton, and Exeter. Arrives Par.

The Cheshireman
Thursday 15th July
London Euston, Watford Junction, Milton Keynes, Northampton, Rugby and Nuneaton. Arrives Chester.

The Cumbrian Mountain Express
Saturday 17th July
Departs Crewe, Runcorn, Liverpool Lime Street, Broad Green, St Helens Central, Wigan North Western and Blackburn. Arrives Carlisle.

The North Wales Coast Express
Sunday 18th July
Departs Liverpool Lime Street, Broad Green, Warrington Bank Quay, Frodsham, Chester and Llandudno Junction. Arrives Bangor or Holyhead.

The Welsh Mountaineer
Tuesday 20th July
Departs Preston, Warrington, Frodsham and Chester. Arrives Blaenau Ffestiniog.

The Kentish Belle
Thursday 22nd July
Departs London Victoria and Bromley South. Arrives Canterbury West, Ramsgate, Broadstairs, Margate, Herne Bay and Faversham.

The West Somerset Steam Express
Saturday 24th July, 14th August
Departs London Paddington, Slough, Reading and Newbury. Arrives Minehead.

The Dorset Coast Express
Thursday 5th, 19th August and 2nd September
Departs London Victoria, Staines, Woking and Basingstoke. Arrives Weymouth.

The Cotswold Venturer
Saturday 21st August
Departs London Paddington, Slough, Reading and Didcot. Arrives Worcester.

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This issue was published on June 2, 2021.
The next issue will be on sale on July 7, 2021.

Rail review: The emperor's new clothes?

So there we have it. The Williams-Shapps has finally arrived and tells us in black and white what many of us knew was wrong with the railways – the style of privatisation adopted in the 1990s was flawed, and the fare-paying passenger was never at the heart of anyone's thinking.

The solution is the creation of Great British Railways, which from 2023 will oversee the infrastructure, award contracts for train operations, set fares and collect most of the revenue. Pity it took so long to realise past mistakes, but now is not the time for the blame game.

The report is very fair and comprehensive, not only identifying past problems – such as over-complication, over-specification and chaotic timetables – but also sets out a way forward covering the next 30 years.

While there is an immense amount of detail still to emerge and be agreed (and some will disagree), what will be essential is not only this Government, but successive Governments continue to pursue the plans for the benefit of the passenger – but without the micromanagement of the past.

The proposals will only work *and* benefit the passenger if everyone at Great British Railways adopts a 'can do attitude' and pulls together. There have been too many reports in the past which have been left to gather dust on a shelf. This one *has* to work.

Future projects must be properly planned and financed (perhaps at a fixed price), with no descoping or cutbacks. We all know it's false economy in the long term.

Let's also see the expansion of electrification, old lines rebuilt and reopened, better and frequent services… and really start to win the hearts and minds of passengers to make rail their first choice for travelling.

Will the review turn out to be the emperor's new clothes?

Only time will tell.

Time is right for a change

TRAIN OF THOUGHT
Editor's Comment

IT MAY come as a surprise to some readers, but this will be my final issue as editor of *The Railway Magazine*.

After more than 30 years of reporting on railways, including more than five years as editor, the time is right to step back, take it a bit easier and do a few things on the 'wish list'.

Although I won't be severing my connections with *The RM* completely, I am looking forward to a new role as contributing editor, working a couple of days per week on news, occasional features and special projects.

From joining *The RM* staff in October 1990, the industry has been through a roller coaster of ups and downs. It has been a tremendous honour and privilege to witness so many historic events first-hand and report on them. As I often say to friends and acquaintances, there is never a dull moment in railways.

Having worked on a quarter of all editions *The RM* has ever published, each has contributed in its own way to Britain's rich and expanding railway history. There have been some real highlight moments including the opening of the Channel Tunnel, HS1 and Eurostar, the Pendolino record charity run of 2006, rebuilding of the Welsh Highland Railway, *Tornado's* construction from scratch, the re-opening of the Borders Railway, so many new services, new trains, new routes… and so much more.

Tribute has to be paid to the exceptional and continued growth of the heritage railway sector, heavily reliant on volunteers, and who have completed some fantastic projects and above all proven *anything* is possible.

I would like to thank the many contributors and photographers with whom I've worked over the years and produced some stunning images.

As the magazine moves forward and prepares to celebrate its 125th anniversary in 2022, the time is right to hand over the 'regulator' to someone with a little more youth and zest.

Therefore I am delighted to confirm Paul Bickerdyke will be the new editor – the 12th in the magazine's history. Paul has edited *Rail Express* since 2013 and is no stranger to *The RM* having previously been its designer as well as a key contributor. Most importantly, Paul will take the magazine on the next stage of its journey. Two new team members, Gareth Evans and Graeme Pickering, will ably assist him.

But above all, I offer my thanks to each and every reader for their continued support and loyalty towards *The RM*, along with the feedback both good (and not so good), and hope to meet some of you as a less intensive working life beckons. My email address remains cmilner@mortons.co.uk

Finally, a very special thank you to my wife Debbie, who has put up with 30-plus years of railway writing, but above all for allowing me to indulge in what began as a hobby and then became a career. I'm reliably informed there's a list of jobs for me to tackle at home… which I suspect will conveniently clash with the places and events I plan to visit!

CHRIS MILNER, editor

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Former Island Line train No. 483007 is about to enter the Isle of Wight Railway's Train Story Discovery Centre on May 20. PHIL MARSH

Williams-Shapps Rail Review published, Daily inspections after cracks found in Hitachi IET trains, Okehampton rebuilding on track, Crossrail test running begins under the capital, Northern Class 769s enter service, refinancing deal for Eurostar, GBRf wants 'freight evangelist'.

On the cover

MAIN IMAGES: A GWR IET approaches Swindon from London Paddington on May 10, some 48 hours after the first discovery of yaw damper mounting cracks. JACK BOSKETT

INSET 1: Farewell to HSTs on the Midland

INSET 2: British diesels and a Cuban Connection.

INSET 3: Class 58s on passenger duties

Track Record *The Railway Magazine's* monthly news digest

Left: In BR Blue, Class 17 Clayton No. D8568 debuts at the Severn Valley Railway diesel gala on May 13. STEVE WIDDOWSON

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Irish Rail announces preferred supplier for DART new trains order

IRISH Rail has selected Alstom as the preferred manufacturer for the new trains to be used on the Dublin Area Rapid Transport network (DART).

Based on the Alstom Xtrapolis articulated multiple unit platform, the order will be for a mix of five- and 10-car sets with the first deliveries expected to be hybrid battery-electric units. There will allow services to be extended to destinations identified as part of the DART+ project which will see an extension of the 1500v DC electrification to Maynooth, M3 Parkway, Hazelhatch and Drogheda over what is expected to be a €2 billion 10 year programme of improvement work.

Add to capacity

The award of the framework contract gives Irish Rail the option to call down as many as 750 vehicles, not only adding to capacity but also enabling the current fleets of DART EMUs to be replaced; initially the DART+ programme is expected double the capacity of the DART and Greater Dublin Area commuter network by 2027.

Permission has also been given for Irish Rail to begin looking at options for the replacement of the Enterprise train fleet which it operates jointly with Translink (NIR) on cross-border services between Dublin and Belfast.

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Shapps announces 'rail

By Graeme Pickering

DESCRIBED as "the biggest change to the railways in 25 years", the Government's long-awaited plans for rail industry reform were finally announced by Transport Secretary Grant Shapps on May 20.

The Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail (the outcome of a review process originally launched in 2018 by former British Airways chairman Keith Williams and subsequently updated to reflect the impact of Covid-19 on passenger numbers and revenue) sets out plans for the railway to be owned and run by a new single public entity to be known as Great British Railways.

Radical

In a Ministerial Statement, Mr Shapps told the House of Commons that the rail industry required "radical overhaul" to reach its true potential and that problems such as delays, systems which cause confusion for passengers and parts of the industry not working together were not going to be solved by investment alone.

He said GBR would bring the railway together "with one overwhelming aim, to deliver for passengers".

Among the recommendations are that paying for fares should be easier, simpler and more flexible. For commuting and city travel, contactless Pay As You Go should be an option, with digital tickets (printable at home or available to download onto phones) available for regional, long distance and frequent journeys.

A modified version of the famous BR logo will be intoduced.

While traditional season tickets will remain available, a flexible version will be launched this month for commuters who don't need to travel to work every day. Available on all major commuter routes, these will allow travel on any eight days in a 28 day period. Travel days will not have to be spaced out or chosen in advance. Season ticket fares will continue to be capped.

The Williams-Shapps Plan, which forms the prelude to legislation to create GBR, also highlights the costs of operating the railway since the Covid pandemic began. At the time of its release, £12 billion of Government support had been provided to train operating companies in emergency subsidies. It says these sums are "not sustainable" and that major change is necessary "to truly secure rail's future".

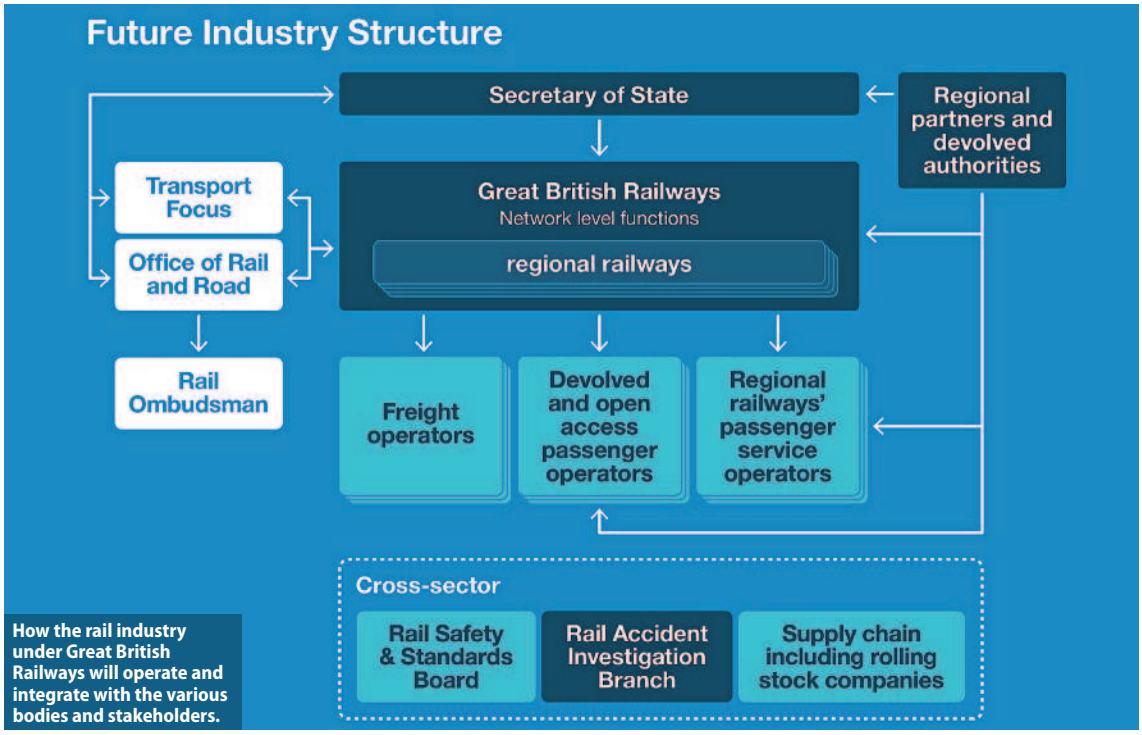
As well as being deemed necessary to provide customer focus and strategic direction, the Government says the formation of GBR could lead to savings of £1.5bn a year after five years, due to economies of scale and other efficiencies derived from having a single organisation running the railway. At the same time, it claims GBR will also be agile enough to make decisions and respond quickly to changing demands.

Safeguards, including new rules for track access underpinned by legislation, will be put into place to ensure fair access to the network for freight operators. GBR will have a statutory duty to promote rail freight to secure economic, environmental and social benefits for the nation. The Government will issue guidance on freight priorities in each funding settlement to GBR.

Opportunity

Describing the creation of GBR as a "unique opportunity" to meet private sector freight ambitions, Rail Freight Group director general Maggie Simpson said: "We look forward to working with Government as they develop the detailed proposals, including for reform of track access and a new role for the ORR. It will be essential that the new structure and systems truly deliver on their promise for rail freight."

Open access operators will also be supported by the rules-based system, with the Office



How the rail industry under Great British Railways will operate and integrate with the various bodies and stakeholders.

THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

Great British Railways

GREAT British Railways will be a new public body which will own the rail infrastructure, run the rail network and receive fare revenue.

As well as succeeding Network Rail, it will absorb many functions of the Rail Delivery Group and Department for Transport.

In the majority of cases, it will contract private companies to operate trains to timetables and fares which it specifies.

The brand identity will be built around a slightly revised version of the double arrow logo, originally introduced by British Rail, with regional sub-identities.

It will also see the introduction of network-wide signage using an updated version of the Rail Alphabet font which was also first used by BR.

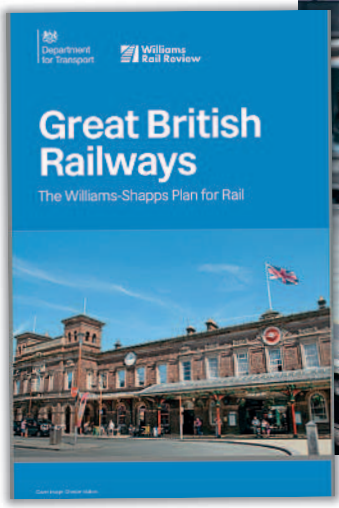
Ticketing

AT the heart of the plans is an easier and more flexible system for paying for fares, including Pay As You Go, downloadable digital tickets and season tickets designed for commuters who don't need to travel every day.

GBR will be charged with simplifying available fares and tickets, setting most through a framework agreed with ministers. Along with a GBR website and app for bookings and train information in place of train company websites, this is aimed at ending complication and confusion for passengers. A greater range of book-ahead tickets will be offered on long-distance services, where operators will have more commercial freedom.

The Government says it will protect the 'turn up and go' railway with affordable walk-

revolution'



Above: Under the new proposals, the passenger will be put first, and simplified ticketing will be at the heart of this. JACK BOSKETT

of Rail and Road acting as an appeals body to ensure fairness. Where capacity exists, new open access opportunities will also be explored. New types of bidders to provide train services, potentially including community rail partnerships, could be considered for operation of individual routes.

Integrate

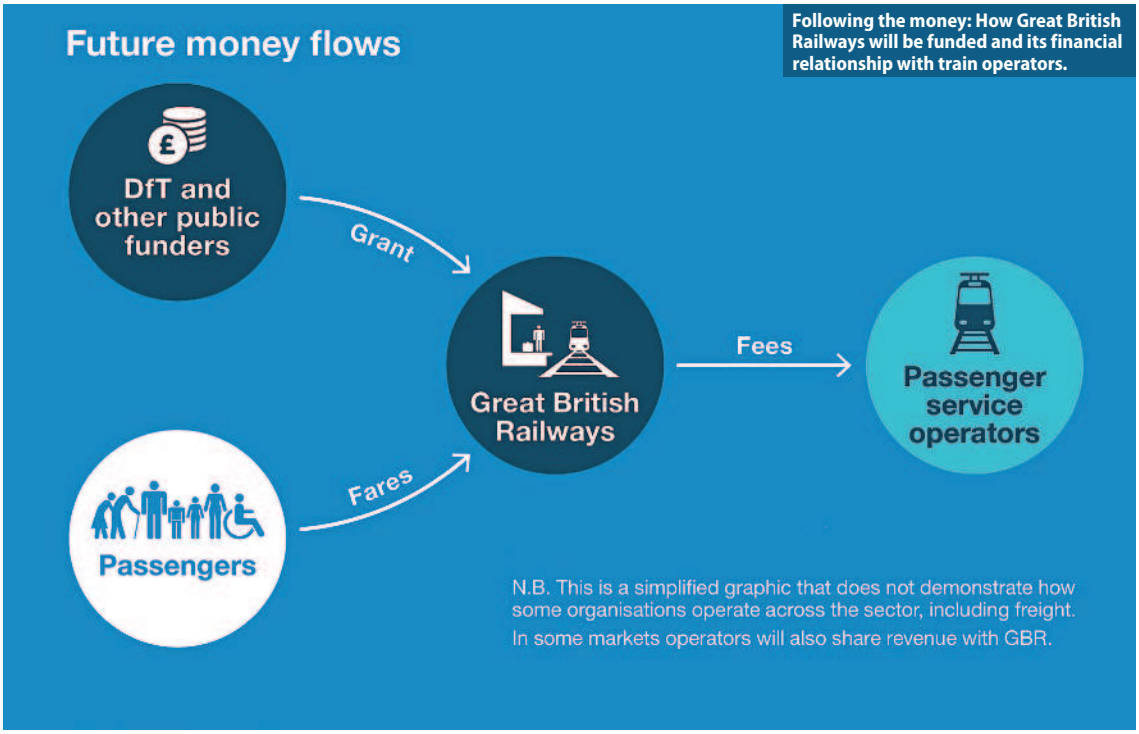
Partnerships will be established between GBR and local and regional government to give a greater say in how services are run and work on long term local railway strategies. Local leaders will also have the ability to integrate ticketing and fares with other local transport services.

Welcoming the announcement, Coun Martin Gannon, chair of the North East Joint Transport Committee, said: "We're pleased to see a commitment to giving local leaders greater control over local ticketing, timetables and stations. These decisions should not be taken by people based hundreds of miles away."

But responding to the statement from Mr Shapps in the Commons, Shadow Transport Secretary Jim McMahon MP said the plan didn't go far enough: "I believe there is ample proof that demonstrates that fuller public ownership rather than a concessionary model would better serve the state, the public and long term investment and I fear the Government have really not understood the scale of the challenge in front of them.

"And in doing so, while we may well see a change of name on the side, fundamentally it will be the passengers who are still left short-changed."

In Scotland, there was anger over an apparent lack of clarity regarding potential implications for the Scottish Government's own railway plans. Ministers at Holyrood intend to nationalise ScotRail next year and the operator already works in alliance with Network Rail Scotland and other partners under the banner of Scotland's Railway. A statement said that Scottish Ministers had not been consulted, adding: "There is no mention of Scotland in these details and it is not clear how these proposals will respect the established and successful devolved responsibility for railways in Scotland."



Following the money: How Great British Railways will be funded and its financial relationship with train operators.

Unions critical

The main rail unions, which have campaigned for a return to full public ownership and operation, were also critical of the announcement.

ASLEF general secretary Mick Whelan described it as "deeply disappointing" and claimed the plan could be used to justify cuts in services.

RMT general secretary Mick Lynch said it was a "missed opportunity" which would allow private sector operators to profit, while Manuel Cortes of the TSSA, accused the Government of "papering over the cracks", adding that the country needed a railway that "works for people, not profit".

In preparation for GBR becoming a reality in 2023, Keith Williams will chair an advisory group to support the transport secretary with the implementation of changes and Network Rail chief executive Andrew Haines will establish a plan for interim arrangements.

up fares, although advance booking on specified trains will continue to offer the cheapest long distance fares.

Accessibility

GREAT British Railways will have a statutory duty to improve accessibility. A national accessibility strategy will provide what the Government describes as "the first robust, joined-up, system-wide approach to accessibility, including getting to, from and around stations and on and off trains".

The white paper promises consistent standards so that passengers know the level of service they can expect, regardless of when and where they travel. Improved training and information for staff aims to create an "inclusive culture that puts the needs of passengers first".

Current sources of finance for improvements will be consolidated into a single accessibility fund serving a long term investment programme.

An expert working group will advise on best practice for accessible station design standards.

Timeline for changes

LAST year, the Department for Transport made Emergency Measures Agreements with train operating companies (TOCs) as plummeting revenue due to Covid threatened their continued operation. The EMAs, which had provided £12bn of Government support to TOCs and the subsequent National Rail Contracts which replace them, are seen by ministers as stepping stones to the return of a more commercially competitive framework.

As the economy and passenger numbers stabilise, the Government intends to return greater responsibility for costs and revenue to operators on routes where it is sustainable to do so. Initial competitions for the new Passenger Service Contracts will be launched in 2022.

The proposals which have been put forward in the Williams-Shapps Plan will form the basis of legislation which will pass through Parliament in preparation for GBR becoming a reality in 2023.

SIDELINES

Scotrail conductor retires after 42 years

OBAN-BASED conductor Angus MacColl worked his last shift on May 6 after 42 years' service.

He was the fourth generation of his family to have worked on the Oban line, all having the same first name and going as far back as 1896. Angus was the conductor in both derailments at the Falls of Cruachan in 1997 and 2010.

DRS rebrands

DIRECT Rail Services has released a new logo now it is part of the Nuclear Transport Solutions (NTS) brand. The company is also looking at developing options with a view to changing the livery on its locomotives, but in a cost-effective way. DRS is also aiming to increase its freight operations.

Persistent fare dodger pays back £3000

A SCOTRAIL passenger who avoided paying train fares for two months has agreed to repay the operator £3,143.90. CCTV showed the unidentified passenger had engaged in fraudulent behaviour, boarding trains at Bellshill on 53 days.

With Scotrail stepping up ticket checks, mobile teams have issued fines and penalties totalling £17,600 to 10,000 other passengers.

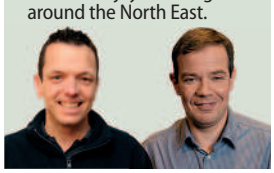
Although there are ticket barriers at just 17 of ScotRail's 350 stations, CCTV can prove where a passenger starts and ends a journey.

Gareth and Graeme join *The RM* team

JOINING *The Railway Magazine* team are Gareth Evans as deputy editor and Graeme Pickering as news and features writer.

Gareth moves from sister title *Heritage Railway* where he has been deputy editor for three years. In his spare time, Gareth is a heritage railway volunteer. He also part owns a locomotive, and started contributing news and photographs to *The Railway Magazine* when he was a teenager, having been a reader since childhood.

The RM also gives a warm welcome to Graeme Pickering, an experienced journalist and broadcaster, who will add a new dimension to *The Railway Magazine* team. When not writing or travelling by rail, Graeme enjoys walking around the North East.



DAILY BATTLE FOR GWR AND LNER

Cracks in Hitachi IET sets lead to mass cancellations

By Tony Miles

TWO major long distance operators, GWR and LNER, were thrown into chaos in the early hours of Saturday, May 8, as they were instructed to stop all movements of their Class 800, 801 and 802 units with immediate effect after the discovery of cracks during maintenance.

What became a fast developing situation began shortly after 04.00 and actions included urgent messages to signallers and station staff "not to depart" services being worked by Hitachi units.

By 04.20 a further message had been issued stating: "Hitachi has suspended both LNER and GWR fleets due to severe cracks found on welds on the jacking points on an 80x unit at Stoke Gifford. No 80x units will leave depot or stations until inspected."

Disruption

Within minutes both TransPennine Express and Hull trains had also stopped all of their Hitachi sets for checks to be completed, and the result across all four operators was widespread disruption to journeys following through the morning.

While some sets were passed to enter service, it quickly became clear a large number of cracks across the 182 units in service had been discovered, and by the end of the day 80 sets, mainly from GWR, had been taken out of service.

As the situation developed, a statement from Hitachi said: "Safety is our number one priority and as a precaution, the decision was taken to halt the entry into service of our intercity fleets pending inspection. We understand the frustration caused and we would like to apologise for the inconvenience caused to passengers and operators."

During the morning of May 9 cracks were also found in a small number of ScotRail's Class 385 Hitachi units in the same areas, with 10 sets eventually being taken out of service for repairs. In all, some 1,500 vehicles have been checked.

The cracks were identified during more intensive checking regime which had been brought in following the discovery of cracks in a small number of yaw damper bracket mountings on a GWR Class 800 unit on April 11 (*RM* p8, May). This led to an official NIR (National Incident Report) being submitted by GWR on April 21 and the introduction of daily visual checks and non-destructive testing for yaw all damper brackets, along with the preparation of a forward repair plan.

It was during an inspection of yaw damper mounts at Stoke Gifford overnight on May 7/8, cracks were found in the lifting plate on Class 800 set which led to the withdrawal of all IET fleets at all operators until a plan for a phased return to service of significant numbers of sets was agreed. The cracks were not in the welds themselves but in the plates adjacent to welds. The purpose of the lifting points is as for a simultaneous lift in depots for maintenance; they are not structural components. The initial concern was these could form a significant safety risk if they detached at high speed.

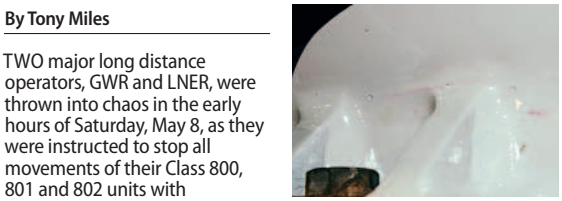
Availability

By May 11 GWR was reported to have 87 of its 93 Class 800 and 802 sets stopped with cracking issues and only two units available for passenger service, while LNER had 31 Class 80x sets available to cover 48 diagrams: no class 800/1 bi-mode nine-car, four class 800/2 bi-mode five-car, seven class 801/1 electric five-car and 20 class 801/2 nine-car units from a total fleet of 65 sets. Five sets from TPE's fleet were also stopped, while all Hull Trains' units were passed fit for service.

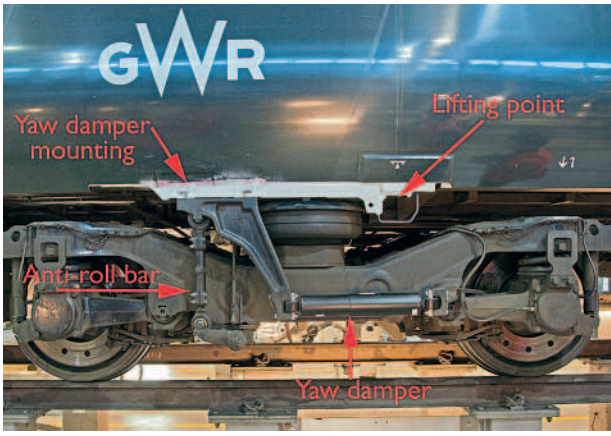
Both GWR and LNER began to develop plans for alternative trains to be used, with LNER reinstating from May 11 the first of its IC225 sets (Class 91 and Mk.4), which had been taken out of traffic until June. GWR entered discussions with other TOCs and private owners over what rolling stock might be available.

Additional services in the West Country were provided by CrossCountry which also began operating an hourly shuttle service between Bristol and Swindon as well as Paignton.

GWR MD Mark Hopwood subsequently praised the industry for the number of offers of support received even before requests for assistance were sent out. Rapid completion of guard



Above: Close-up of the yaw damper mounting with a hairline crack, enhanced by red dye.



Right: A side-on view of a GWR bogie showing the location of the yaw damper mounting cracks and also the lifting points where cracks have also been found. TONY MILES

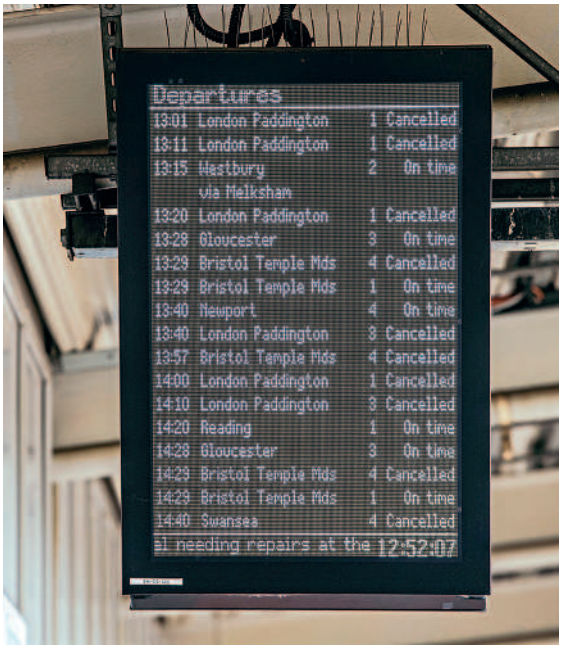
Three Class 378s from c2c have been drafted in to provide additional capacity, set No. 378301 and a Crossrail Class 345 sit at Reading station on May 14. KEN BRUNT

training was achieved to allow Class 387s to operate between Didcot and Swindon. Trains usually operate in DOO mode on the Didcot – Paddington section, but from May 10, extended workings to Swindon were with guards.

On the ECML, Great Northern increased many eight-car trains to 12 cars between King's Cross and Peterborough and for a short period TPE turned back its Liverpool Lime Street – Newcastle services at York.

Permission to put sets back into traffic was provided by the ORR on the understanding that every set returned to service would be inspected three times a day for a set to remain in service. In the meantime further x-ray checks were being carried out across to ensure no further cracks have remained undetected due to the paints or vinyl that may be hiding them.

Since then sources confirmed further cracks have been identified, and more sets, particularly from the LNER fleet, have been stopped. On May 21, 46 of LNER's 65-strong fleet were in service while GWR was able to cover around 60 diagrams from 70 available sets, with the others undergoing routine maintenance. In GWR's case these, supplemented by additional deployment of EMUs, DMUs and the use of single five-car IETs on diagrams where pairs of sets would usually be used, enabled it to run the majority of its timetable.



The departure screen at Swindon station on May 10 showing many cancellations. JACK BOSKETT

BREAKDOWN OF IET SETS BY OPERATOR

Operator	Class 800 *(5/9 cars)*	Class 801 *(5/9 cars)*	Class 802 *(5 cars)*
LNER	23	42	
GWR	57		36
TPE			19
Hull Trains			5

Options

Although GWR has not needed to hire-in privately owned trains or the HST sets taken out of service after the end of use by EMR, both remain as options. GWR has taken three Class 387s EMUs on loan from c2c and as *The RM* was closing for press, the loan of six Gatwick Express Class 387s from GTR was also being agreed. The loan of at least one Chiltern Turbo set was also being discussed. As part of the deployment of these additional sets, Class 387s took over Paddington – Newbury services with a diesel shuttle conveying passengers onward to Bedwyn. A small number of 12-car Class 387 diagrams between Paddington and Bristol Parkway were introduced from May 24.

While investigations into the cause of the cracks are underway, initial conclusions are that they are due to stress corrosion cracking, which is a combination of stress and a chemical reaction.

Substantial samples have been cut from sets 800026 and more severely damaged 802005 and taken for metallurgical analysis by The Welding Institute and in Japan. In the meantime a repair is underway on set 800013 which could act as the pilot for the full repair programme.

Both of these sets were involved in the earlier issue where cracks were discovered around the yaw damper bracket bolsters. Meanwhile, the design authority in Japan responsible for the Class 80x product has given the TOCs and ORR a better understanding of the role of the lifting pockets and what risks may or may not follow should one become completely detached; a situation thought to be extremely unlikely given that the equipment is secured at several points.

It is accepted that an extensive repair programme will now be needed, covering all the 80x and Class 385 fleets.

As one senior industry source explained: "This isn't a crack in the weld, but it will probably be repaired with a weld. So although Hitachi has demonstrated that the vehicles can run, it is clear in the medium to longer term, they will have to be repaired. There are a number of options being looked at for the long term solution; one is whether a weld would solve the problem to everyone's satisfaction, Hitachi might have to look at a slightly different assembly and look at whether they bolt it on and not weld it, or the other option is whether to just cut that piece of the vehicle out and weld something new in."

Engineers are also considering whether there is a connection via the bracket between the anti-roll bar, the yaw damper and the lifting point might mean that a replacement could be designed in a different way.

Once a plan is agreed, there is a need to disconnect all electrical equipment to avoid it being damaged during the welding process. This will be very time-consuming process and industry estimates that it could take until the end of 2022 to complete the repairs.

There will also be a need for dedicated facilities with appropriately trained engineers involved. As one source commented: "There are a limited number of people with the skills for welding railway vehicles and there are a limited number of places where you can take the vehicles, support them in the right manner and do the welding."

Analysis

It is also confirmed the work will be overseen by The Welding Institute and independent consultant Ricardo will be monitoring and evaluating plans for repairs on behalf of the ORR, with the repair programme being led by Hitachi's design team in Kasado, where the bodyshells were assembled.

The metallurgical analysis will also prove interesting with a number of metallurgists already questioning Hitachi's decision to use 7000 Grade aluminium for these vehicles, despite many reports indicating that it is more prone to cracking. Other train builders including Siemens use 6000 grade, which has different properties.

The Public Accounts and the Transport Select Committees are believed to have demanded that Hitachi attend hearings and UK Government ministers have spoken directly to Hitachi in Japan regarding the situation.

The repair timescale could lead to delays in the delivery of the Class 805 and 807 sets for Avanti West Coast which could be pushed back from 2022 to 2023.

Data guides Northern Class 195/331 solution

AN interim solution has been agreed to deal with the cracks found in the yaw damper mounting brackets on the CAF Class 195 and 331 sets at Northern.

This has been supported by data provided from strain gauges fitted to No. 195002, which carried out a number of e.c.s. workings with the equipment in place.

As it appears that the principal issue is the level of stress where the yaw dampers connect to T-slots underneath the CAF bodies, spreader plates will be fitted between the yaw dampers and the T-slots which will distribute the load evenly over a much greater length of the slots.

In the meantime Northern has been able to maintain most of its timetable, even following the service increase from May 17, while several damaged CAF sets have been moved at slower speed to other locations to free up space in depots.

A significant number of Class 195s were taken to the station sidings at Huddersfield where the missing yaw dampers, removed due to the cracks, were obvious to observers on the platforms.

Cracks discovered in Class 68 ETS module at Chiltern

ROUTINE inspection has revealed a crack in the mountings for the ETS (Electric Train Supply) module under a Class 68 on hire from DRS to Chiltern Railways.

Inspections of the all locos on hire to Chiltern revealed cracks in seven out of eight locomotives and as a result loco-hauled workings using two diagrammed sets ceased, and would be covered by DMUs. This would mean some trains are formed of fewer carriages.

Chiltern, which is adopting a safety first approach, is working with DRS, owner of the Class 68s which were built by Vossloh between 2013-15. Vossloh was subsequently bought by Stadler.

Class 68s from a second order are also used by TransPennine Express on passenger duties where there is an ETS requirement, and these were being checked as we closed for press, as were all other locos in the fleet.

Station roof collapses suddenly at Northwich

THE collapse, without warning, of a wall and part of the roof of the main station building at Northwich mid-morning on May 18 was fortunate to have resulted in no injuries to passengers.

A section of the glass and iron roof and a gable end above the ticket office on the Manchester-bound platform gave way, with debris landing on the track.

A partial demolition was necessary by work teams to make the station safe for use. A coach service was instigated until trains could call again, which was later the same evening.

CHESHIRE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

TfL secures funding extension

TRANSPORT for London's funding deal with the Government, which was due to expire on May 18, was extended for a further 10 days at the last moment as negotiations on the details of a longer-term funding settlement continued.

The £65 million top-up grant allowed the capital's transport network to continue operating until May 28 on the same terms, as rumours circulated that more of the London area commuter rail network could be transferred to TfL control.

The Department for Transport said: "Support for London needs to be balanced with the national recovery and ensure fairness and value for money for the taxpayer."

However, critics argue that such short-term funding deals create unnecessary uncertainty in a sector that requires long-term planning and consistent funding to ensure it operates efficiently.

The situation beyond May 28 was unconfirmed as this issue of *The RM* went to press.

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Okehampton route on track

By Graeme Pickering

TRACK laying has been completed on the Dartmoor Line ahead of its planned reopening as part of the passenger rail network this December after a gap of almost 50 years.

The 14-mile route runs from Coleford Junction (on the Exeter-Barnstaple line) to Okehampton. Work began in March following the confirmation of a £40 million investment from the Government's Restoring Your Railway Fund.

Over 11 miles of new track has been laid along with 24,000 concrete sleepers, using a new track construction machine which can drop sleepers into position evenly and simultaneously, before laying and clamping track to them. By mid-May, nearly all of the 29,000 tonnes of ballast required for the trackbed was in situ and ready for tamping.

Four miles of lights, operated using quiet generators to minimise disturbance to local residents, have been in place to allow engineers to work through the night.

Attention has turned to upgrading level crossings, bridge repairs and the installation of GSM-R masts for railway mobile communications before engineering test trains begin. GWR expects to introduce daily services running every two hours by the end of the year, and hourly in 2022.

Loaded and empty sleeper wagons at Okehampton station on the Dartmoor Line as part of track relaying work. NETWORK RAIL

After 100-year gap... Avanti brings back three classes

By Ben Jones

THREE-class trains were reintroduced to the British rail network by Avanti West Coast on May 17 after a gap of more than a century.

The new Standard Premium class sits between Standard and First Class on AWC's Pendolino services, offering declassified First Class seats with more legroom, greater space and a guaranteed table. Standard Premium passengers also have the option to purchase refreshments via the new 'at-seat order' feature.

Following market research and successful trials in 2020, the new class is initially available to buy as an upgrade on the day of travel, with advance purchase tickets on sale from July for travel from September. Upgrade prices range from £15 for Birmingham to London, to £30 for Glasgow to London (one way).

Enhanced offer

AWC is also introducing an enhanced First Class offer with improved catering and more bespoke customer service later this year. Work is also due to start in June to fully refurbish the fleet of 56 Class 390s as part of a £117 million deal with Alstom.

New seats with leather headrests will be installed in Standard Premium and First, and all 25,000 Standard Class seats will be replaced.

Standard Class capacity on all 11-car Class 390/1s will be increased by 5% with the conversion of one of the four First Class vehicles to Standard seating. A new-look on-board shop will also be introduced as part of the mid-life overhaul. The first refurbished '390' is expected to enter service in November 2021.

FirstGroup's partner in the West Coast Partnership franchise, Italian state operator Trenitalia, has successfully operated three classes on its high-speed trains in recent years, providing greater choice for passengers in its battle with open access operator NTV.

Abolished

Second Class was abolished on British trains by 1910, leaving First and Third Class until the latter was renamed Second Class in 1956. Eurostar has operated three class trains on the London-Paris/Brussels routes for some years.

PRESERVATION MOURNS ALAN MOORE CBE

ALAN Moore CBE died peacefully following a long illness on April 22 aged 84.

Born in June 1936, Alan was a hugely important figure in railway preservation but sought to remain in the background, with many of his contributions not being publicised at his request.

Born in Hemel Hempstead, Alan attended Berkhamsted School between 1946 and 1953 before a career in banking, joining Glyn, Mills & Co.

His career was interrupted when he was called up for National Service. He learned Russian at the Joint Services Language School in Bodmin, resulting in a lifelong connection with the railways of the town, and was sent to Berlin to utilise his newly acquired language skills during the Cold War.

Afterwards he returned to banking, rising to eventually become deputy chairman of Lloyds Bank, his work taking him to the Middle East where he spent a significant part of his career. He was awarded a CBE for his services to banking.

On returning to Britain, he settled in Leighton Buzzard with his wife Margaret.

His contributions to railway preservation significantly developed following retirement in 1998. He became a major benefactor, chairman and latterly president of Bodmin & Wenford Railway.

Contribution

In addition to supporting the development of the railway, he made significant contributions to the restoration and overhaul of numerous locomotives, including 'West Country' *Wadebridge* and the NRM's T9 and Beattie Well Tank.

He also became a director of North Norfolk Railway, a member of the Swanage Railway Trust and later its patron, during which time he kick-started the restoration of the trust's LSWR T3 No. 563, and also made other projects possible.

For many years he quietly supported his local Leighton Buzzard Railway, which he had joined as a member of the original Iron Horse Railroad Society in June 1969. His financial help included assisting the construction of the new station building at Page's Park and the extension of the line to Munday's Hill, and he was a major benefactor to Greensand Railway Museum Trust's LBR-based restorations of Baldwin WDLR No. 778 and Motor Rail Armoured Simplex WL2182.

He became president of both the railway and the trust following the death of Sir William McAlpine. He was also a vice-president of the Transport Trust, with an annual award named in his honour.

As a benefactor, he employed a banker's approach to project finance. He would offer support to groups and organisations where he saw the value of what they were aiming to achieve, often offering £1-for-£1 matched funding to get projects off the ground.

Unsung

There are numerous such projects where his help was invaluable but unsung due to him preferring to remain anonymous.

Attended by limited numbers due to Covid-19 restrictions, Alan's funeral took place at Garston crematorium on May 11. He leaves a son, Andrew and a daughter, Kathryn. His wife Margaret died several years ago.

Cliff Thomas *(with the grateful assistance of Steve Doughty).*

FirstGroup signs National Rail Contracts for TPE and SWR

By Ben Jones

FIRSTGROUP is the first operator to sign new National Rail Contracts (NRCs) with the Department for Transport.

The new two-year deals came into force on May 30, ensuring continuity for TransPennine Express and South Western Railway after the end of the previous Emergency Recovery Measures Agreements (ERMAs).

NRCs represent a new structure for agreements between train operating companies and the DfT, replacing the previous revenue risk-based franchising system. Under NRCs, the Government holds all revenue risk and almost all cost risk for the former franchises, with the operator paid a fixed management fee plus performance incentives for punctuality, cleanliness and other customer-facing measures.

Targets

First's share of the SWR fee is £3.3 million per annum (70% with MTR holding the other 30%) and a further £9.9m possible if it exceeds agreed performance targets. First's fee for running TPE is £2.3m per annum plus up to £5.2m in performance incentives.

The TPE and SWR contracts have an option to be extended by up to two further years at the DfT's discretion. Contingent capital for both NRCs is £15m, 50% of which is bonded in the event of early termination of the contracts by the operator.

First and the DfT are also negotiating the NRC for West Coast Partnership, the ERMA for which expires in March 2022.

As well as operating existing services on the West Coast Main Line, WCP is also responsible for developing the initial HS2 service and the contract is expected to run to March 31 2032.

The agreement of the new NRCs followed negotiations to establish the financial impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the franchises. In early May, FirstGroup agreed to a termination fee of £6 million with the DfT – around £50m lower than expected by the transport group. The fee is in addition to £42.5m already paid in by FirstGroup to keep the franchise afloat.

Financial issues

Despite widely reported financial issues, even before the pandemic, DfT concluded that TPE would not have defaulted had the pandemic not occurred. By March 31 last year, £80m remained of the group's contingent capital exposure to the TPE contract. Following the agreement, this will be released and be credited to FirstGroup.

TPE was the third of FirstGroup's four franchises to be terminated and follows the agreements reached for South Western Railway (SWR) and West Coast Partnership, announced on December 10, 2020. FirstGroup paid £33.2m to terminate the SWR contract, but no termination fee was requested by DfT for the relatively new West Coast franchise.

No termination fee has been paid for its other franchise, Great Western Railway (GWR), which is operating under an Emergency Measures Agreement in addition to a direct franchise award which runs until April 1, 2023.

Nova 1 visits CLC Line

THE CLC (Cheshire Lines Committee) route between Liverpool and Manchester via Warrington Central saw an unusual visitor on May 13 when a TransPennine Express Class 802 unit called at all stations on the route in both directions.

Sadly passengers were unable to avail themselves of the additional service, with its first class accommodation, as set 802218 was being used to carry out station verification tests. This includes checking the position and visibility of stop boards, visibility of signals at platforms, ease of access for ramps and how many doors are at the platform for shorter stations. While TPE has no plans to operate an all stations service on the route the information has been added to the units' database, ensuring that it is now up to date.

TPE has also been carrying out similar tests on the WCML between Manchester and Carlisle ahead of planned operation of Nova 1 sets in passenger service on the route.

From December 2021 this is likely to be a single daily diagram, increasing to two from May 2022. The section north of Carlisle is already cleared for Class 80x units as it is used as a diversionary route for LNER services.

TPE Nova 1 No. 802218 calling at Humphrey Park station in Stretford on its journey from Liverpool to Manchester Oxford Road. The station platforms were extended in 2020 but the longer vehicles on the Nova 1 units meant that only 3½ of the five were alongside the platform when the set stopped. WORDS AND PICTURE: TONY MILES

An artist's impression showing the new station building and multi-storey car park proposed for Neasham Road. The existing station canopy is on the right. TEES VALLEY COMBINED AUTHORITY

Darlington station images revealed

By Graeme Pickering

NEW images which show how Darlington station could look following its planned £100m redevelopment have been revealed by Tees Valley Combined Authority.

TVCA is contributing £25m to the project, which will create new platforms, a new entrance and station building and a transport interchange.

Three platforms will be built on the eastern side of the current station and a new station building and multi-storey car park located on land between the railway and Neasham Road. These will be linked by footbridge to the existing station.

The entrance beneath the station's familiar clock tower on Victoria Road will be upgraded. Car parking and a pick up and drop off area are also planned for this side of the station, along with a new road layout, wider pavements and improved access for pedestrians and cyclists.

A business case was submitted to the DfT in January, almost five years after initial plans for the transformation were first announced. TVCA says that significant progress has been made since the submission, including the acquisition of some land next to the station.

Local residents were invited to give their views online about the plans, ahead of an expected planning application in June. The work is scheduled for completion in December 2024, nine months before the town celebrates the bi-centenary of the Stockton & Darlington Railway.

Crossrail trial running gets underway in central London with four trains per hour

By Ben Jones

FOUR trains per hour have been operating through Crossrail's central London tunnels since May 10 as the new railway gears up for full operation.

The Trial Running programme will see train frequencies through 26 miles of tunnels increase to the planned 24 trains per hour (tph), then focus will switch to Trial Operation ahead of the line's opening in the first half of 2022.

Trial operation is expected to start later this year and will include a range of mandatory exercises,with emergency evacuations of trains and stations.

The trial running has been made possible by the completion of integration work, linking the new railway's signalling and safety systems with the Great Eastern and Great Western main lines at either end. The programme involves integrated trials of the railway to demonstrate that it is safe and reliable and meets capacity and performance requirements.

Nine-car Class 345 EMUs are now able to run from the depot at Old Oak Common through to Gidea Park, controlled by Romford Route Control Centre (RCC) in east London. Empty trains are running between the 4tph trial services to work interim diagrams for full length sets on the Liverpool Street-Shenfield route.

Tottenham Court Road station has now been handed over to TfL by contractors, the third of the central section stations to be completed. It looks set to become one of London's busiest stations, offering an interchange between the Northern, Central and Elizabeth lines.

Farringdon was handed over earlier this year and Custom House, on the Abbey Wood branch, was completed in 2020.

London Underground and TfL teams will now prepare the stations for Trial Operations beginning later this year. Woolwich, Liverpool Street and Paddington will be the next stations to transfer to TfL.

Services were originally due to start through the tunnels in December 2018, with the full cross-London service linking Reading and Heathrow with Shenfield/Abbey Wood a year later. Since August 2018, delays and cost increases have totalled almost £4 billion.

Eurostar agrees new financing deal

By Keith Fender

EUROSTAR announced in mid-May that after months of uncertainty it has secured new financial backing from a consortium of banks.

The financial rescue worth £250 million avoids any direct contribution by governments in the UK or France, although in several cases companies owned by both governments are either lending money or guaranteeing the loans.

Insolvent fears

The collapse in passenger numbers due to the pandemic had led to its own chief executive saying it could be insolvent by June. Unlike most other European rail operators or airlines, Eurostar has received no government assistance beyond staff furlough schemes.

Eurostar's shareholders have agreed to fund £50 million of additional capital; 60% of that will come from French and Belgian railways which are owned by their respective governments, primarily France's SNCF as the biggest shareholder.

Restructuring

In addition £200 million of new loans and restructuring of old ones have been agreed with several French banks plus two British ones. All of the new loans are backed by the shareholders or guaranteed on the Eurostar train fleet, which has been used as security.

Eurostar says that now the deal will allow it to move forward with its merger plan with European high speed operator Thalys, which is also majority owned by SNCF. The new company to be known as 'Greenspeed'.

Eurostar says it plans to increase the number of trains on its London-Paris route to two daily return services from May 27, with three per day planned from the end of June and more added over the summer period.

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Island Line Class 483 arrives at Havenstreet

FORMER Island Line Class 483 unit No. 483007 has been delivered to the Isle of Wight Railway for display in its Train Story Discovery Centre.

The set was moved from Ryde St Johns to Sandown from where it was transferred to a low loader for the final movement to Havenstreet. Donated to the railway by SWR, the repainted set is seen awaiting final positioning on May 20. PHIL MARSH

GBRf wants proposed 'freight evangelist' to push for growth

By Ben Jones

GB Railfreight (GBRf) has called for the new dedicated rail freight 'guiding mind' to push the case for recovery and growth in response to the structural changes to Britain's railways announced on May 19.

The new position, which will oversee all British rail freight operations, was unveiled in the Williams-Shapps White Paper and will be part of the Great British Railways organisation led by Network Rail.

GBRf wants the 'freight evangelist' to commit to a five-point manifesto to ensure the sector can continue to grow and support the UK economy.

The five point plan calls for the holder of the new role to champion the economic value of rail freight so that it is on an equal footing with passenger traffic; to put decarbonisation at the heart of their plan for the sector; enforce a track access regime that is reliable and fair to allow operators to deliver growth; to deliver freight-specific investment such as electrification and improvements to critical infrastructure that unlocks freight capacity and to take a national view, but also devolve powers over operations to the regions to ensure the smooth running of services across the country.

GB Railfreight managing director John Smith said: "We are at a critical point in the rail sector's future. The decisions in the White Paper this week will have long-lasting consequences. "What rail freight needs now is parity of esteem with passenger services, and we need a voice round the table that can make the case for us. We have shown that we are an integral part of the UK economy but rail freight also has an important role to play in reaching net zero emissions."

■ GBRf has extended its contract with Belmond to operate the 'Royal Scotsman' landcruise train for another five years.

GBRf replaced West Coast Railways as the haulage provider and operator of the Scottish-based train in 2015. The luxury train made its first outing of 2021 on May 19-21.

Northern Class 769 bi-mode finally in service

THE first Class 769 bi-mode units, modified from Class 319 EMUs, finally entered service with Northern at the start of the new timetable on May 17 – considerably later than envisaged when the project was launched.

Initially the sets are being used on Southport – Hazel Grove services with a few diagrams between Southport and Stalybridge also worked by 769s.

Able to work on 25kV AC and powered by newly-fitted diesel engines, the sets change between power systems at a number of locations including Bolton, Manchester Victoria and Salford Crescent, depending on the service and route.

Changeover itself is very quick, with no obvious extensions to station dwell times; the diesel engines powering up and switching off when not required.

The first service to be operated by a Class 769 for Northern was the 05.50 from Wigan North Western to Alderley Edge; set No. 769450 departed in diesel mode and became the first set to switch power supplies in passenger service when it made a one minute stop at Bolton.

The project, initially described as 'Class 319 Flex', was announced by Porterbrook in 2016 as a partnership project with Northern; the proposal was for the conversion of eight sets to bi-mode operation to cover for cancelled electrification schemes such as Manchester Victoria to Stalybridge.

A partnership between Porterbrook and Brush Traction (part of Wabtec) was set up to deliver the conversions, however the work itself has taken considerably longer than planned.

Derailment blocks key line

THE derailment of an engineering train just before 02.00 at Church Fenton on May 4 caused a disruption to TranPennine, CrossCounty and Northern services.

Five wagons of a welded rail train were off the rails on the curve just after the station blocking the line to Leeds. Some trains ran via South Milford and Castleford to and from Leeds. A recovery team from Wigan attended and the line reopened the following afternoon. DAVID TILLOTSON

Viaduct collapse kills 26 and injures 70 others on Mexico City Metro

A VIADUCT collapsed on Mexico City's Metro Line 12 on May 3 which led to derailment has left at least 26 people dead and 70 injured, *writes Keith Fender.*

The accident near the Olivos station resulted in two carriages of an FE10 train partially falling onto a busy main road.

One of those killed and several of the injured were in vehicles on the road.

Line 12 is the most recent part of the Mexico City Metro which opened in October 2012.

london transport museum

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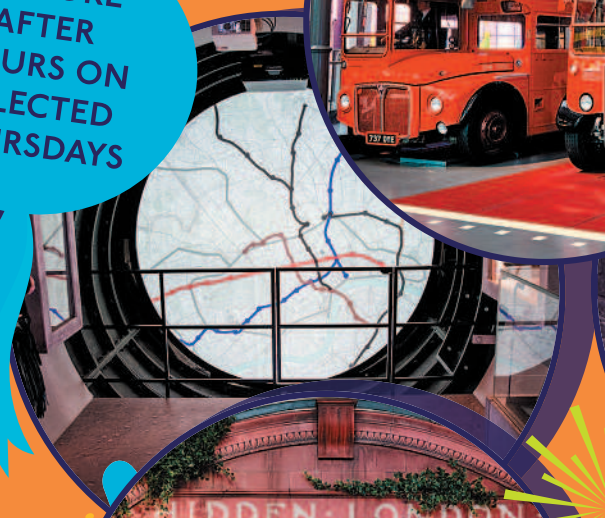

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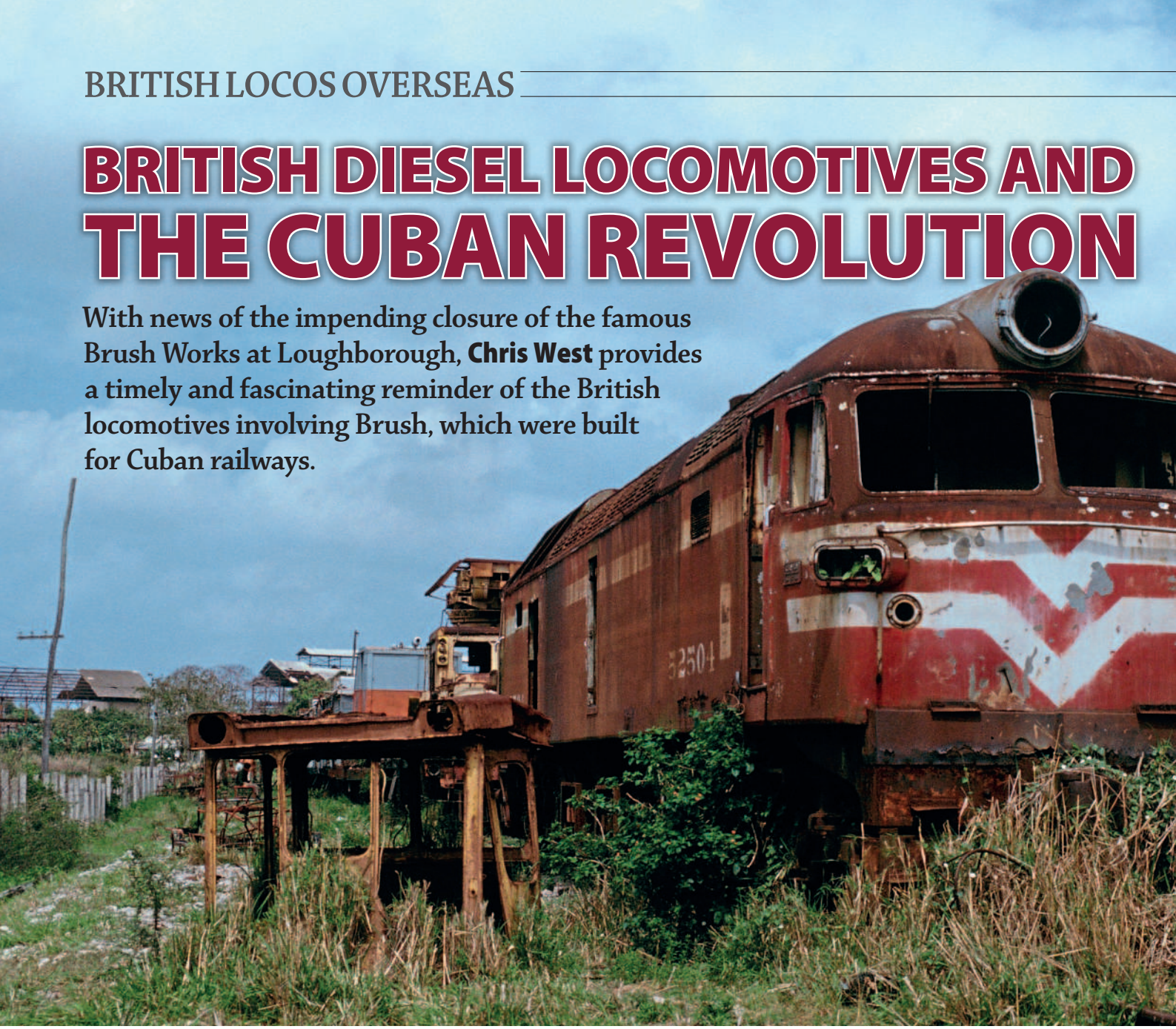
BRITISH DIESEL LOCOMOTIVES AND THE CUBAN REVOLUTION

With news of the impending closure of the famous Brush Works at Loughborough, Chris West provides a timely and fascinating reminder of the British locomotives involving Brush, which were built for Cuban railways.



DURING the 1990s Cuba was a popular destination for British railway enthusiasts hoping to photograph American-built steam locomotives at work. A few of those enthusiasts found that Cuba was also home to some British-built diesel locomotives. Readers of *The Railway Magazine* will have seen some of those in a feature on the Clayton Equipment Co. in the September 2015 issue. Here is the story of British diesel locomotives and the Cuban Revolution.

Before the Revolution

Until the late 1940s most of the railways in the east of Cuba formed the Consolidated Railroads, a company largely backed with American capital, while the United Railways of Havana, a British company, was the dominant operator in the west. However, despite being British, the United Railways, like the Consolidated Railroads, bought most of its locomotives and rolling stock from the United States. A trade treaty which saw Cuban raw sugar refined in the United States also ensured American railway equipment was imported into Cuba with minimal duties, while equipment from Europe suffered high import tariffs.

Things were changing; financial difficulties saw the Cuban government intervene in the management of the United Railways in June 1949 and in 1953 the company's railways were nationalised, becoming the Western Railways. At about the same time, a new trade agreement reduced tariffs on British goods, which saw Leyland enter into a £10 million contract for buses – paving the way for British locomotive builders to enter the Cuban market.

Latin American Tour

During 1954, Sir George Nelson, chairman and managing director of English Electric, toured Latin America in the hope of drumming up business. From April 12 to April 22, Sir George was in Cuba, where he met with Dr Martinez Saenz, the chief administrator of the newly nationalised Western Railways, to discuss a five-year rehabilitation programme.

The programme included the supply of new diesel locomotives for which English Electric duly tendered, but when the offers were considered, the favourites were General Motors, which had won an order for more than 50 locomotives for the Consolidated Railroads a year earlier; Baldwin, which had already supplied two diesel locomotives to the Western Railways; and the French.

The order was signed on July 29, 1954, and went to the French firm of Brissonneau & Lotz, which committed to shipping six locomotives that November; a short delivery time English Electric could not match. The design offered by the French was, except for a few minor modifications, identical to more than 100 locomotives already ordered by the French State Railways (SNCF).

English Electric was not discouraged by this disappointment. In September 1954 a small team of British experts from three UK firms – English Electric, United Steel and Westinghouse – went to Cuba to study the rehabilitation of the Western Railways. Their report was submitted in February 1955, but they found there were many competitors for Cuban business.

In 1955 the British firms invited Dr Saenz to visit Britain. On August 3, he and dictator Fulgencio Batista's 21-year-old son were entertained to dinner at Claridge's. Over dinner, the British industrialists learned the Germans were sending equipment to Cuba on approval so it could be tried. The German firm MaK had sent a locomotive to Cuba, which it had flatteringly called *Presidente Batista*, and

Above: Railways had a significant role in the Cuban Revolution. In the late 1950s the Batista regime constructed an armoured train, known in Spanish as "El tren blindado", which was powered by two General Motors diesel electric locomotives. An armoured railcar, numbered 810, ran ahead of the train. This much-published photo shows the railcar on its side, having been derailed at Santa Clara by revolutionaries led by Che Guevara. AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

> "The Cubans always required 10 years' credit so the French and Germans almost certainly were not paid in full for the locomotives they sold."

Left: Few railway enthusiasts reached Cuba in time to see or ride behind the Clayton locomotives in regular service, but visitors in the 1990s saw the locomotives stored out of use. Clayton number 52504 was in the yard at Central Camilo Cienfuegos on March 10, 1995. The similarity with British Railways' Class 47 is obvious. The undergrowth masks the central coupler, one of the distinctive features of the Cuban locomotives. This view makes an interesting comparison with the picture of the body structure photographed 30 years earlier at Loughborough – see p17. ALL PHOTOGRAPHS BY AUTHOR UNLESS STATED.

was rewarded with orders for more than 70 of its diesel-hydraulics.

English Electric's lack of orders from its efforts in Cuba might have seemed regrettable at the time but the Cubans always required 10 years' credit for the purchases, so the French and Germans almost certainly were not paid in full for the locomotives they sold. Perhaps English Electric had a lucky escape.

Revolution

A General Election had been planned in Cuba for June 1952, widely expected to be won by the Orthodox Party. The United Action Party, led by General Batista, was generally agreed to have no chance. On March 10, 1952, the government was overthrown by a group of army officers, led by Batista, who quickly formed a government with himself as Provisional President of the Republic. This new government was recognised by the United States, the United Kingdom and other foreign powers.

Fidel Castro had hoped to stand in the election for the Orthodox Party but was forced into exile following the Batista coup. In December 1956, Castro returned to Cuba with like-minded revolutionaries, including his brother Raul and the Argentinean Ernesto "Che" Guevara. Their operations were initially limited to the Sierra Maestra in the east of the country, but late in 1958 the revolutionary columns were able to advance westwards.

The key battle of the revolution occurred in December 1958 when Guevara's column derailed an armoured train at Santa Clara. Castro arrived in Havana in January 1959, and Batista fled to the Dominican Republic.

The UK's government quickly recognised the new regime and by February 1959 was looking to restore normal trading relations.

At that time, the major concern was that the Cubans might boycott British goods as a reprisal for the sale by Hawkers of Sea Fury fighter aircraft to the Batista government. The Americans took a different path and from mid-1960 progressively implemented a series of economic measures against Cuba, known by the Cubans as The Blockade.

Diesel electrics for British Railways

As the revolution occurred in Cuba, something of a revolution was taking place on British Railways. During 1959 the decision was taken to standardise main line diesel electric locomotives. For the new classes, the builder whose design was accepted was required to allow British Railways, or any other builder, to build locomotives under licence. The licensor would receive a lump sum at the signing of the licencing agreement, and then a fee per locomotive.

This new arrangement was in place when British Railways required more Type 4 locomotives in mid-1962. The Brush design of mechanical parts had been adopted as standard for Type 4 diesel electric locomotives, so tenders to this design were invited from British Railways' Crewe workshops and eight private builders, seven of which responded.

Among them was Clayton Equipment, offering the Brush design with the preferred Sulzer engine and the options of electrical equipment from Crompton Parkinson, Brush, English Electric or GEC.

Responding to the same enquiry, AEI offered Brush-designed mechanical parts and the Sulzer engine but with its own electrical equipment or, alternatively, its own design of mechanical parts with either the Sulzer engine or a pair of Paxman engines, each rated at 1400hp.

AEI was also interested in Birmingham Railway Carriage & Wagon's offer of locomotives to the same design as 'Lion', which could also be built with Crompton Parkinson electrical equipment.

The endeavours to sell British locomotives to Cuba followed a path set by Leyland, which secured a massive order in the 1950s for Royal Tiger buses to replace Havana's trams. Deliveries of Leyland buses continued after the revolution, and a Leyland Olympic is shown in this picture taken at Madruga on April 6, 1997. In October 1964, a ship carrying Olympics to Cuba sank in the Thames in circumstances that have never been fully explained.

In the 1950s, English Electric lost out on a Cuban locomotive order to the French firm of Brissonneau & Lotz. History was to repeat itself in the early 1960s when the same French firm won an order from Cuba that English Electric was pursuing. The first of the 1960s French locomotives, number 50801, is now displayed in the Railway Museum in Havana, seen here on January 1, 2006.

English Electric offered three alternatives. The first used mechanical parts to the Brush design, the Sulzer engine and their own electrical equipment. The second was for locomotives with English Electric-designed mechanical parts, diesel engine and electrical equipment. The third had English Electric-designed mechanical parts and electrical equipment but the Sulzer engine.

British Railways decided that 99 locomotives would be built at Crewe with power equipment provided by Brush, and 100 built by Brush at Loughborough. The Crewe-built locomotives became D1583-D1681, while those built by Brush were numbered D1682-D1781.

English Electric was disappointed that British Railways had formed the view that its 16CSVT engine was of unproved reliability when uprated to 2700hp and set out to demonstrate the merit of the engine with its DP2 prototype. However, English Electric accepted that British Railways then preferred locomotives fitted with cast steel bogies and flat ends, and by November 1963 had designed a new version of its Type 4 locomotive with these features for consideration. The process of designing locomotives to meet British Railway's requirements ensured the locomotive builders were ready when export opportunities arose.

Cuban enquiries

The new Cuban government did not take long to make enquiries about purchasing diesel locomotives. In October 1963, it became known that the Cuban agency Transimport required high horsepower locomotives for the mainline from Havana to Santiago de Cuba, together with a larger number of locomotives for secondary and branch lines.

The exact requirements changed as negotiations progressed, but there seemed to be a need for about 10 locomotives approximately equivalent to the British Railways Type 4, and as many as 80 locomotives equivalent to Type 1.

By early November 1963, English Electric had contacted the British government's Export Credit Guarantee Department about two potential contracts for diesel locomotives; one for 46 at a value of £3.4 million, and the other for 30 valued at £2.1 million.

That month, a Cuban trade delegation toured Britain before visiting France, Sweden, Spain, West Germany and Italy. The delegation met Board of Trade officials and exporting firms, having announced it had authority to spend £10 million on heavy equipment to be used primarily to repair damage caused by Hurricane Flora, and to carry out anti-flood works.

Brush apparently only learned of the Cuban requirements just before Christmas 1963 and quickly prepared a quote of £1,122,310 for 10 high horsepower locomotives. AEI was also hopeful of the order but English Electric remained the front runner and in January 1964, Cuban representatives visited the company to enquire about buying 45 locomotives to the value of about £3.5 million.

English Electric was invited to send a technical representative to Cuba. The Cubans were also understood to be talking to locomotive builders in France and Spain, and a Belgian company was also active on the enquiry.

The threat of blacklisting

By the end of January 1964, what had been a normal locomotive enquiry turned political when the Board of Trade became concerned that English Electric would be blacklisted in the United States. At a meeting of English Electric's traction company on March 10, 1964, the decision was made to not quote for the Cuban business. Two days later, Sir Arnold Hall, chairman of Brush's parent company, Hawker Siddeley, decided it could not accept the order.

That might have been the end of the story, but negotiations continued with a view to placing the order with a company that did not fear American reprisals. At the end of April, Brush prepared a quote of £516,189 for 10 sets of Type 4 power equipment for Clayton Equipment, so it could fulfil the order for Cuba. At the same time, French firm Brissonneau & Lotz announced it had booked an order for 20 locomotives for secondary and branch lines, with an option for a further 10. The Cubans announced a contract between Transimport and Machinoimport, of the Soviet Union, for the supply of 40 diesel locomotives during 1964 and 1965.

Cuba also bought locomotives in the 1960s from the Soviet Union and some of these have proved remarkably long-lived. Locomotive 51015 was built at the Bryansk works in 1965 and was photographed at Nuevitas, still in regular service, more than 50 years later on March 28, 2016. It is not too difficult to imagine a British Railways' Class 20 with central buffing and draw gear, and fitted with a large headlight.

Above: Sales of main line locomotives to Cuba were sure to draw the ire of the Americans, but there was less sensitivity about some other items of railway equipment. This breakdown crane, built by Cowans Sheldon at Carlisle, was supplied to Cuba at the same time as the Clayton locomotives. The crane was photographed at Camagüey on January 8, 2006.

Left: Brush supplied Clayton with the body structures as well as the power equipment for the Cuban locomotives. The first of the 10 structures was photographed on December 11, 1964, on the Falcon Works test track on accommodation bogies. The Great Central Railway embankment is in the background. Brush ambiguously said the locomotives were for South America. BRUSH OFFICIAL PHOTOGRAPH A11489.

In June 1964 the contract between Clayton Equipment and Transimport was announced and although the Americans made their displeasure known, there was nothing they could do about it.

The Clayton locomotives

The Cuban locomotives were built by Clayton Equipment under a licence obtained from Brush. The design closely followed the British Railways Type 4 locomotives, the most obvious external differences being that the cab was modified to carry a headlight in the roof and illuminated number boxes on the sides. Central buffing and draw gear was fitted to meet Cuban requirements, and only air brakes were needed.

The most significant difference between the locomotives built by Clayton and the Brush Type 4 for British Railways was the diesel engines. For the Cuban locomotives, French company Cie de Construction Méchanique Procédés Sulzer (CCM) manufactured 11 Sulzer 12-cylinder LVA24 engines. In these engines, the cylinders were in a V-formation rather than the twin bank of the Sulzer 12-cylinder 12LDA28 engines used in British Railways' Type 4s.

The decision to use a French engine was most probably a result of politics rather than technical considerations. Vibration problems became evident in the Sulzer engines in the Type 4 locomotives used by British Railways early in 1965, only after the order for the Cuban locomotives was placed. At about the same time the Cuban locomotives were being built, five locomotives built by Brush for British Railways (D1702-1706) were also fitted with the Sulzer LVA24 engine and the type was also in use in France.

Shipment of the Cuban locomotives began in July 1965 and delivery of all 10 was completed early in 1966. On delivery, the locomotives were numbered 2501 to 2510. Trials are said to have taken place on British Railways from Derby, although this apparently escaped the attention of photographers.

The Clayton locomotives were the first in Cuba to have more than 2000hp. With their axle load of more than 18 tons, the Cubans classified them as heavy locomotives – which would have limited them to the main lines, and particularly the route from Havana to Santiago de Cuba.

Unfortunately few enthusiasts visited Cuba during the first 10 years of the career of the Clayton locomotives but in the early 1970s, when the Cubans had the opportunity to obtain locomotives from Canada, the specification was similar to that of the Claytons.

Sugar railway locomotives

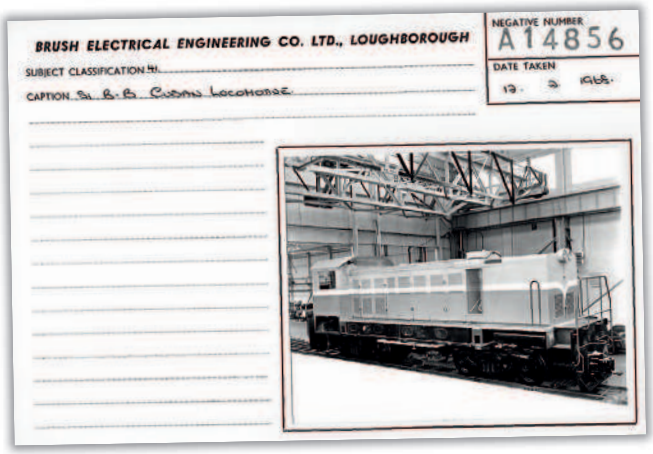
In Cuba, main line railways constitute only about a third of the total mileage, with – at the time of the revolution – 8000 miles of railway existing to serve the sugar industry, of which about a half was narrow gauge.

As well as new locomotives for the main lines, the Cubans required locomotives for their sugar railways, and the first British locomotive supplied to Cuba after the revolution was for the sugar industry. In 1959 Hunslet built two 0-6-0 diesel shunting locomotives with 204hp Gardner 8L3 engines for stock. One of these, Hunslet No. 5510, was shipped to Cuba in January 1960. The locomotive was named *Carlos Alfert*, for the entrepreneur responsible for a sugar warehousing complex on the north coast of Cuba – although a name honouring a capitalist is unlikely to have lasted long in post-revolutionary Cuba.

In the mid-1970s the Hunslet locomotive was given the number 40201, suggesting it was a main line locomotive, although it is only known to have worked on sugar railways. The Hunslet survived until at least 1996, when it was seen out of use in the yard at the Central Granma sugar mill.

Clayton Equipment responded to enquiries about locomotives for the Cuban sugar industry during 1961, but this came ▶

This small Hunslet diesel shunter was the first British locomotive sold to Cuba after the revolution. The picture shows it out of use at Central Granma on April 9, 1997, and carrying the number 40201.


BRUSH ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING CO. LTD., LOUGHBOROUGH
NEGATIVE NUMBER A14856
SUBJECT CLASSIFICATION 41
CAPTION S. A. B-B Cubans Locomotive
DATE TAKEN 13. 3 1968

The Brush Index Card acknowledges the S1 locomotives were for Cuba. BRUSH OFFICIAL PHOTO

One of the first batch of Brush S1 locomotives was photographed loaded on road bogies at the Falcon Works on April 18, 1968. BRUSH OFFICIAL PHOTO A15046

to nothing. A more serious approach was made to a number of locomotive builders in 1964. Again, the exact requirements evolved as negotiations progressed, but diesel locomotives of 600 to 800hp for both the standard and narrow gauge were needed, as were diesel engines to repower unserviceable American-built locomotives.

In May 1964, English Electric was approached about new diesel engines to rebuild existing locomotives but declined to get involved. However, although the Hawker Siddeley group had decided Brush should not build main line locomotives for Cuba, it realised equipment for the sugar railways was less sensitive. Between September 1966 and March 1967, Mirrlees – which, like Brush, was part of the Hawker Siddeley group – delivered 10 JST6 diesel engines to Cuba. These engines, rated at 780hp at 1000rpm, were to replace unreliable Cooper-Bessemer engines in locomotives built by General Electric.

Cuban orders for Brush

New diesel engines for existing locomotives were followed by orders for complete locomotives. English Electric, perhaps having seen what happened with Brush and Clayton Equipment, decided it could tender, but only as a subcontractor and provided that the company's name was not associated with the business.

Brush was less cautious and on April 15, 1967, Transimport placed an order for seven 3ft gauge locomotives, with a second order for a further eight locomotives of the same type on July 4, 1968.

The locomotives were Brush Class S1, an inexpensive B-B diesel-electric locomotive targeted at countries where the railways operated in challenging circumstances and, consequently, were well-suited to the Cuban sugar railways. The Cuban locomotives were fitted with 720hp Paxman 12 YHXL engines powering a Brush generator and two frame mounted traction motors, with the drive from each motor to the bogie through a cardan shaft to one axle and an interconnecting shaft to the other axle.

When building the S1 locomotives, Brush had supplied Paxman with a sub-frame along with the generators on a free issue basis. This sub-frame was suitable for installation in other types of locomotives and, at the same time as the locomotives were supplied, a further 21 Paxman 12 YHXL engines – six engines rated at 825hp and 15 rated at 720hp – were delivered to re-engine American-built locomotives.

The 825hp engines were reported at the time as being for rebuilding Alco-built locomotives, which was not completely correct. In 1953 the Consolidated Railroads had purchased 10 General Electric 78-tonners powered by Alco 6-251 engines, rated at 800hp. Fifteen years later, these locomotives were all out of service, and six were recipients of the Brush sub-frames and generators with Paxman engines. The 15 12 YHXL 720hp engines were used to re-engine General Electric-built locomotives.

In June 1968, two Brush engineers went to Banes in the east of Cuba to commission the first seven locomotives, which then replaced the last steam locomotives on the 3ft gauge railways at two large sugar mills – Central Antonio Guiteras and Central Jesus Menendez. A report from the early 1970s said the English Locomotives of Central Antonio Guiteras guaranteed the successful sugar harvest.

Withdrawal from service

On the main line the Clayton locomotives were renumbered twice. In the late 1960s they were given the class designation T and were to be numbered from 975 to 984, although it is not clear if all of the locomotives received their new numbers. In another re-numbering scheme in the mid-1970s, the Claytons had '5' added to their original numbers, becoming 52501 to 52510, but again, these were not applied to all of the class.

The Cuban working timetable, to take effect from January 24, 1989, included the technical specification of the Clayton locomotives, but by that date they may have already been set aside following the arrival of the Canadian and some high horsepower locomotives from the Soviet Union.

Enthusiasts visiting Cuba found eight Clayton locomotives derelict in the goods yard at Cardenas, where they were cut up during 1995 or early 1996. A further locomotive, 52504, was derelict in the yard at Central Camilo Cienfuegos, where it was cut up during 1998 – although the body shell remained, lying on its roof at the far end of the yard, for some time.

Mystery surrounds class leader 52501, which was not accounted for in the goods yard at Cardenas or in the yard at Central Camilo Cienfuegos. Enquiries suggested it may have been scrapped at Santiago de Cuba, but that was never confirmed.

Into the 21st Century

Just as British Railways took the decision to standardise its main line diesel electric locomotives, the Cubans tried to standardise their locomotive classes around a few types. With only 10 locomotives in

Uncle Sam on the outside, John Bull on the inside. The Cubans found their General Electric locomotives unreliable so contracted with Brush for new Paxman diesel engines and generators, built at Loughborough. Some of the resulting rebuilt locomotives remained in service for more than 30 years, as was the case with General Electric-built 2735, photographed at Central Antonio Guiteras on January 25, 2010.

The arrival of more than 100 2600hp locomotives from the Soviet Union, starting in 1977, reduced the duties of the Clayton locomotives on the Havana to Santiago main line. Soviet-built number 52689 is seen on the right in this picture. However, there was no doubt that the days of the Claytons were over when their numbers were taken by new Chinese locomotives in 2006. Chinese-built number 52510 is on the left of the picture, which was taken on February 25, 2008, at Camagüey.

Eight Clayton locomotives spent their last months disappearing into the undergrowth in the yard at Cardenas before being scrapped. Clayton 52507 is nearest the camera in this picture, taken on March 11, 1995.

The continued operation of Brush locomotives is helped by the shed foreman's reading material. The Brush maintenance and repair manual, translated into Spanish, and the parts catalogue in English were found on the foreman's desk at Central Heriberto Duquesne.

Brush supplied Cuba not only with parts to rebuild existing American locomotives but complete locomotives, built at Loughborough with Paxman engines. Brush locomotive No. 2723 is seen at Central Heriberto Duquesne on March 18, 2014.

the class, the Claytons were seen as non-standard once much larger numbers of first Canadian, then Soviet, and now Chinese diesel electric locomotives of about 2500hp became available.

On the sugar railways it has been the Brush locomotives' non-standard 3ft gauge that has saved them. Gauge conversions saw the Brush locomotives move to sugar mills in the Villa Clara province until the last remaining examples were allocated to the short 3ft gauge system at the Central Heriberto Duquesne sugar mill.

The Cuban sugar industry was restructured from 2002, with many mills closing and the railways serving them rationalised. This process brought to an end the regular use of steam locomotives on sugar cane trains and saw Cuba drop in popularity as a destination for railway enthusiasts.

But each year, when the Central Heriberto Duquesne sugar mill is working, Brush locomotives are in use – and long may it continue. ■

Above: Cannibalisation of withdrawn locomotives means there is little need to refer to the parts catalogue. A Paxman engine and Brush generator mounted on a sub-frame were photographed on January 28, 2010, stored outside the locomotive shed at Central Heriberto Duquesne.

Right: The surviving Brush locomotives at Central Heriberto Duquesne have already celebrated their 50th birthdays and although they are rarely visited by enthusiasts now, there are reasons for optimism that they will still be used when they are 60 years old. No. 2728 was photographed on March 19, 2018.

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CLASS 58s: NOT JUST FREIGHT LOCOS

The fleet of 50 Class 58s had a short life, spent mostly working freight trains, but they also worked a fair few passenger trains over their 18 years in service. Pip Dunn looks back at their Class 1 history.

How it started with the Class 58 on passenger trains: No. 58002 hauls Hetrfordshire Railtours 'Class 58 Pioneer' through Narborough on September 18, 1993, working from Nuneaton to Nottingham and Matlock. FERNDALE MEDIA

AS a heavy freight diesel, the Class 58s only had a top speed of 80mph and no train heating, which meant their appearances on passenger trains was relatively infrequent. But that did not stop them working both service trains and railtours, and this feature recalls many of those passenger workings over their short lives.

The first one

The first time anyone enjoyed a Class 58 on a passenger train was on September 18, 1983, when No. 58002 took over Hertfordshire Railtours' 'Class 58 Pioneer' charter at Nuneaton and worked to Matlock and back. But the first to work a service train occurred in quite interesting circumstances.

For many years, Sundays in Birmingham had been of interest to enthusiasts seeking to ride behind freight locos because Wolverhampton to Euston trains would be diverted via Nuneaton if the direct Birmingham to Rugby line was closed for engineering work.

Operationally, the easiest way to do this was to keep the electric loco on and simply 'drag' it from Birmingham New Street to Nuneaton with a diesel. All sorts of locos were used, and often they were freight machines. These trains were eagerly watched in the early 1980s after Class 56s appeared on them, and it only natural that 58s would do the same.

The first 58 working, however, was on – of all days – April 1, 1984. The news started to filter out that 58004 would 'drag' the 12.00 Wolverhampton-Euston. But was it an April Fool?

Just after midday, 58004 arrived from Saltley, took up its position, and sure enough worked the 20¾ miles to Nuneaton. It came back on the 11.00 Euston-Wolverhampton, and then worked back with the 15.00 Wolverhampton-Euston.

Enthusiasts continued to watch the 'Nuneaton drags' as 58s started to appear regularly over the next few years: 58002 worked on April 23; 58013 on June 10; 58002/014 on July 1; and 58002 the following week. The next four workings were, however, all on railtours: 58014 on July 15; 58010 on July 28; and 58006/013 on August 12.

A remarkable outing

Given that by September 1984, only 15 had been accepted into traffic and not many drivers were trained on them, it is remarkable to think that September 1 saw what remains as probably the rarest passenger working ever. That day saw No. 58002 haul a failed HST with power cars Nos. 43131/149 on the 12.10 Liverpool-Plymouth south from Birmingham.

All was not well; on the final stages, the 58 itself ran into trouble at Ivybridge and one of the power cars was revived to get the train to its destination.

A week later saw, on September 8, another rare working when 58007 took the 13.40 Poole-Sheffield forward from Birmingham via Nottingham as booked. The following weekend, on September 16, 58007 was on railtour duty to Buxton.

When the loco hauling the 05.50 Paddington-Liverpool failed at Banbury on December 6, 58008 was on hand to take the train to Birmingham. Two days later an issue on the WCML saw Euston trains diverted into Paddington and 58001 handled the 14.00 Wolverhampton-Paddington, returning on the 18.15 Paddington-Birmingham.

Into 1985 and another few weeks of 'drags' saw 58028 (February 19), 58015 (March 3), 58021 (March 10) and 58003/023 (March 17) all used. On March 22, 58025 rescued the 12.54 Brighton-Manchester at Oxford, taking the train to Birmingham. Two days later, 58012 worked a railtour from Birmingham to Doncaster and back. The first workings for 58009 were on drags on March 31 – alongside 58014.

Another Class 58 appeared at Paddington on April 24, when 58003 took over the 17.28 from Manchester at Coventry as a Type 4 was unavailable. A few weeks later, on May 10, 58021 took charge of the 07.30 Euston-Shrewsbury at Wolverhampton. The following day, with an incident closing the WCML south of Rugby, trains were diverted into Paddington. As well as the Class 37s, 47s and 50s being used, No. 58016 took the 01.15 Holyhead-Euston forward from Birmingham, and although the train did go into Euston, it did so via Reading. The loco was sent back on the 10.20 Euston-Stranraer, coming off at Birmingham.

On September 1, 1984, No. 58002 was used to rescue a failed cross-country HST set. The loco is seen arriving at Exeter with the stock of the 12.10 Liverpool-Plymouth, which it had assisted from Birmingham. The 58 also had problems near Ivybridge, and one power car was coaxed into life to get the train to its destination. COLOUR RAIL

The first working for 58024 was also 'different' – it worked 1G00, the 03.45 Crewe-Birmingham from Stafford via Cannock. It was then put to work on the 'drags'. No. 58013 worked 1G00 a week later.

When No. 50031 *Hood* failed at Banbury, hauling the 17.40 Paddington-Wolverhampton on July 5, 58028 came to its aid. A few days later, on July 12, this same train was worked by 58017 – the first time it had hauled a passenger train – due to a shortage of traction at London. Two days after, 58018 made its debut on the 'drags', with 58023 also in use. More off-the-beaten-track work occurred on July 16, when 58021 took over the 17.40 Euston-Chester at Wolverhampton.

Unusual routes

If anyone had started to try and enjoy Class 58s on unusual routes, then July 28 was a good day – but it was a case of choosing one or the other. No. 58015 was provided for the 10.50 Birmingham-Manchester and headed back on the 14.45 Manchester-Euston to Stafford. Leaving Birmingham just before it was 58016, which took over the 08.30 Liverpool-Poole and worked to Reading, and came back on the 15.34 Poole-Manchester as far as Birmingham.

Taking 58015 to Manchester would have been wise as, on August 1, 58016 went to Reading again as it took over the 06.50 Liverpool-Poole at Coventry and returned on the 11.40 Poole-Manchester.

Drags between Bletchley and Coventry on September 1 saw 58019 haul the 09.50 Euston-Manchester at the same time 58018 was working a charter from Birmingham to Matlock. Two Sundays later, on September 15, three 58s worked their first trains on the drags, with 58020 *Doncaster Works*, then 58005 and finally 58011 all appearing.

Another day of emergency drags came about on December 1, with 58032 working for the first time alongside 58001/003/012. ▶

No. 58006 inside Toton depot on August 12, 1984, with F&W Railtours 'Paxman Collier 1'. With the tour stating at Plymouth, No. 58006 drew the charter train into the depot from Stapleford & Sandiacre before working the special back to Birmingham. GEOFF GRIFFITHS

Another cross-country rescue by a Class 58. No.58017 waits time at Leamington on August 22, 1998, working 1O38, the 09.10 Edinburgh-Bournemouth. The 'bone' took over from a Class 86/2 at Birmingham, returning north with the 18.14 Bournemouth-Birmingham New Street. This was a common freight loco working as, at the time, Saltley depot was short of Class 47/8s. ANDY FLOWERS

Another debutant was on December 12 when 58022 took over the 06.50 Liverpool-Poole after 47537 failed at Leamington. Naturally, it came off at Reading

The first 58 to work in 1986 was a first-timer; 58027 appeared in the drags on January 26. A week later, 58033 did the same, working alongside 58019.

A loco that was to prove elusive over the years was 58017, but on February 25 it came to the assistance of the 07.30 Penzance-Glasgow at Cheltenham, and worked to Birmingham – a first up the Lickey Incline.

Failures also saw 58038 and then 58037 work for the first time. The former took over the 09.45 Glasgow-Poole at Fenny Compton and worked to Reading on March 18, while three days later 58037 assisted the 06.45 York-Portsmouth from Banbury, and was replaced at Reading.

The first passenger working by 58029 was on June 1, when it took the 15.40 Euston-Shrewsbury forward from Wolverhampton and returned on the 19.37 Shrewsbury-Euston. Earlier, 58035 also worked its first trains on the Nuneaton drags. The following Saturday was a high-mileage day for 58037, when it took the 08.30 Liverpool-Poole from Birmingham to Reading. It went back on the 11.40 Poole-Liverpool before handling the 19.05 Liverpool-Paddington to Birmingham.

A weekend of shenanigans continued on the Sunday, with 58034 *Bassetlaw* working the 23.50 (previous night) Glasgow-Bristol from Stafford to Birmingham, piloting 47599. This train was frequently piloted when diverted via Cannock as the heavy load could cause the Class 47 to slip to a stand on Rugeley bank. Anyone having just enjoyed 58034 then could have sampled 58013/040 on the drags. No. 58020 also worked three overnight drags between Nuneaton and Rugby.

An unusual working came the way of 58033 on June 12, when it took the 07.26 Taunton-Inverness from Birmingham in place of an electric loco, but was replaced at Crewe. Railtour work for 58008 on June 29 saw it work from Nottingham to Stainforth and back to Toton.

Having completed a 'drag', probably from Nuneaton, No. 58028 and 87005 stand at Birmingham New Street on July 7, 1985, with the 58 about to be uncoupled. COLOUR RAIL

Another cross-country turn came on July 26 with 58025 pressed into last-minute action when the 08.40 Liverpool-Paignton needed a diesel from Birmingham; it was replaced at Bristol. Hertfordshire Railtours secured the first working by 58039 *Rugeley Power Station* on September 20 from King's Cross to Skegness and Cleethorpes.

On November 9, not only was 58002 the Cannock pilot, but 58044 was used for five drags – the first time it worked. Two weeks later, on November 23, 58043 broke its duck as the Cannock pilot, and then seven days later 58046 did likewise. In between, 58030 worked its first train, dragging the 20.20 Wolverhampton-Euston on the 28th. It then appeared on some more accessible turns between Birmingham-Nuneaton two days later, while 1986 drew to a close with yet another newbie – 58045 – on the Cannock pilot on December 14.

If you were prepared to put the effort in and had the information in advance, the winter of 1986 enabled people to 'scratch' in a lot of 58s, so much so that by the end of the year, just 58031/036/042/047-050 had yet to appear on a passenger train.

But in 1987, dragging turns and Cannock pilot jobs dramatically reduced. That said, on March 15 No. 58038 was provided for a full day's dragging. March 27 saw an incident on the WCML which saw 58044 taking the 09.25 Manchester-Dover forward from Coventry, being diverted via Reading. However, it was replaced at Oxford.

Not far behind was 58032 on the 11.27 Wolverhampton-Euston, also diverted into Paddington. Finally, 58038 took the 13.00 Liverpool-Euston from Nuneaton but diverted into St Pancras.

Another view of a drag between Birmingham and Nuneaton as No. 58009 passes Whitacre Junction on March 31, 1985, with the 09.57 Wolverhampton-London Euston. JOHN WHITEHOUSE

For a few days, Class 58s were used on a diagram between Birmingham and Cambridge, hauling Regional Railways stock. On September 7, 1992, No. 58009 slows for the station call at Leicester with the 10.50 Cambridge-Birmingham New Street duty. CHRIS MILNER

The first working for 58049 *Littleton Colliery* came on March 29 on the drags while a week later, April 4, saw 58008 on the Cannock pilot and 58020/043 on the drags. More emergency dragging came two days later, which saw 58001/008/043 all working one-way trips to Nuneaton, while April 29 saw 58041 do one trip.

At sectorisation, all 58s were allocated to the Railfreight business, which started to see their passenger work reduce; if InterCity wanted to use a 58, it had it pay for the privilege. However, there was still a need to get the job done and when incidents occurred it was all hands on deck, regardless of sector.

So, on May 17, 1987, when the WCML was closed and all Euston to Birmingham trains ran via Nuneaton, seven Class 58s were in use! The highlight was a debut for 58031 but 58003/010/023/024/029/044 were also in action.

Railtour work on June 26 saw 58042 *Ironbridge Power Station* work from Shrewsbury to Aintree and back to Toton, where it gave way to 58031 for the leg to Birmingham. Two days later, 58040/045 were used on emergency drags while 58035/043 both had a couple of drags on July 19.

The odd rescue mission, hire-in or drag continued in the latter half of 1987, while on October 24, 58002 was used on Corby to Kettering specials.

Late November suddenly saw a renaissance of 58s appearing on the Nuneaton drags: 58034 did one trip on November 15, but the following weekend 58002/005/015 were all out, as were 58001/011/016/047 a week later, 58047 working its first train. December 6 saw 58025 drag three times.

After an absence of many months, the Cannock pilot provided employment for 58008 on December 13, a job covered by 58014 a week later, while the next day, December 14, 58025 was used for a drag from Birmingham to Rugby and another from Coventry to Rugby.

When 50034 *Furious* failed at Leamington with the 11.17 Paddington-Birmingham on December 15, 58009 came to its aid. This concluded 1987's passenger activity, which left just three to appear: 58036/048 and test bed 58050 *Toton Traction Depot*.

Less work

The start of 1988 saw a few instances of 58s being hired for dragging: 58035 on January 17, and 58009/016 the following weekend.

The 07.20 Glasgow Central-Penzance enjoyed Class 58 power three times in five weeks in February/March. The first occasion was on February 10, when 58016 rescued the train at Kings Norton and went to Bristol.

Two weeks later, on the 24th, the same loco worked from Birmingham to Gloucester, while the third instance was on March 17, when 58043 went from Birmingham to Bristol. The same day, 58045 worked Wolverhampton to Shrewsbury and back.

After another lengthy break, the Cannock pilot turn was treated to 58022 on May 1. Later that day, 58048 worked its first train when it took the 13.36 Birmingham-Glasgow to Crewe via Cannock. Two days later, 58022/031/037 were all used on emergency drags, while 58028 did likewise on May 8. On May 28, 58026 was provided for a 10.00 Derby-Bristol relief.

There was rare ECML haulage on June 25, when 58010 rescued the 13.00 King's Cross-Aberdeen at Doncaster and hauled it to Newcastle – an unusual working. When 47436 suffered low power at Leamington on the 19.30 Poole-Birmingham on July 8, 58006 piloted it to its destination.

The next few months saw another collection of unplanned drags and failures with 58006/007/009/012/017/028 involved, but the next working of note was on September 1 when 58001 took over the 20.13 York-Bristol at Birmingham.

On September 13, 58017 took the 14.07 Shrewsbury-Euston from Coventry and diverted into Paddington. No. 58004 got to Euston on September 21 on the 12.48 from Birmingham, presumably because an electric loco failed.

There was an unusual 56/58 combination on September 24 when 58014 *Didcot Power Station* and 56023 worked a Woking-Romsey-Waterloo charter to Basingstoke. The next day, 58007 was on the drags and heralded a sudden upturn in 58s on these trains.

October 2 saw 58006/011 on drags, while the following weekend 58019 dragged the 11.35 Euston-Witton football special from Nuneaton.

A trio of 'bones' were on the drags on October 16 – 58010/011/015 – and while none were used for the next two weekends, on November 6, six locos appeared: 58003/005/014/015/007/021, followed by just 58001 the following weekend. The Nuneaton drags then ended for a while, only to reappear again – in lesser numbers – in the spring of 1989.

Three 58s found passenger work between Birmingham and Stafford on February 19, with 58004/011/013 all working InterCity trains and 58001 used for one drag from Birmingham to Nuneaton. Diversions into Paddington happened again on February 23, with 58010/011/014 all used.

By this time, the East Midlands 58s – allocated to the FEBN pool – were rarer for passenger work, but 58033 was on hand to assist the 17.50 Paddington-Wolverhampton at Leamington on February 28 after 47618 failed; the train was terminated at Birmingham.

When 50037 *Illustrious* failed at Coventry on March 16 on the 14.41 Birmingham-Paddington, 58007 took the train forward.

Unless you happened to be on the train at the time, few would have enjoyed 58036 working its first passenger train when it rescued the 18.13 Wolverhampton-Paddington at Fenny Compton and took it to Oxford on April 24.

Another unplanned Class 58 working on 'table 116' came three days later, when 58011 took over the 06.41 Wolverhampton-Poole at Birmingham and worked to Reading.

Having already assisted the 12.40 Euston-Birmingham at Rugby and taken it to Coventry, 58006 ran round and worked the 15.10 Coventry-Euston on May 17. Two days later, 58023 recovered the 09.00 Poole-Newcastle at Leamington.

Last man standing

On May 21, the final Class 58 yet to work a passenger train did so. No. 58050 had spent much of its early days being monitored by the Railway Technical Centre evaluating its 'Separately Excited' traction motors, meaning it was not used on day-to-day workings. ▶

The class has visited several London termini and on May 21, 1989, the final Class 58, No. 58050, departs St Pancras station on 'InterCity' day, promoted by Hertfordshire Rail Tours. It involved seven return trains running between the capital and Leicester using a variety of motive power. KEN BRUNT

The class quickly became popular for railtour haulage. Here No. 58014 passes Hinckley on July 15, 1984, with the Severnside Tours 'South Yorkshireman' from Cardiff to Cleethorpes. The 58 worked between Birmingham and Sheffield. FERNDALE MEDIA

Arriving at Ruddington on the Great Central main line is No. 58016 heading the 'Oil Leake' tour on May 6, 2000, topping-and-tailing with No. 56131. Just 10 Class 58s gained EWS livery. CHRIS MILNER

When this experiment was complete, the loco joined the FEBN pool and was requested by Hertfordshire Railtours to take part in its InterCity Diesel day, working the 15.20 Leicester-St Pancras via Oakham and 18.45 return. So, all 50 Class 58s had now hauled passenger trains.

On August 8, 58013 took the 09.08 Plymouth-Glasgow from Birmingham and it was to be Warrington Bank Quay before a more suitable loco replaced it. By now, 58s on Nuneaton drags were pretty rare, though 58013 was used on September 3 for one run.

October 22 saw 58014 took over the 15.20 Manchester-Paddington at Birmingham but only got to Birmingham International before it failed. Assistance came from 58015!

The first 58 workings of note in 1990 were on January 25, when 58005 and 58017 both worked into Paddington on diverted Euston trains with just the latter returning north. Nos. 58006/015 were engaged on dragging on January 29.

A long-distance trip was on February 20, when 58007 worked the 06.40 Poole-Manchester – albeit starting at Southampton – to Birmingham.

Six days later, 58012/015 made it to Euston, the former on the 06.00 Carlisle-Euston from Wolverhampton, while the latter took over the previous night's 21.15 Inverness-Euston from Coventry and came back on the 15.40 Euston-Aberystwyth to Rugby.

Class cleared?

Although it had worked once before, everyone needed 58036 for 'haulage', and for those keen to get all their 58s in their haulage books early on, it was their last one.

That was solved on March 3 when the loco piloted 47456 on the 08.25 Leeds-Carlisle and 12.42 return, hired by Provincial Railways to boost S&C patronage.

On March 21, 58001 took over the 07.13 Aberystwyth-Euston at Coventry and worked into Paddington. It came back out on the 11.18 Paddington-Birmingham. Nos. 58003 and 58014 both worked Paddington diversions on April 8, the same day seeing 58048 take charge of the 12.50 Holyhead-Euston at Nuneaton and working into St Pancras. It came back on the 19.12 St Pancras-Holyhead, all the way to Crewe.

Railtour work occupied 58033 and 58045 (St Pancras to Coalville and back) on June 6 and 58004 on July 1 (Birmingham to Bristol), with 58001/008 working in between – on June 28 – on unplanned drags

More long-distance off-region work came the way of 58009 on July 17, on the 0752 Swansea-York from Birmingham to Leeds where the delayed train was terminated, and the loco ran round to work back to Sheffield.

Three days later, 58003 got a rare run from Birmingham to Bristol on the 09.18 Manchester-Plymouth. Drags for 58015 on August 12 and 58013 the following Sunday showed the locos could still occasionally appear on this work.

Cross-country rescues

Lightning struck twice for CrossCountry on October 13 when firstly the 08.40 Poole-Edinburgh failed at Leamington and needed 58007 to get the train to Birmingham, and then later, the 17.10 Poole-Manchester failed just after leaving Leamington and needed 58026 to assist to Birmingham.

A few railtours featured double-headed 58s. On August 11, 1991, a special day of freight locos workings operated between Crewe and Llandudno as part of the Trainload Coal motive power day. Here Nos. 58007 leads 58003 past Holywell on the way to Llandudno. GAVIN MORRISON

Two days later, 58010 helped out on when the 10.40 Poole-Glasgow failed Wolverhampton; the 58 getting to Preston. The odd drag by 58011 and a Birmingham to Gloucester run for 58002 on December 12 wrapped up the year.

The new year of 1991 was only six days old when 58005/006 appeared on drags to Nuneaton. The first failure to need the help of a 58 was on February 18, when 58036 assisted the 15.40 Poole-Manchester from Leamington to Birmingham. The next 58 working of any kind was another rescue when, on April 20, 58008 saw that the 07.16 Penzance-Glasgow Central got on the move from Bromsgrove and took it to Birmingham.

The last of the class worked only its second passenger train on May 5, when 58050 assisted the 13.44 Birmingham-York from Tamworth to Derby.

May 31 saw a – by now very rare – 58 piloting via Cannock when 58006 took the 09.44 Glasgow Central-Plymouth from Stafford to Birmingham. It was not alone, as 58010 piloted the 07.26 Edinburgh-Birmingham and 58011 did likewise on the 09.18 Manchester-Plymouth.

June saw a number of notable 58 workings with 58009 (on June 7) and 58001 (June 22), both reaching Paddington. In between (June 21), 58001 took the 06.18 Manchester-Plymouth from Birmingham to Bristol. The first two 58s both assisted trains in the West Midlands on June 24, while on June 30 a full day's dragging saw 58001/003/007/009/012 used.

Reading to Birmingham allowed 99 miles of mileage behind 58006 on July 5 when it took over the 14.20 Brighton-Manchester, and two days later 58009/010 both did emergency drags.

A railtour from Denby Colliery to St Pancras occupied 58042 on July 28 and similar work was done by 58029/047 on August 10 from Derby to Crewe, while the following day 58003/007 worked from Crewe to Llandudno and back, giving way to 58029/047 at Crewe for the run back to Derby.

August 28 saw 58005 work in to Paddington and 58001 work out on diverted trains.

58040 *Cottam Power Station* was warmly received when it spent a day top-and-tailing with 56007 on Worksop to Chesterfield shuttles for an open day on September 1, reversing at Elmton & Creswell Junction.

Likewise, Laira Open Day on September 15 brought 58027/041 from Paddington and they returned to Manchester. The year closed with 58042 working a railtour from St Pancras to Ramsgate via Dover on December 21.

Getting rarer

The year 1992 was when 58s started to become rarer on passenger trains. It wasn't until March 1 when one appeared, although it was worth the wait as 58010 worked the 15.35 Birmingham-York and 19.00 York-Bristol.

April 11 saw 58026/039 on a Sheffield-Cleethorpes Regional Railways special train while two weeks later No. 58009 worked a charter from Southport to Manchester Victoria.

September 6 saw 58034/050 on a Leicester to Nottingham charter but the following day was to see the start of two weeks of unexpected service train work when Regional Railways reverted to loco and stock for some trains.

The usual turn was the 06.48 Birmingham-Cambridge and 10.50 return and between September 7 and September 11, these trains were worked by 58009, 58016, 58038 and 58016 twice more.

November 28 saw railtour work take 58044 *Oxcroft Opencast* to Deepcar, while the next day 58008 did three emergency drags.

A similar trend followed for the next few years, with the occasional failure, emergency drag or diversion, and an increased number of railtours. 58s also started to be used on more work aside from coal trains, and also in Southern England and West Yorkshire. Therefore, passenger workings reduced considerably; the odd failure and occasional drag, but even these were much rarer than before.

Railtours increased, often taking 58s to unusual places, such as 58002/020 to Paignton on June 19. On September 9, 58005/012 worked to West Burton and 58032/037 worked from King's Cross to Worksop, while on November 20, 58049 top-and-tailed with 47833 to Saltend and Silverwood Colliery.

In 1994, only one 58 was recorded on a service train, on November 1 when 58031 assisted the 06.15 Leeds-King's Cross from Stoke Tunnel to Peterborough after 91010 failed.

Other than that, all other workings were on railtours, with 58008 working from Wakefield to Sheffield on February 20, the first trip of the year.

On March 18, 58011 *Worksop Depot* worked a special to Ayr and other 58 charters were: 58037 Bedford to Leicester (April 2); 58021 Worcester to Moreton-in-Marsh (May 22); 58025 Blackburn to Sheffield (July 9); 58034 Derby to Doncaster (July 10); 58046 Crewe to Chester (August 21); 58019 Manchester to Hooton via Northwich (September 19); 58043 Leicester to Derby (October 2); 58030 Coventry to Stafford (November 20); and 58038 Dollands Moor to Waterloo (December 11). In between, 58049 starred at the Nene Valley Railway's diesel gala on October 8/9.

Only five workings were recorded for 58s the following year, including 58031 from Cambridge to Peterborough on February 26, ▶

"The year 1992 was when 58s started to become rarer on passenger trains. It wasn't until March 1 when one appeared, although it was worth the wait as 58010 worked Birmingham to York and back to Bristol."

58028 from Swindon to Clapham Junction on December 17, with 58022 on the return from Reading to Bristol, and finally 58023 from Tonbridge to London Bridge via Hastings on December 30.

February 1996 saw the fleet change ownership to EWS and it was mostly railtours so far as Class 58s on passenger trains were concerned – although 58029 (January 24) and 58036 (November 12) both assisted failed InterCity trains.

On July 13, 1996, 58033 worked a charter from Nottingham to Birmingham. Other notable 58 charters that year were 58011 from Bristol to Preston on September 14, 58002/046 from Retford to Aberdeen and back on September 21, and 58005 from Stratford-on-Avon to Guildford on December 14.

By 1997, Class 58 working service trains were few and far between, and mostly because of failures. For example, on February 9 when 58036 came to the aid of 47810 at Norton Bridge on the 09.17 Manchester-Poole, it only worked to Birmingham.

Use on charters increased, and one charter got four different 58s on March 15. The train set off from Reading behind 58024 but it failed at Coventry. No. 37680 assisted to Nuneaton, when 58003 *Markham Colliery* replaced it. At Toton, 58044 took over for the run to Sheffield, while 58006 handled the Nuneaton to Reading leg.

Other tours in 1997 were: 58015 from Eastleigh to Portsmouth Harbour on June 21; 58035/037 Worksop to Paignton on July 26; 58024 Victoria to Bedford on August 16; 58018 Rugby to Wembley Yard on September 20; and 58042 Swindon to Coventry and 58026 back on December 13.

The uses of 58s on failed trains of note that year included 58022 on the 08.30 Birmingham International-Bangor to Crewe on June 26 after 37415 failed, and a couple of ECML rescue missions after 91s failed, while on September 1, 58014 handled Virgin's 20.00 Birmingham-Derby.

Another pair, Nos. 58033 and 58045, were used on Pathfinder Tours 'The Bone Breaker', which ran between Crewe and Walton-on-the-Naze on August 26, 2000, and are seen at Small Heath, Birmingham. JOHN WHITEHOUSE

A last drag

On January 2, 1998, 58049 dragged the 10.45 Euston-Wolverhampton from Nuneaton to Birmingham, the last time a 58 did a drag. It worked back on the 13.34 Birmingham-Euston.

A week later, the same loco rescued the 06.32 Sheffield-St Pancras at Long Eaton and hauled the HST to Leicester. On February 28, 58022 worked a railtour from Birmingham to Shrewsbury via Maindee.

CrossCountry work came the way of a few Class 58s in 1998. On March 29, 58046 *Asfordby Mine* worked the 13.03 Poole-York to Birmingham and a few days later, on April 6, 58001 piloted 47841 from Birmingham on the 16.43 York-Bristol. The following day, the same loco worked the 20.00 Birmingham-Derby. A shortage of 47s again saw 58012 handle the 06.45 Derby-Birmingham on April 20.

Railtour work occupied 58030 on June 13 from Redditch to Leicester. The following Sunday, June 21, 58044 was hired by Virgin to work the 12.06 Paddington-Glasgow to Birmingham and the 16.28 Glasgow-Paddington back.

The next Saturday, 58039/047 worked from Worksop to Weymouth on the Worksop Open Day Committee charter, while July 4

On familiar ground, No. 58025 passes Thoresby Colliery Junction signalbox on February 12, 2000, hauling the 'Dukeries Collier' tour, a top-and-tailed tour promoted by Pathfinder which visited a number of colliery branches in Nottinghamshire. ROBIN STEWART-SMITH

An open day at Worksop depot on September 1, 1991, featured No. 58040 working top-and-tail with 56007 on specials between Doncaster, Worksop and Elmton & Creswell, from where the train has just arrived. Normally Worksop station is less busy! ROBIN STEWART-SMITH

saw 58049 work from Swindon to Crewe and 58018 handled the reverse leg.

An amazing Virgin hire occurred on August 22 when 58017 *Eastleigh Depot* worked the 09.10 Edinburgh-Bournemouth from Birmingham and returned on the 18.14 Bournemouth-Manchester. Five days later, Virgin hired in 58015 to take the 18.05 Euston-Shrewsbury from Wolverhampton. This train was worked by 58040 on October 6.

Toton open weekend on August 29/30 saw lots of railtours, with the Saturday seeing 58028 work from Finsbury Park and 58047 returning. No. 58029 worked from Exeter, and 58032 worked back as far as Saltley. The following day, 58041 worked a Toton-Salisbury charter from Birmingham International.

Railtour work befell 58045 on September 26 from Basingstoke to Paddington, while 58021 joined 56116 to work from Stafford to Sheffield via Mansfield on December 12.

The rundown begins

The new year of 1999 was a mix of short-distance failures and charters for Class 58s, but it was also the start of the fleet's rundown; in April, 58017 was withdrawn.

May 1 saw 58010 handle a Yeovil Pen Mill-Lincoln charter from Acton, running via Spalding. June 19 saw 58001 with 56098 on a Bristol to Goole charter from Toton to Worksop, while the Worksop charter on July 10 took 58016/048 from Retford to Dunfermline and back to Retford via the S&C.

By the end of the year, 20 of the fleet had been withdrawn and this rapid elimination saw their demand for charters rise further. February 12 saw 58025/043 used for a trip around colliery lines in Nottinghamshire and two weeks later, 58036 worked from Bristol to Sheffield.

April 1 saw 58005 work from Watford Junction to Crewe, while on May 6, 58016 was used for another East Midlands freight line tour. The WODC annual jolly went to South Wales on July 1 with 58024/037.

By this time, working on service trains other than failures was rare but on July 26, 58005 worked Virgin's 06.05 Bristol-York from Derby and returned on the 14.06 York-Bristol to Birmingham. Others on tours that year were 58002 from Derby to Deepcar on September 23, and 58047 on December 16 from Derby to Banbury.

During 2000, withdrawals slowed a little, with just nine more locos laid up, so the active fleet stood at 21 locos.

Railtours took 58050 from Kettering to Toton on April 21 and 58045 from Ely to Lowestoft on May 12.

There were three workings in four days for Virgin in June. The first was on June 2, when 58026 worked the 09.18 Brighton-Edinburgh from Reading to Birmingham. Two days later, 58047 hauled a failed HST on the 12.20 Bournemouth-Edinburgh to Reading and then on June 5, 58020 handled the 05.50 Bournemouth-Glasgow from Didcot to Birmingham.

Unbeknown at the time, the last time a 58 worked a service train was on August 6 when 58042 rescued the 17.13 Euston-Wolverhampton at Weedon.

Thereafter it was only charter train work; September 14 saw 58037 work Newport to Crewe with 58050 returning from Crewe and the following weekend 58025 worked from Swindon to York.

A trip for which a 58 was not requested was on October 20, when 58047 visited various freight lines in the Southampton area, top-and-tailing with 73110/136 to Fawley, Furzebrook and Hamworthy. A week later, 58030 worked from Westbury to Taunton via Exeter. December 1 saw 58049 work from King's Cross to Peterborough, and finally, on December 15, 58029 was in action from Acton Yard to Nuneaton via High Wycombe.

The final months

The last year of EWS Class 58 activity was 2002, and the 19 survivors were used on a number of charters, including some farewell tours.

No. 58020 was in use on January 12 from Kingsbury to Wolverhampton, only to fail and be replaced by 60076. It fared better on February 2, working from Toton to Lincoln via Shirebrook. The next train wasn't until May 11, when 58029 and 56065 worked from Wembley to Bescot. June 9 saw 58033 work Yeovil Junction to Eastleigh, while June 22 was the turn of 58043 to work from Peterborough to Finsbury Park.

With the class now on borrowed time, there were a couple of really rare track trips for the 58s. The problem was… they were on the same day!

Pathfinder's annual Mazey Day train on June 9 took a 58 to Penzance for the first time: 58021 *Hither Green Depot* working from Birmingham. Sadly, it would not restart, so was dragged to Plymouth by 47811 and dumped there while the train returned to Birmingham.

While this was going on, 58025/045 were working from Worksop to Blair Atholl and back via Edinburgh.

July 13 saw 58024 work a Spalding to Finsbury Park charter from Peterborough to Colchester, while a few days later, on the 19th, 58024 worked from Newport to Crewe.

By late August, just five remained in traffic – 58020/024/033/045/047 – and on August 26, 58033/045 set off from Crewe on the 'Bone Breaker' charter to Walton-on-Naze. On arrival at their destination, the train failed to stop in time and hit the buffers at low speed. There were no injuries, but the return trip was cancelled.

That left the farewell train to run a week later, on September 1, with 58024 leaving King's Cross with the 'Bone Idol' to Skegness.

After a short break, 58024 worked to Toton, where 58020 took charge for the final leg back to London – and that was it. By September 4, the fleet had ended it life in the UK.

The Class 58s enjoyed an incredibly short working life with BR and EWS, but the new Class 66s meant they were always on borrowed time.

Several locos were later hired abroad to Spain, France and the Netherlands, and railtours in 2007 and 2008 provided work for 58038 and 58039. But it's now been more than 18 years since a 50 worked a passenger train in the UK! ■

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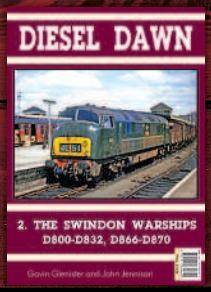

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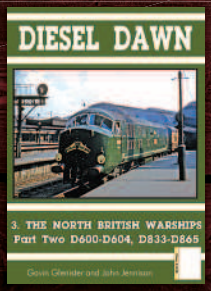

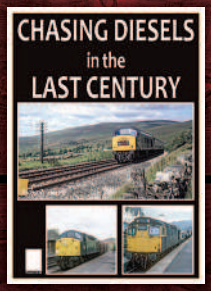

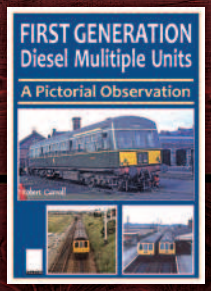

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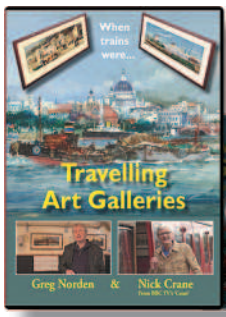

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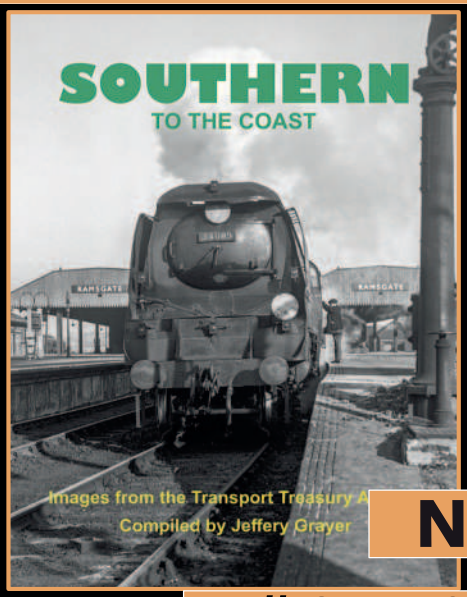

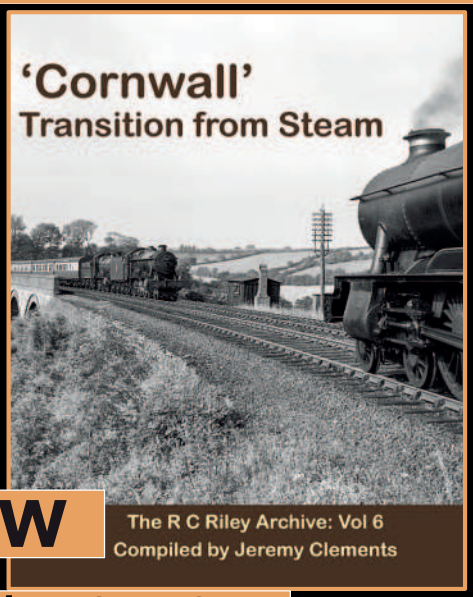

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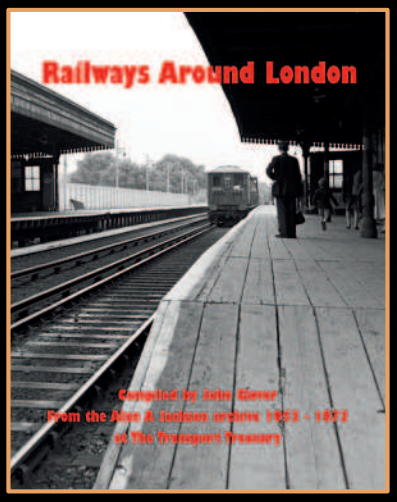

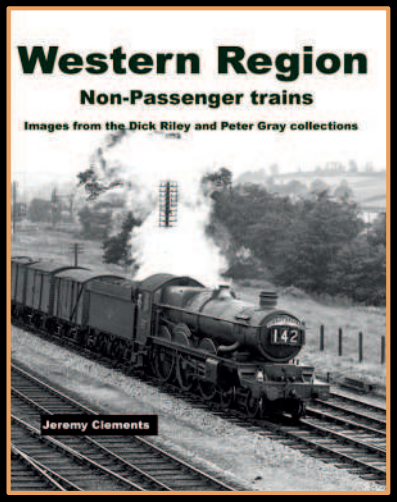

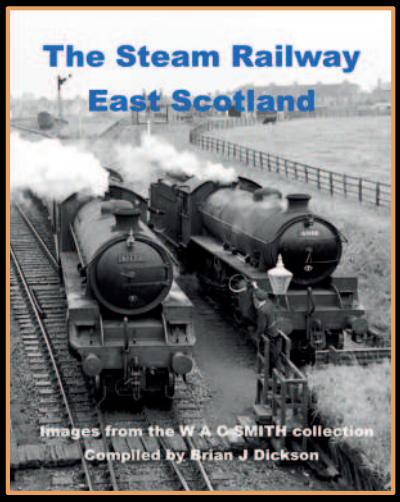

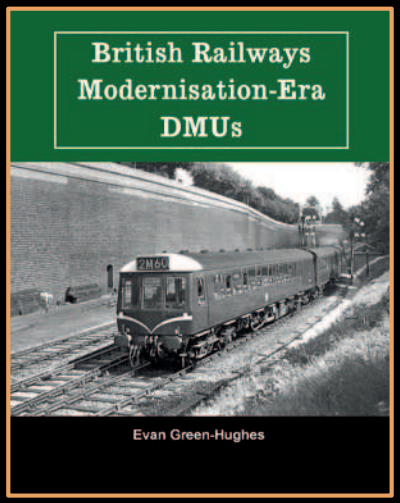

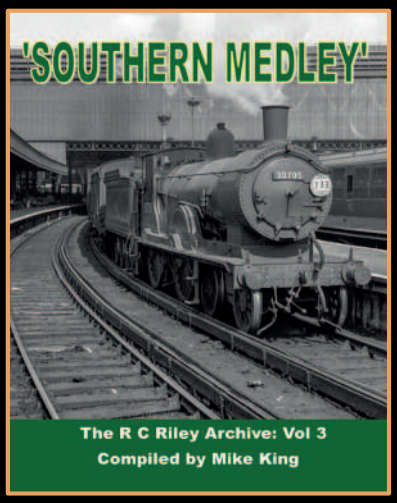

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FIRST CITY FLYERS

In this month's Practice and Performance, John Heaton FCILT analyses some of the fastest commuter services from London termini to stations accessible using Oyster cards.

PICTURE any London terminal in the rush hour as commuters cram on board a series of departing trains. Which of the passengers has been smart, or lucky, enough to pick the right suburb to give the fastest journey to work?

Finding a universally acceptable definition for the 'fastest commuter service' could prove controversial, so this survey has used those stations that appear on the February 2019 London Rail and Tube services map for which an Oyster Card is valid.

When this article was first planned, it was the intention to base research on the December 2018 to May 2019 timetable and reassess the figures in the light of the timetable in force at the time of publication, but Covid-19 has since taken its grip.

Railway travel is a 'derived demand' that reflects the economy in which it operates. Both are in a state of flux, so the original figures from February 2019 have been retained which might, by accident, also coincide with the zenith of London commuting.

The Railway Performance Society (RPS) keeps abreast of the fastest services on the national network thanks mainly to the efforts of Jeremy Hartill tracking developments, but London-based RPS publicity officer Baard Covington has undertaken extensive work to establish the winner of the title 'London's Fastest Commuter Service'.

If we turn back the clock, London commuting was chiefly into a suitable terminus near to the financial institutions of the City, but the business world and transport infrastructure has evolved since then. As a result, many new commuting destinations, such as Stratford, lie outside the central zone 1.

Zonal system

Most London stations fall within Oyster fare zones 1-6 but as the zonal system has developed, stations on the extensive Metropolitan line run into as many as nine.

Some train operating companies have widened Oyster availability beyond even the standard 1-9 fare zone area, with special fares applicable but – crucially – retaining a daily maximum price cap. Greater Anglia now includes Shenfield and Broxbourne, plus stations to Hertford East, and London & North Western (LNWR) has incorporated Watford Junction. Southern/Thameslink stations from Merstham to Gatwick Airport also accept Oyster at special fares with the daily price cap, as do South Western Railway/ Southern at Epsom.

Transfer of GWR London to Reading services to TfL in advance of integration into Elizabeth Line 'Crossrail' services saw stations from Hanwell to Reading join the London Rail services map for the first time, but limited to contactless use, surprisingly not Oyster, and without the daily price cap. Similarly, Thameslink services from St Albans to Luton Airport also now appear on the map, but again are limited solely to contactless use, along with East Coast Main Line suburban stations from Brookman's Park to Welwyn Garden City.

By February 2021, the London Rail and Tube Map encompassed Heathrow Airport,

Southern Electrostar units Nos. 377470 and 377433 arrive at Redhill with 1R46, the 16.39 London Victoria to Reigate on September 13, 2019.
JAMIE SQUIBBS

Radlett, Potter's Bar, and stations from Cuffley to Hertford North, with some locations being outside the fare zones but with special fares and daily price cap. The February 2019 map and timetable remains the survey's baseline.

It seems anomalous that commuters can travel from Hertford North to Moorgate using contactless and Oyster with a daily price cap, but that the latter two facilities are not available at Welwyn Garden City or Hatfield on the main line – a similar distance from Moorgate.

Top 16

Analysis concentrated first on the question of the fastest average speed between any two Oyster Card stations, the Top 16 being shown in Table 1. Only four of these feature London termini. The Paddington to Heathrow Terminals 2 and 3 is surprisingly down in 15th place, but even that beats the Class 395s on the St Pancras to Stratford International leg, despite the 140mph nominal maximum permissible speed. In fact, the 6min timing for the 5.75 miles yields an average speed of only 57.5mph.

Sad to relate, the RPS has received only three logs that have beaten this timing, out of 108 recorded runs. Admittedly, it is timetabling protocol to round schedules down at the start of a journey. The fastest so far recorded is 5min 43sec, but my best effort is 6min 05sec (Table 2).

Readers might wonder how a speed reading was obtained ▶

TABLE 1: LONDON'S FASTEST AVERAGE SPEEDS BETWEEN STATIONS IN THE OYSTER CARD AREA

Company	From	To	Miles	Mins	Ave MPH	Max MPH	Efficiency*
LNWR	Euston	Watford Jct FL	17.45	13.5	77.6	110.00	70.51
LNWR	Wembley Central	Watford Jct SL	9.37	8	70.3	90.00	78.08
TL	Gatwick A	East Croydon	16.32	14	69.9	90.00	77.71
LNWR	Euston	Watford Jct SL	17.45	15	69.8	90.00	77.56
GA	Stratford	Shenfield	16.18	14	69.3	90.00	77.05
GA	Tottenham Hale	Cheshunt	8.05	7.5	64.4	80.00	80.50
GA	Tottenham Hale	Enfield Lock	5.81	5.5	63.4	80.00	79.23
GA	Stratford	Romford	8.37	8	62.8	90.00	69.75
GA	Romford	Shenfield	7.81	7.5	62.5	90.00	69.42
c2c	Barking	Upminster	7.73	7.5	61.8	75.00	82.45
LNWR	Harrow & W	Bushey	4.61	4.5	61.5	75.00	81.96
SN	Victoria	Gatwick A	26.75	27	59.4	90.00	66.05
GA	Northumberland P	Enfield Lock	4.9	5	58.8	80.00	73.50
c2c	Upminster	Barking	7.73	8	58.0	75.00	77.30
GWR	Paddington	Heathrow Terminals 2 & 3	14.51	15	58.0	100.00	58.04
SE	St Pancras	Stratford International	5.75	6	57.5	140.00	41.07

*Efficiency=Ave/Max speed %

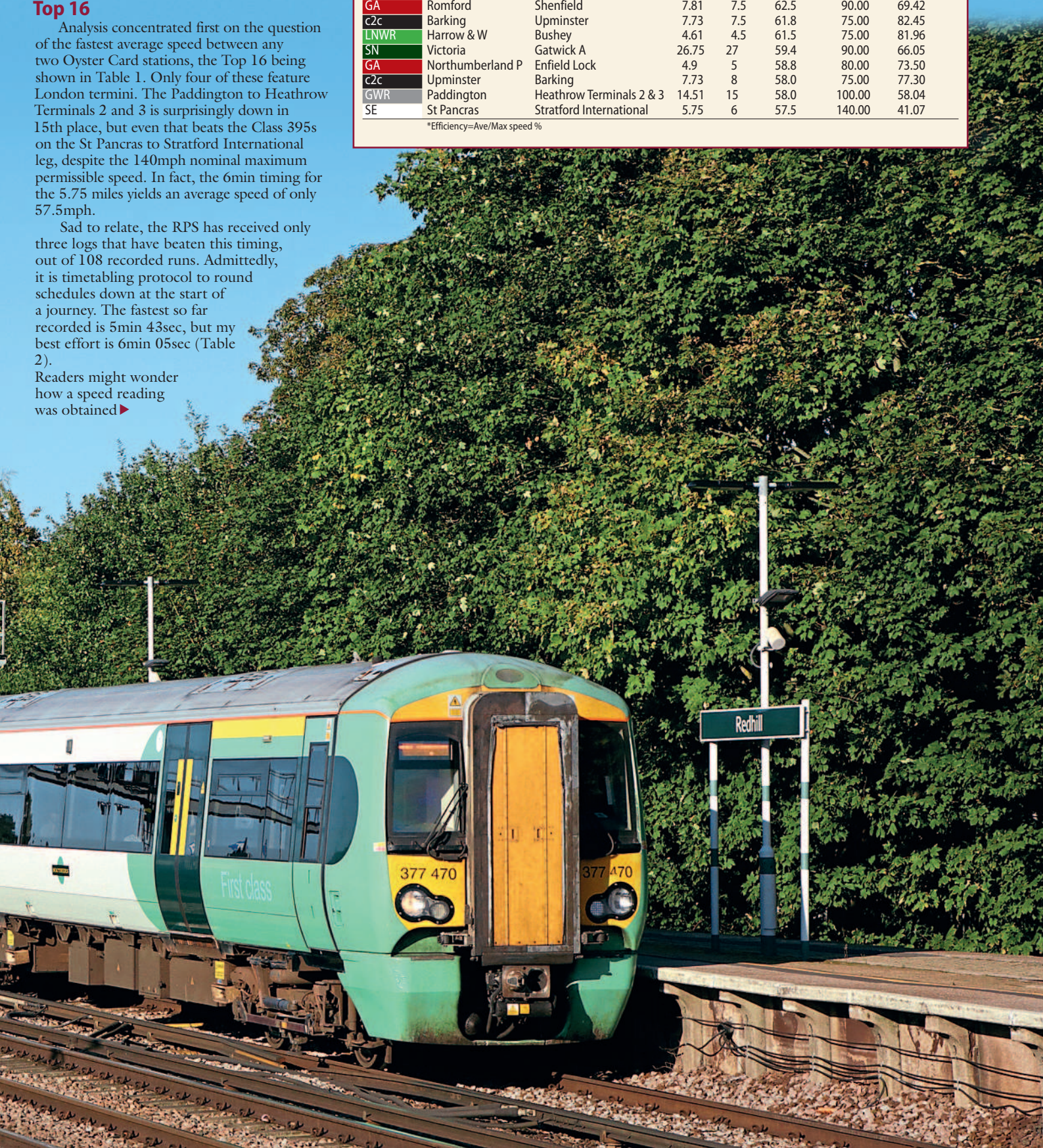

TABLE 2: ST PANCRAS INTERNATIONAL TO STRATFORD INTERNATIONAL

Unit	395014
Load	6/276/285
Train	10.42 St Pan I-Margate
Date	February 6, 2010
Recorder/Position	J Heaton 1st of 6

Km	Miles	Timing Point	WTT	M S	KM/H	M P H
0.00	0.00	ST PANCRAS I d	0	0 00	T -/40	-/25
1.11	0.69	London T No.1 NP	1½	1 42	53/175	33/109
8.76	5.44	London T No.1 SP		5 18	80	50
9.25	5.75	STRATFORD I a	6	6 05		

Left: The NSE livery with white cab roof suited the Class 319s when they were clean! Set No. 319183 arrives at East Croydon on April 18, 1993, with the 12.56 Bedford to Brighton train. CHRIS MILNER

TABLE 3: BARKING TO UPMINSTER

Unit/Loco		357224			Class 302s 277+262			42502		
Load*		4/158/170			8/314/-			11/285/300/392		
Train		16.10 Fenchurch S-Shoeburyness			14.42 Fen St-Shoe'ness			13.15 Fen St-Shoe'ness		
Date		April 20, 2002			March 2, 1988			December 16, 1961		
Recorder/Position		L Allsopp 2nd of 4			P M Smith			J Wrottesley		
Miles	**Timing Point**	**Sch**	**M S**	**Ave M P H**	**Sch**	**M S**	**Ave M P H**	**Sch**	**M S**	**Ave M P H**
0.00	BARKING d	0	0 00	T	0	0 00		0	0 00	5½L
0.96	Upney		1 11	50.5		1 26	40.3			
2.05	Becontree		2 08	60.9		2 31	60.2		3 45	33.2
2.96	Dagenham H		2 51	76.4		3 15	74.7			
3.76	Dagenham E		3 29	74.6		3 55	72.0		5 35	56.0
5.21	Elm Park		4 39	74.6		5 06	73.5			
6.15	Hornchurch		5 24	75.2		5 51	75.0		8 15	53.7
6.95	Upminster Bridge		6 03	76.2		6 33	68.6			
7.73	UPMINSTER a	7½	7 02	45.2	9	7 33	46.5	12	10 30	35.3

* Vehicles/tare/gross/(incl loco)/tonnes

TABLE 4: GATWICK AIRPORT TO EAST CROYDON

Loco		319002			377508		
Load		4/145/150			4/165/-		
Train		12.15 Brighton-Bedford			07.37 Brighton-Bedford		
Date		August 6, 1988			June 7, 2014		
Recorder/Position		B I Nathan			P M Smith 4th of 4		
Miles	**Timing Point**	**WTT**	**M S**	**M P H**	**M S**	**M P H**	
0.00	GATWICK A d	0	0 00	11L	0 00	11L	
0.84	Horley	1½	1 25	-	1 17	-	
4.95	Earlswood	4½	4 43	81/83	4 20	90/80	
8.15	Quarry TSP		7 03	81	6 33	90/89	
13.29	Purley	10½	10 31	94	10 0	90	
15.38	S Croydon	11½	11 53	77	11 34	61	
16.32	EAST CROYDON	14	13 07		13 51		

Schedule is that of the 2014 train

Above: Class 309 'Clacton' EMU No. 309608 makes the call at Chelmsford station with a London Liverpool Street to Clacton working on October 7, 1988. The set was one of three at the time which carried this tri-tone livery, with the sub-brand 'Essex Express' on the bodyside. FERNDALE MEDIA

in a 4.75-mile long tunnel, but the maximum speed shown of 175kph (109mph) is the normal fastest on this Eurostar 230kph (143mph) stretch, as reported by an experienced HS1 route driver.

Back in February 2019 the new suburban electric service pattern to Reading and Heathrow had yet to be fully established and timed for the replacement traction, but the closely spaced stations, relief line bookings and close Oyster Card boundary means there are currently no qualifiers – even with a skip-stop pattern of calling points.

GWR stations Reading and Slough appeared on the London Rail and Tube map in summer 2019 with high-speed services serving both, but the unavailability of Oyster on this stretch excludes both from our survey. The 36 miles from London to Reading take just 22min by 125mph bi-mode trains – a potential table-topping 98mph. These services are available to contactless users but outside peak hours, day return fares are significantly cheaper, especially with a railcard.

Racing ground

The formerly much-maligned London Tilbury & Southend (LT&S) c2c line makes a welcome appearance, with down journeys averaging 61.84mph start-to-stop over the 7.73-mile racing ground from Barking to Upminster. In contrast to some sectional timings, the 7½min schedule can be beaten by almost half a minute with a keen driver and well-maintained set. Table 3 shows one of the modern Class 357 Adtranz units that helped transform this route into the modern era. Having said that, some of these units are now 20 years old.

A small fleet of six 10-car Bombardier Aventra Class 720 units is due to join the c2c fleet from summer 2021 to replace six four-car Class 387s on lease. The new trains' acceleration is superb (0-60mph in 39sec), but a line speed limit of 75mph will reduce their potential.

The Barking-Upminster log shows how the Class 357s can quickly accelerate to 75mph and stay there until time to brake for the station stop. These capable units can reach 60mph in 46sec, whereas the inaugural LT&S Class 302 EMUs (also shown in Table 3) lost ½min to their modern counterparts to reach 75mph but nothing more until the old braking techniques of the LT&S drivers could pull back some of the lead established by their modern counterparts. The Class 357's 7min 2sec run demonstrates how all aspects of the railway

Formally launched into service in September 2003, the Siemens Class 360/1 replaced Class 312 on services out of Liverpool Street to Clacton, Colchester and Ipswich. Here No. 360101 leaves Stratford with a service to Liverpool Street on April 29, 2005, as another set, 360106, heads east with a Harwich Town train. Last month the 360s started passenger services between Corby and St Pancras (see Traction News). CHRIS MILNER

require to be upgraded in concert to maximise investment returns. A 30sec advantage on starting to 75mph does not meet that aspiration, even allowing for the frequent LT&S station stops.

Finally in Table 3, I could not resist including the fastest Barking-Upminster steam run in the RPS archive, achieved by one of the LT&S fleet of Stanier 2-6-4Ts, No. 42502, and timed by Mr J Wrottesley in 1961, reaching speeds in the mid-50s with an 11-coach train on a schedule 60% longer than the current allowance.

The remaining Table 1 entries fall under three headings: Brighton Main Line, Greater Anglia and LNWR (Euston-Watford Jct).

Despite the reduction in status of Gatwick Express in recent years, in an attempt to create more capacity for other services, some down Victoria to Gatwick Airport trains are booked 27min for the 26.75 miles, all but 60mph. However, Up Gatwick conventional services booked to stop at East Croydon can be given as little as 14min for the 16.32 miles at an average speed of 69.94mph.

Table 4 contains the fastest run over the above stretch, timed by Bruce Nathan with a Thameslink Class 319. The new Class 700s have yet to match it despite their higher power/weight ratio, but the adjacent run with a Class 377 (also Thameslink) shows they, too, can comfortably beat the timing.

Former Southern Region sectional running times generally used to contain a 5% contingency allowance, so we might expect the units to achieve 13min 18sec. The 13min 7sec time of the Class 319 is chiefly due to excessive speed down the 1-in-165 (steepening to a brief 1-in-100) from Quarry tunnel, where I once touched 100mph with one of these services. The 18% power/weight ratio benefit of Peter Smith's Class 377 over the Class 319 run gave it a ½min advantage by Purley, which was recouped by the Class 319 over the final three miles, partly owing to what was probably a signal check for the Class 377.

TABLE 5: STRATFORD TO SHENFIELD AT CHELMSFORD

Unit		360117/360xxx			Class 309 602/617/621		
Load*		8/336/350			10/434/454		
Train		11.08 Liverpool St-Clacton			9.00 Liverpool St-Clacton		
Date		May 26, 2010			-/-/1981		
Recorder/Position		I Umpleby 2nd of 8 D Jackman					
Miles	**Timing Point**	**Sch**	**M S**	**M P H**	**Sch**	**M S**	**M P H**
0.00	STRATFORD d/p	0	0 00	5L	0 pass	0 00	sigs20 2L
1.30	Forest Gate		1 33	74/85/80		1 14	72
3.40	Ilford		3 03	90/87		2 53	80
6.00	Chadwell H		4 48	90		4 42	89
8.37	ROMFORD a	8	7 04		8	7 19	
0.00	d	0	0 00		9	8 08	
1.12	Gidea Park		1 22	75/90	2½	1 46	63
2.58	Harold Wood		2 25	86		3 01	76
5.83	Brentwood		4 38	90	(1)	5 26	82
6.88	Ingrave Summit		5 22	80		6 13	74
7.81	SHENFIELD a	7½	6 36		9½	7 44	
0.00	d	0	0 00	-/90	10½	9 05	
3.31	Ingatestone LC		2 55	88		3 17	87
5.31	Margaretting		4 17	90		4 35	98/100
8.31	Overbridge		6 23	80		6 27	-
9.59	CHELMSFORD a	8½	7 57		8½	8 01	

* Vehicles/tare/gross tonnes (1)= 1min pathing
Class 309 passed Stratford in 6m 38s from Liverpool Street

Uphill stretch

Investigation of the Liverpool Street to Shenfield line shows that by eliminating the slow uphill stretch to Bethnal Green and instead taking the Stratford to Shenfield time, Greater Anglia matches the 14min schedule of the Gatwick-East Croydon trains for just a 0.14miles shorter distance, giving an average of 69.34mph – just 0.6mph slower. Stratford to Shenfield trains that call at Romford manage to beat the 60mph average figure both sides of the stop, the first stretch taking 8min for 8.37 miles and the second 7½min for 7.81 miles.

The fastest known non-stop Stratford-Shenfield run is 12min 21sec at an average ▶

speed of 78.6mph, timed by David Lloyd-Roberts.

The first run in Table 5 is the fastest Romford-Shenfield section, timed by Ian Umpleby, with the corresponding Stratford-Romford section for that journey. The RPS archive contains a fast run by the splendid Class 309 Clacton electrics with a 10-car formation touching 100mph before Chelmsford. I have therefore chosen to stray out of the Oyster Card area to show that section too. Recorder David Jackman says his Class 309 run was typical, "doing high speeds where perhaps it shouldn't, after having reached Bethnal Green in 2min 33sec, far faster than nowadays."

Table 1 also includes a few meritorious Lea Valley sections not traditionally associated with high-speed running. Greater Anglia comes out of this survey far better than many would have predicted, although no surprise to readers of the Practice and Performance 'Little Town Flirt' article (RM Feb 2021).

Although the line from Liverpool Street to Tottenham Hale is desperately slow, it is a different story in the Lea Valley, where modern EMUs breeze through the former location of power utilities such as Angel Road and Brimsdown to manage average speeds in the mid-60s over distances as short as 5.81 miles to Enfield Lock. All these Greater Anglia examples serve genuine commuters far more than, say, the Brighton Line pair of entries, but they fail to include a main line terminus.

King's Cross is normally the place to seek high speeds but the location of the Oyster Card boundary was no further north than Hadley Wood in early 2019, although Potter's Bar – generally considered by Londoners to be the northern boundary of civilisation – was added in summer 2019. The intermediate stopping pattern of the local trains and their confinement to the slow lines means nothing approaches the Top 16. Waterloo's claims are similarly afflicted by the Surbiton boundary.

Extend the Oyster Card boundary 16 miles to Stevenage and it would look much better! The Class 91 schedule for the 27½ miles from King's Cross was 20½min at an average of 80.5mph, but it would be the only example in the article of a bona fide InterCity train qualifying for inclusion. Stevenage northbound east coast express calls used to be 'pick-up only' but have been 'open stops' since… since revenue raiding became the vogue?

Line switch

Similar considerations apply on the Midland Main Line, particularly because the local trains have first to emerge from the Thameslink tunnels, the faster trains then having to switch lines before they can reach high speeds. None of the MML 'fast' services served outlying Oyster stations in early 2019, St Albans being the first stop from West Hampstead. Stopping services along the 'slow' lines can reach 75mph but the timings are conservative.

As for Chiltern, the slow exit to Neasden Jct with a maximum speed of 50mph for virtually the first four miles precludes any headline-making station pairings, despite 100mph being authorised only two miles further on from the junction.

That leaves Euston, where the introduction of 110mph Class 350 Siemens Desiro EMUs on the LNWR franchise has matched InterCity trains to Watford Jct to become the clear table-topper, with an average speed of 77.6mph start-to-stop over just 17.45 miles. Trains calling at only Wembley Central almost compensate for the shorter available top speed running by the elimination of the comparatively slow climb to Camden to reach second place, and also exceed a 70mph average speed.

Table 6 shows the fastest Class 350 EMU example in the RPS archive. Theory and practice are closely matched on this run. There is nothing to spare but the schedule can be kept. The next run in the table is the fastest-known Pendolino run over the same stretch in 12min 41sec, with a nine-car set timed by David Ashley 11 years ago. It does not meet the necessary criterion for inclusion in the analysis because the Watford Jct stop remains to 'pick-up only'.

What did electric locos do over the same stretch? The third run in Table 6 shows they could beat a Class 350 but, in this case, only by pre-empting the authority for 110mph running. Timer Bill Long points out that this train was the first of a flight of trains all scheduled to call at Watford Jct, and the driver clearly knew any delay would cause a bow wave of trouble behind him. It is a sobering thought that the margin between the run of No. 87035 was only 42sec longer than the fastest-known 125mph Pendolino, and it was actually 15sec ahead at Willesden Jct.

For the final Table 6 entry, I could not resist going off-piste again and including the run with Fairburn 2-6-4T No. 42119 on a down local train given the fast line to Watford Jct. Discussing the log with RPS steam specialist Michael Rowe, he suggested that running up a 1-in-339 gradient and balancing around 65mph

TABLE 6: LONDON EUSTON TO WATFORD JCT

Unit/Loco		350372			390041			87035			42119		
Load		4/179/-			9/460/-			10/335/360/443			3/84/90/176		
Train		09.49 Euston-Birm N S			06.36 Euston Man P			07.40 Euston-Shrewsbury			09.00 Euston-Tring		
Date		March 4, 2019			June 19, 2010			April 19, 1980			August 1, 1953		
Recorder/Position		B. Covington 2nd of 4			D Ashley 8th of 9			W E Long			D C Davies		
Miles	**Timing Point**	**Sch**	**M S**	**M P H**	**Sch**	**M S**	**M P H**	**Sch**	**M S**	**M P H**	**Sch**	**M S**	**M P H**
0.00	EUSTON d	0	0 00	P.11 ½L	0	0 00	P.14	0	0 00	1L	0	0 00	5L FL
1.09	Camden S Jct	2½	2 06	44	2½				2 06	44			
3.68	Queen's Park		4 43	83					4 34	93			
5.39	Willesden Jct	6	5 55	86	6	5 53	102	6½	5 38	98/96	9	6 48	74
8.05	Wembley C	7½	7 35	104	7½	7 18	117		7 13	108/-		8 57	70
9.41	South Kenton		8 22	106									
11.38	Harrow & W	9½	9 29	105	9½	8 57	123	10	9 03	107		11 56	67
13.26	Hatch End		10 32	109		9 52	125					13 47	65½
15.99	Bushey		12 01	110		11 17	105		11 43	102		16 17	66/sigs SL
17.43	WATFORD JCT	13½	13 26		13½	12 41		15	13 23		23	18 56	

390041 pick up only stop

Above: LMS 4MT No. 42510 from Shoeburyness shed approaches Upminster with the 6.02pm Thorpe Bay-Fenchurch Street on July 21, 1954.
RM ARCHIVE/IAN S PEARSALL

Above left: The Class 302 EMUs which worked east London and Essex suburban services from the late 1950s and ran on Gresley bogies. Here No. 302210 approaches Dagenham Dock station on October 17, 1987, with a train to Shoeburyness.
FERNDALE MEDIA

TABLE 7: OYSTER CARD BOUNDARY TO TERMINUS OR VICE VERSA RANKINGS
(BEST FROM EACH COMPANY OUT OF TOTAL 58 SECTIONS)

Overall Ranking	From	To	Company	Distance	Schedule inc dwell	Ave MPH	Schedule excl dwell	Ave MPH	Schedule excl dwell & allowances	Ave MPH	Notes
1	Euston	Watford Junction	LNWR	17.45	13.5	77.6	13.5	77.6	13.5	77.6	AC 110mph
2	Gatwick	London Bridge	TL	26.62	28	57.0	27	59.2	26	61.4	fastest DC
3	Liverpool Street	Shenfield	GA	20.25	22	55.2	21.5	56.5	20.5	59.3	90mph
4	Orpington	London Bridge	SE	11.95	15	47.8	15	47.8	15	47.8	
6	Surbiton	Waterloo -fast	SWT	12.03	15.5	46.6	14.5	49.8	14.5	49.8	
7	Heathrow T5	Paddington	TFL	16.25	22	44.3	19.5	50.0	17	57.4	100mph
8	West Ruislip	Marylebone	CR	13.37	18.5	43.4	17.5	45.8	17.5	45.8	fastest diesel
10	Fenchurch Street	Upminster	C2C	15.25	22	41.6	20.5	44.6	20.5	44.6	
13	West Drayton	Paddington	GWR	13.15	21.5	36.7	18.5	42.6	18.5	42.6	
18	Coulsdon S	Victoria	SN	15.24	27.5	33.3	24.5	37.3	23.5	38.9	
23	Amersham	Baker Street	LU	23.57	42.5	33.3	40.5	34.9	40.5	34.9	
30	Hadley Wood	Moorgate	GN	11.62	29	24.0	21.5	32.4	21.5	32.4	
38	Chingford	Liverpool Street	LO	10.5	27	23.3	23.5	26.8	21	30.0	AC

was not exceptional with just three coaches. On the other hand, what a thrilling journey this must have been for recorder Mr D C Davies, because the speeds were a good 10mph higher than usual. The locomen had the incentive of a 5min late start, which they all but recovered by Watford Jct.

Some of the averages for No. 42119 are slightly askew when compared to the spot speeds (as one might expect on the railway of some 68 years ago with the unsophisticated timing equipment of the time), but a speed well over 70mph at Willesden Jct gave an excellent basis for the uphill section. Accepting that there could be some difference in the actual location where the times were taken, the Euston to Willesden Jct time of our tank engine was just 55sec adrift of the fastest Pendolino run.

Baard Covington has also calculated an 'efficiency index' (Table 1), showing the percentage of the timetabled average speeds compared to the maximum permissible speeds. This measure favours sections which have a low top speed, the c2c Barking-Upminster section coming out top as reaching 82.5% of its unambitious 75mph maximum permitted speed; the corollary being the 41.07% of HS1 St Pancras-Stratford International trains with their nominal 140mph top speed in London No.1 tunnel.

Service speed

Table 7 examines the speeds of services from Oyster Card boundaries to/from an appropriate London terminal. Only the fastest example from each operating company has been selected. To some extent, franchise ownership has become irrelevant during the gestation period of the article and changes, not necessarily for the better, will no doubt follow. The full set of 58 entries is available on the RPS website (railperf.org.uk). The average speeds are ranked by overall schedule, then with station dwell times removed, which changes the order, especially on services making many stops.

Euston-Watford Jct LNWR Class 350s remain the top entry but many of the other 'boundary to terminus' (or vice versa) measurements remove the effect of any fast individual intermediate timings between pairs of stations. Gatwick to London Bridge, calling at only East Croydon, is perhaps a surprising No. 2 in the list, as is the promotion in the ranking of both the Orpington to London Bridge and Surbiton-Waterloo 'fasts'.

Conversely, Heathrow Express falls down the table because of the slow section between Heathrow Terminals 2 and 3 and the Terminal 5 'boundary'. Diesel trains operated by Chiltern Railways between West Ruislip and Marylebone are higher up the table than might be imagined and, in fact, displace Fenchurch Street-Upminster c2c Class 375s. This is no mean feat.

LUL's extensive network has not evaded Baard's attention, with the Amersham to Baker Street 23½-mile run managing a creditable 33mph average speed. A further 16 LUL entries are shown in the RPS website table.

So the "First City's Fastest" title clearly belongs to LNWR's Euston-Watford Jct trains, no matter what criterion is used. I wonder if its customers realise just how lucky they are? How long will it remain so? Readers are invited to submit any further thoughts, corrections, and even speculations. Perhaps you would like to imagine a list of 'what ifs?' Baard suggests an HS1 station at Grays (Essex) – as well as, or instead of, Ebbsfleet – would have come top of both tables 1 and 7. Or what about a spur from HS1 to the LT&S near Rainham?

Should the qualifying criterion be the last station inside the M25 cordon or perhaps the first one outside? Or maybe all services within a set radius from the centre of London, rather than the current hotch-potch where Oyster validity ceases six miles from St Pancras International on HS1, yet 27miles from Victoria on the Brighton line.

My thanks are due to Baard Covington for suggesting this idea and providing such comprehensive data. ■

Above: Virgin Trains Class 87 No. 87024 *Lord of the Isles* passes South Kenton on July 4, 2003, with the 14.05 London Euston-Manchester Piccadilly train. CHRIS MILNER

Left: Bombardier Electrostar unit No. 357019 leads No. 357013 on the 21.53 London Fenchurch Street to Shoeburyness, making its Upminster call on May 2, 2021. JAMIE SQUIBBS

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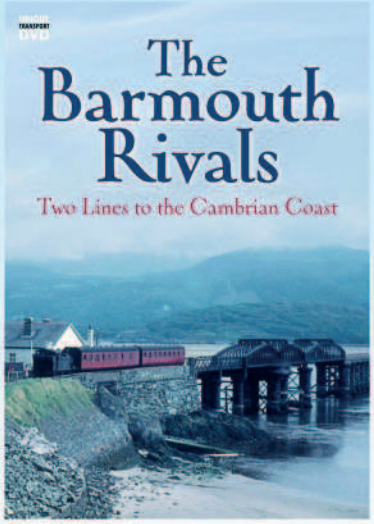

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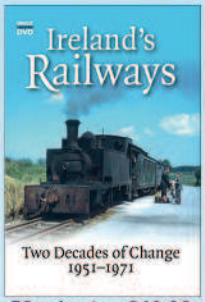

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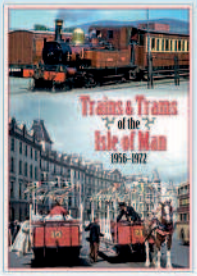

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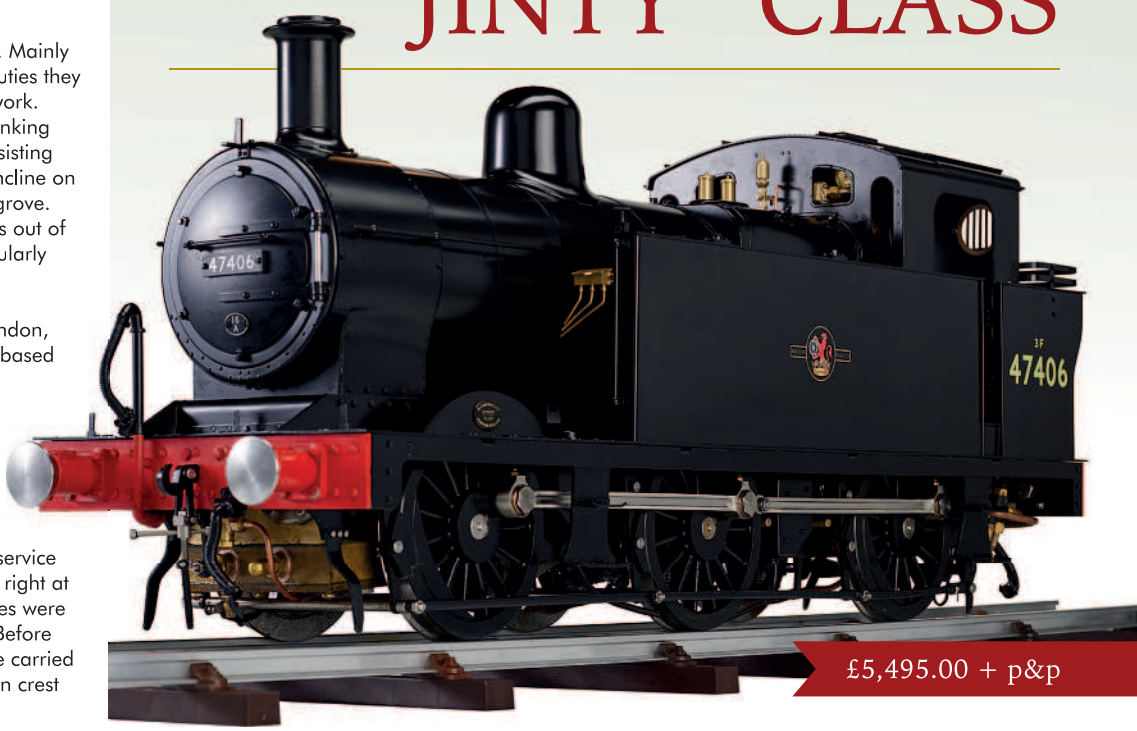

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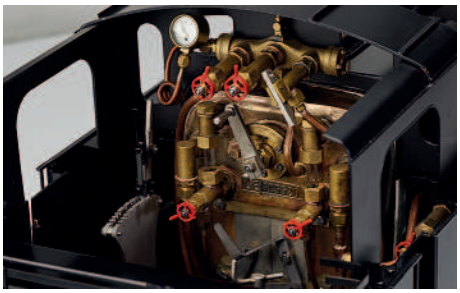

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HS2 DIVIDING LINE OR UNIFICATION POINT?

Most readers will have a view on the controversial HS2 project, be it one that can visualise the benefit of moving trains to a dedicated line, or that it's an utter waste of money and a blight on the environment. Phil Marsh makes an exclusive visit to an HS2 protest camp and talks to a protestor in what is a revealing insight.

IT was a brief encounter near the former GCR Calvert station between the author and an anti-HS2 protester that resulted in the unlikely invitation to visit to the nearby Poors Piece camp. Making the offer was a very articulate 21-year-old who gave his name as Goldi, and who had been living there since February.

Goldi had been furloughed from the brewing industry, enabling him to join the anti-HS2 protest camp in Buckinghamshire. When the tree he was occupying was surrounded by men with chainsaws, he made the instant decision to stay to protect the tree, forfeiting his job when his furlough ended.

The three-hour interview took place within the protest camp adjacent to the East West Railway line – just east of Claydon Loop on one side, and fenced off from HS2 territory on another. The original Poors Piece was in a field by the woodland but protesters were evicted by HS2 when work commenced. The current camp is on land outside the HS2 boundary.

Discussion

Goldi admitted he had never discussed his anti-HS2 campaign with anyone from the rail industry, thus setting the scene for the opening question: Why are you anti-HS2, when surely the far greater threat is climate change? "They were both deeply linked and symptomatic of the really bad British patriarchal (political) system that is hurting a lot of the people, the land and animals," Goldi replied.

This led to talking about the planned HS2 'rewilding' scheme at the Chiltern Tunnel south portal.

"The HS2 ecologists were not very knowledgeable," Goldi alleged. "They were trained in the HS2 academy, and potential nesting areas were checked by even less knowledgeable ecologists, who then signed off tree-felling and land clearance."

As well as HS2, also under construction and close to HS2 is the East West Rail (EWR) link project to connect Oxford with Cambridge. This, too, is a scheme with controversial elements over choice of route. In this view, the first rails on the EWR are being laid east of Bicester on April 12 this year. ALL PICTURES: PHIL MARSH

Above: HS2 protestor Goldi at Claydon Poors Piece camp on April 8.

Right: Living accommodation in the camp is among the trees. The 'house' was constructed using scaffolding, pallets, fencing and any other scrap material.

An HS2 spokesman responded to this claim by saying: "All our ecology work is carried out in accordance with the law. Where appropriate, suitably qualified ecologists are present during vegetation clearance."

There was no 'HS2 academy', the spokesman said, and the ecologists at Poors Piece were sub-contractors with wide experience across the industry – unlike Goldi.

Yet Goldi said one of the Poors Piece protesters is an ecologist, and had told contractors they were felling the wrong trees in the wrong order. Some contractors, he added, were actually good at their job. One of the protesting ecologists agreed HS2 rewilding projects creating wildlife corridors was a good principle, but that it might take 100 years to come to full fruition.

One troubling allegation was that unless tenant farmers evicted protest camps, there would be no compensation and they would become homeless, to which an HS2 spokesman responded: "It is simply not true that people are being put in this position, and this particular camp is not on HS2 land."

Goldi was at pains to explain that the protest was not just about HS2; this was part of a wider protest movement which included anti-airport and road expansion plans, too – with no hierarchy of projects which needed resisting.

When asked what his top three concerns about HS2 were, Goldi outlined the following:

- We don't need it.
- The wider industrial complex that HS2 is part of exploiting people and land
- And when asked why a tree is valuable only after being cut down, Goldi replied that the land is more valuable without the tree.

The climate emergency has to include HS2 using up finite imported resources, and Goldi cited biomass imports as a key example of carbon hypocrisy. His view was that this emergency will eventually cause wars over ever more scarce resources as climate changes brings about more construction projects, thus perpetuating the climate emergency.

Police powers

"The power the state has really scares me and is exemplified through the powers HS2 has, controlling the police by telling them what to do with protesters," he claimed.

"Combined with compulsory land and house purchase, this shows the state has too much power and we cannot stop it by legal means. The looming Police Bill will give yet more powers to the state."

Goldi was asked if he understood rail capacity issues on the West Coast Main Line (WCML), and it was put to him that though most anti-HS2 people say it's not worth building to save 10 minutes between London and Birmingham, the real gain is rail capacity – especially on the WCML.

Asking for an explanation, Goldi was informed that one 775m freight service could remove 75 HGVs off the roads, for example. This, plus a smoother speed profile of trains on the WCML, would bring a capacity increase, enabling more freight services to operate.

Goldi understood these points but countered them with: "It's not worth the destruction. Why do people need so much, creating the demand for these containers?" He queried why people need to travel so much, suggesting that we should all just slow down the pace of living.

The notion that we all retreat into caves was met with: "I'm not a primitive person, burning wood to survive, as we do not burn wood because it's not sustainable. We cook on gas and are really careful about what comes on to the camps. It's a slower pace and you can appreciate the world around you, plus you can learn a lot of useful skills here that you won't learn at school. This is the real issue, and not HS2."

Regarding the East-West Rail project, he said his rural Lincolnshire background was where the GN Joint line ran north-south, and was sympathetic for the need for east-west travel and connectivity – but it was a sticking plaster.

He repeated: "Why do people need to travel so much? I am sympathetic to expanding public transport but not by reopening railways.

"People should embrace slower lifestyles and stop creating demand for more possessions and ever faster modes of transport, and should become more local and self-sustaining interdependent communities."

This ever-increasing consumer demand, he said, was due to the aforementioned patriarchal and capitalist system which he sees as wrong and self-serving.

Goldi was asked to consider HS1, which now blends into the landscape and regenerated parts of Kent and virtually wiped out the London-Paris/Brussels air market – which had to be a good thing for the environment.

Yet again, Goldi questioned why people had to and wanted to travel, and make so many of these journeys. His view was HS1 may now blend into the landscape, but the ecological damage had been done.

It was suggested HS2 will enable urban networks surrounding an HS2 station and make for more reliable services, as HS2 will abstract traffic away from the classic network-reducing pollution, as well as levelling up the country economically. This was accepted as a benefit.

Concrete connection

The local area regeneration at Bicester was offered as an example of rail expansion, while HS2 has brought billions in investment to West London, Birmingham, Crewe and Manchester. Goldi was convinced that this expansion would result locally in Aylesbury and Milton Keynes becoming one urban sprawl.

When asked why the protests are continuing when they will not stop HS2, Goldi said they could delay it and that the extra estimated £40 million cost of the protests was a drop in the ocean compared

with the ever-increasing HS2 cost. "It's something I passionately believe in, so I should protest," he explained. "It's not about stopping it but resisting it as a drowning person might fight a rescuer, and it is a struggle, as daily life is for many. I don't want to bring children into a world which will be concreted over at this rate."

Goldi made some points about a number of HS2 security employees allegedly behaving incorrectly during evictions, plus claims that trees were being felled in bird-nesting season.

Worryingly, the author could not dismiss either of these, having been captured by HS2 security staff on video at Claydon while taking photographs from a public road and also seeing what appeared to be tree-felling and coppicing during the bird-nesting season.

HS2 Ltd was very keen to make the situation clear: "It is not illegal to fell trees in bird-nesting season. It's only illegal if there is a bird nesting in the tree at the time which is why, at this time, an ecologist will be on hand to inspect each tree before it is felled."

It was also alleged that HS2 security teams were not wearing Security Industry Association ID cards at all times. HS2 has also been challenged as to why protesters were being filmed. There has been no reply, despite Freedom of Information or Subject Access Requests.

The HS2 spokesman said: "When taking possession of land and removing illegal trespassers, the safety of all concerned is always HS2's first priority. HS2 has been repeatedly and excessively targeted by activists and this criminal activity is a threat to the safety of the public and our workers, and places unnecessary strain on the emergency services during the pandemic.

"Body-worn cameras are fairly standard across the industry and help capture evidence, and keep our staff and communities safe."

Positive relationship

Goldi suggested we went for a walk from the camp, using a public footpath to stand in what was the four-foot of the disused EWR track. Instantly, three security guards closed in on the other side of the fence as they did not recognise me. Goldi explained what I was doing and they relaxed and engaged with us, and clearly had a positive relationship with Goldi – which may explain the different approach security made to myself a few months earlier.

The 'front line': The HS2 project is using security fencing at Claydon. Overlooking the site is a protestors' tree house.

And it's not just protesters in camps campaigning against HS2.The following comment, posted on *The Bucks Herald* Enough is Enough Stop HS2 Facebook page, was allegedly made by HS2. It read: "If you believe a wildlife crime is being committed, please report this to the police in the first instance. Natural England has attempted to attend the site to carry out compliance monitoring, however, protestors have blocked our entrance, resulting in its postponement. Kind regards, The HS2 Advice Team."

The comment was sent to HS2, and its spokesman confirmed there is no HS2 Advice Team in existence – so no, it is not genuine.

This is seemingly yet another example of keyboard warriors posting incorrect information on social media platforms about the first new railway to be constructed during this era of the internet. These platforms are a major battleground between protesters and objectors and HS2, and incorrect claims and misleading statements are frequently made.

The final question to Goldi was this: "Is there no compromise you could be part of?"

"I'm a firm believer in sticking to your guns and we need to stop constructing things because I genuinely think we are getting to the point where we might be looking at the next generation being under water with rising sea levels due to climate change," he replied.

"This is far more important than how much quicker you will be able to get to anywhere on HS2. Much of London is at sea level, so that'll be the last place you'll want to get to in a hurry as it becomes flooded with sewage-contaminated water."

So, how did Goldi feel about being interviewed by a railway professional of almost 48 years? "Cool," was the reply – as were most railway staff he'd met.

The anti-HS2 fight has brought the politically extreme left and right wings together in opposing the project, with both wings citing an abuse of democracy and political power by Government.

It was a fascinating visit, offering an insight into why HS2 continues to be vehemently opposed – in a fight that protesters acknowledge will most likely be lost. ■

An aggregate train at Claydon delivering material in connection with EWR bridge work.

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FROM ENTHUSIAST TO MANAGING DIRECTOR

Made a CBE in the 2021 New Year Honours in recognition of his contribution to the rail industry over 30 years, GWR chief Mark Hopwood has a lifelong interest in railways. He talks to Tony Miles about his journey from a young enthusiast to becoming the current longest-serving TOC managing director.

PART 1

BORN in 1971 in Buxton, Derbyshire, and then living in Whaley Bridge, to the south of Manchester, Mark recalls being taken to the nearby railway line at a very young age by his paternal grandparents.

"I think it was when I was about two, and they told me that it grew up from there, really," he says. "I also used to visit my maternal grandparents in South Wales, travelling by train, and my grandfather wouldn't even allow me to step foot in the house until I'd recited every station from Cardiff Central to Ystrad Rhondda in the correct order."

Station rides

When Mark was about two-and-a-half, the family relocated to Marlow in the Thames Valley, an area he has come to know well and has spent most of his life. "Once I was old enough to be trusted to leave the house – I was probably about eight, I'd jump on my bike and pop down to the station. Marlow station wasn't very exciting because the same train bounced in and out all day long, but soon I got talking to the train crews."

With only a small pool of drivers and guards based at Slough working on the line, it wasn't long before the crews began giving Mark free rides to Bourne End and back in the evening rush hour, when the shuttle service saw two trains operating. "Riding on the train led to me being asked to dispatch the train," he says. "The guard used to go through and do the tickets and say, 'We're due off at 17.41, Mark, just give two on the buzzer at 17.41.'

Mark Hopwood, GWRs managing director. JACK BOSKETT

Class 104 DMUs on the Manchester-Buxton route were some of the first trains Mark encountered before the family relocated to the Thames Valley. This view at Buxton station was taken on July 27, 1976. A PRICE/COLOUR RAIL

I was about 10, 11, 12 – and that's what I used to do."

In those days, services from Maidenhead to Marlow required the use of a ground frame at Bourne End to change the points and the collection of a token and staff. "Very often the guards would expect me to either do it under their supervision, or one or two of them used to just send me down to do it on my own," Mark recalls. It simply wouldn't happen today.

Mark's grandmother outlived his grandfather, and she moved into sheltered housing in Llandaf, to the north of Cardiff. Not only was this right next to the railway line, but it was only a few minutes' walk from Llandaf station and a path that led to a small signal box. "No one ever locked the gate, so I opened it one day and went down."

He was spotted by the signalman, and invited to climb the wooden steps and take a look inside. This became a regular event.

"Needless to say, he soon had me working the signal box," says Mark. "We had all the passenger trains going up and down the Merthyr and Rhondda Valley lines, but also at that time there was a loop out of the back of Radyr yard that used to bring quite a lot of the coal trains that needed to face west at Cardiff – bound for Aberthaw power station or Barry Docks with coal for export.

Box lessons

"Instead of going round through Ninian Park they would come around the loop and then run down through Llandaf. The signalman started teaching me how to work the box, all the bell codes to the other boxes, and the art of regulation so you didn't bring a freight train off just before a passenger train was due through."

Mark recalls one day in particular when he was about 13 years old. "I remember him saying: 'You seem to be doing all right, I've run out of fags. I'm going to pop down the shop. Do you want anything? I'll be back in 10 minutes' – and so I was working this box for 10 minutes, which I don't think anyone ever discovered!

"Fortunately there were no signal post telephones so the drivers were never going to ring me, but the knowledge and the education from that was fantastic."

As he got older Mark was able to travel further afield, becoming particularly fond of one particular class of locomotive: "A lot of it was travelling on the usual Class 50 routes; Maidenhead to Twyford to start, and then Paddington-Oxford because that was all I could afford. I thought 'these are very good', so I started travelling around behind the class even more. It's no secret I have a strong interest in Class 50s.

"I travelled further afield, down to the West Country and on overnight trains from Paddington to Newquay, when they ran, because having the 50 up the bank at Luxulyan on the Newquay branch was always a great experience, and there was Waterloo to Exeter, of course.

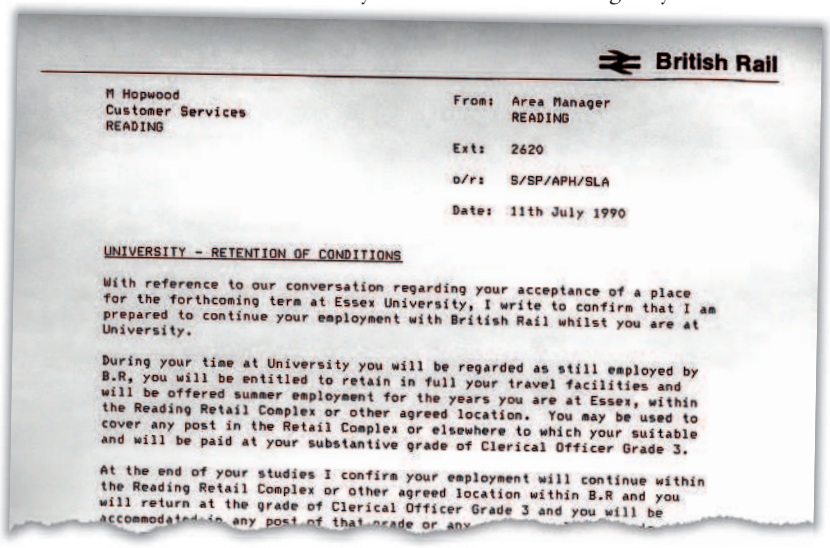
"But I did do other things as well. When we had a family holiday up in Scotland, I had an all-Scotland rail rover and went round chasing Class 26s and 27s with 25s on Carstairs to Edinburgh. Of course, I did various railtours and went off around the freight lines in South Wales with their Class 37s."

A highlight in 1986 was the Hertfordshire Railtours Class 50 trip from Paddington to Buxton and Manchester, which took a Class 50 to Mark's town of birth in Buxton and through his original home station on that line at Whaley Bridge.

Back in 1983, Mark had started at the Royal Grammar School in High Wycombe. ▶

The visit on Ferbruary 8, 1986, of No. 50012 *Benbow* allowing Mark's to return to his birth place of Buxton on Hertfordshire Rail Tours 'Derbyshire Dingle' was an opportunity too good to miss. Here the Class 50 eases away towards Manchester, the old line to Ashbourne is on the left. LES NIXON

Right: The letter from Area Manager A P Hancock confirming the retention of travel facilities and other perks.



British Rail

M Hopwood
Customer Services
READING

From: Area Manager
READING

Ext: 2620

o/r: S/SP/APH/SLA

Date: 11th July 1990

UNIVERSITY - RETENTION OF CONDITIONS

With reference to our conversation regarding your acceptance of a place for the forthcoming term at Essex University, I write to confirm that I am prepared to continue your employment with British Rail whilst you are at University.

During your time at University you will be regarded as still employed by B.R, you will be entitled to retain in full your travel facilities and will be offered summer employment for the years you are at Essex, within the Reading Retail Complex or other agreed location. You may be used to cover any post in the Retail Complex or elsewhere to which your suitable and will be paid at your substantive grade of Clerical Officer Grade 3.

At the end of your studies I confirm your employment will continue within the Reading Retail Complex or other agreed location within B.R and you will return at the grade of Clerical Officer Grade 3 and you will be accommodated in any post of that grade or any

"Once I was old enough to be trusted to leave the house – I was probably about eight, I'd jump on my bike and pop down to the station. Marlow station wasn't very exciting because the same train bounced in and out all day long, but soon I got talking to the train crews."

In due course, this also saw the start of some heated discussions with his parents over whether he would leave school at 16 or stay on to do A-Levels before going to university. His father put his foot down and the higher education route was presented as the only option.

The school had a model railway club, and Mark quickly became involved: "We organised exhibitions and I remember in my last year I was chairman. I'd organised an exhibition and ours was slightly better than the one in town run by the main model railway club. We earned a huge amount of money and the headmaster summoned me into his study to say well done.

"He said: 'How much of this money are you donating to the school funds or to school charities?' and I said, 'none at all, headmaster, we're keeping it all in the model railway club funds.' He invited me to review my decision."

Work shadowing

While Mark was studying for A-Levels in economics and politics, geography and history, one of the school's governors – a key member of the British Rail Board – set him up with a week's work, shadowing the assistant area manager at Reading.

"Her name was Sarah Kendall. She's since worked in a number of high-profile jobs but she'd just come off the BR graduate training scheme then. She must have upset someone because they stuck me with her for a week. We did numerous things and I remember going up to the signal box in Reading with the area operations manager to see the Royal Train come though."

This led to the offer of a summer job in the telephone enquiry bureau in Reading, which Mark began on June 26, 1989. He initially saw it as a way to earn money before taking up a place at the London School of Economics. However, one of his A-Levels hadn't gone well. "I probably spent a bit too much time chasing trains and not enough time studying," he admits, "so I decided to stay on with BR for a year and reapply."

A place was secured at Essex University to study politics, but things became complicated when Mark was first promoted into the ticket office and then again into the traffic and customer services office.

What followed next was exceptional, but also shows that Mark's developing talents were not going to be lost by BR.

"I wrote my resignation letter and went to see the area manager and told him I was leaving to go to university. He said: 'Go away, take your silly little letter away and come back and see me tomorrow morning at nine o'clock.'

"So I went and saw him at nine o'clock, and he had another letter for me, which was headed up with 'University, retention of conditions'. It's probably one of the most valuable letters I've ever received. British Rail had agreed to send me off to university, I could keep all my travel facilities – which, as a young rail enthusiast was quite important but, more importantly, they said I could stay in the pension fund and they would backdate my pension contributions to the day I started.

"On top of this, they would guarantee me a job during all the holidays, and two grades higher than all the other students who would be joining which, of course, made me even more unpopular than usual!

"That offer was snapped straight out of his hands. I headed off to university and when I came back in the holidays, I got experience of a whole number of things – telephone enquiries, selling tickets, managing some of the basic operational stuff in the office, answering customer complaints and letters and so on."

After a year of work, university life was quite a different experience, especially as most of the other students had come straight from school. But Mark broadened his interests, taking a particular interest in the university radio station, on which he hosted a number of shows; an interest that has remained with him.

On graduating in 1993, he returned to BR and after just two weeks of customer relations work, the head of operations offered him a job as duty operations manager in the in the NSE Thames Control office. It caused a bit of a stir.

As will be seen in part two, Mark has a very soft spot for Class 50s – and rightly so. No. 50024 *Vanguard* arrives at Reading with a down passenger service to Oxford in the early 1990s. FERNDALE MEDIA

Left: Mark (left) with brother Justin at Severn Valley Railway, around 1980.

Right: A picture taken in the garden of family home by Mark's mum in 1993. While Mark claims the hat fitted perfectly, its styling is akin to a Russian State Railways design... but by British Rail!

"Not everybody knew about my background, knowledge and interests," says Mark, "so some were asking how this bloke – just two weeks out of university – was given the duty manager's job in Control. This can't possibly be right? But, obviously, I knew the geography pretty well and I probably knew more about the train fleet than most of the unit controllers, if I'm honest!"

Things went generally very well, although Mark remembers being only a few minutes into a late shift when a Reading-Gatwick DMU ran out of fuel. "I hired a Class 33 from the Southern Civil Engineers' Department and dragged it back with passengers on board. We didn't have social media or text messaging in those days, but the jungle drums rattled a bit and I remember walking over to Reading station and when it arrived, I think there were about three normal passengers on it and about 150 Class 33 bashers hanging out of the front."

Interesting traction

It wasn't the last time Mark arranged for some interesting traction to be provided. His close affinity to the Marlow branch saw him ensuring that, on the final day of Class 117 DMUs being in service before the full handover to Turbos, not only was a 117 sent to the branch for that final Saturday, but sets were also diagrammed for the Gatwick service.

"I travelled on one of the last ever DMU trips on the branch, and then travelled home on the train, so that was good."

Mark's return to British Rail came as the reorganisation known as Organising For Quality (OFQ) was being completed; for passenger services, the regions became Network SouthEast, InterCity and Regional Railways. Advice from senior managers was there would be no point in Mark joining the BR graduate training scheme because he had already gained considerable experience from his holiday work and that initial year with BR. There was, however, a suggestion that it was time to move on in his career, so in October 1993, he took up a position as duty manager at Slough station.

"I had shift responsibility for pretty much everything that went on at the station, the ticket office, and the safety of the line. That meant attending things like fatalities, going out to operational incidents, and acting as a pilot man, an operational term when the signalling fails where you're effectively a human token.

"I also trained as an emergency guard. One Saturday evening, the signalling failed and the guard went sick, so I worked the service and did both jobs – the pilot man and the guard! I did get a 'please explain' message on the Monday morning and was told that 'the rulebook doesn't allow for you to do both jobs'.

"I replied: 'Show me which page says that', and explained that I thought it was an efficient solution to the problem. I think the conclusion was that, while they could not actually find the clause that prohibited it, my actions were not entirely within the spirit of the rulebook!"

Early on in his time as Slough duty manager, Mark also found himself being thrown one of those special 'challenges' reserved for new arrivals. A signaller at Slough rang to report a bull on the track on the Marlow branch. Summoned to assist, Mark travelled to Maidenhead and joined a branch line train. Shortly after climbing the bank out of Cookham station towards Cock Marsh, the driver slowed to a halt and said: "You'll have to get off and sort it."

Unsure of what to do, Mark donned his orange jacket and climbed down from the cab.

With a brick-like mobile phone of the early 1990s, this picture was used on a poster at Marlow station, introducing Mark to potential passengers.

"As soon as I stepped onto the ballast, I heard a click," he says. "The driver had shut the door behind me, and then he just opened up the power handle and drove off. I was left at the top of this embankment with no road access. I don't like animals at the best of times, and I had this bright orange jacket on.

In NSE livery, No. 50035 *Ark Royal* waits for the road at Paddington October 1987, with an evening working to Oxford. FERNDALE MEDIA

"I suppose that could have been the end of me, but for reasons I've never fully understood, the bull sort-of looked at me, turned around, ran off and clambered back through the fence. It was only three minutes to Bourne End and the train was back in about 10 minutes. The driver stopped, looked down and said: 'Oh, you're still alive then!'"

With Slough being located so close to Windsor, the Royal Train was a regular visitor and Mark had the opportunity to meet most of the Royal Family. "British Rail was really good. In this day and age, a lot of people are very status-conscious and they'd all sort of barge in. But in those days, the senior managers used to just leave us to it, so initially it was just my boss and then me. We used to just deal with it ourselves."

The management

After about nine months, Mark applied for the station manager's job, taking up the position in July 1994 and continuing in that role for about two-and-a-half years until the privatisation process began. In late 1996 Thames Trains was awarded to a management employee buyout in partnership with the Go-Ahead group, in a business known as Victory Rail Holdings. As part of the management team, Mark had some involvement with the process.

"I was asked to go to head office and help with setting up some of the initiatives we'd signed up to on the commercial side. This included train planning, station access and restructuring track access."

In June 1998 Go-Ahead bought out the rest of the business and launched a process to reduce the number of people in the commercial team. By the time that reorganisation finished, Mark was the only one left and they asked him to move to the operations side.

"I found that quite difficult actually, because in British Rail, things like that hadn't really happened in that way," he says. "It was quite a tough experience. I moved across to manage the control and the performance team, which I'd had some experience of previously, but it was an another big opportunity for me in a relatively small train company."

While things seemed to be going very well in Mark's career, October 5, 1999, is forever etched in his memory as possibly the darkest day for his time on the railway. Shortly after 08.08, a Thames Trains Turbo, having left Paddington bound for Bedwyn, passed signal SN109 travelling at 41mph and collided head-on with a First Great Western HST at a combined speed of about 130mph.

A total of 31 people, including the drivers of both trains, lost their lives, and more than 400 others were injured, some of them critically. "It was horrible in all sorts of respects," Mark reflects. "Passengers died and a driver who worked for us died, and his family had to be looked after. During the immediate aftermath, where nobody could access those carriages and nobody knew what was going on, the press got rather carried away and started talking about more than 100 potential fatalities.

"I was just 27 years old and had to sit in a room in Reading with driver managers as we dealt with some pretty tough questions, like

A Thames Trains Class 166 'Turbo' No. 166221 arrives at Reading on March 17, 2003, with a service from Oxford. A year later, Thames services had been merged into the First Great Western franchise. CHRIS MILNER

Above: Class 50 No. 50035 is Mark Hopwood's favourite, and here the loco is on May 5, 1990, approaching Radley with the 12.00 Oxford to Paddington train. FERNDALE MEDIA

which of us would tell the driver's wife what had happened.

"I was given a lot of responsibility. Terry Worrall, the director and general manager, had a wealth of experience and was very much focused on responding to that incident, so he said to me: 'You just need to concentrate on running the rest of the Thames Trains business.' Looking back, I learned a lot from the incident but in many ways I'd rather not have had it to learn from."

The subsequent inquiry unearthed a number of serious issues regarding the Thames Trains driver training programme, and challenged Network Rail about its SPAD prevention measures and how the signalling arrangement had been managed.

"Nobody came out of Ladbroke Grove smelling of roses," he says, "and until it was concluded, I guess some of us were wondering what potentially might happen to us. But the one person, I think, whose integrity, professionalism, and clear understanding of the risks stood out, was Alison Forster, who was operations director of Great Western at the time.

Clear warnings

"Alison was persistent in trying to flag to Railtrack that she had concerns about the signalling, the track layout and other issues around the Ladbroke Grove area, and the exit in and out of Paddington. She had recorded her thoughts very clearly in a series of letters and sadly, while I don't think most of the senior people in Railtrack deliberately ignored her, I think quite a few just didn't understand what she was saying.

"I've often thought of Alison subsequently, and considered what she might have done in a situation and that she would have highlighted something. Even if you know you're probably not going to get what you really think you need, then I think having been seen to make the point is sometimes useful.

"Of course, the railway is a safer place and the accidents at Southall and Ladbroke Grove very much triggered a lot of the investment in things like TPWS, but the whole thing was a tough experience for everybody at Thames Trains and Great Western, and in what was then Railtrack.

"I don't have any desire to put everyone else in the industry through what I went through with Southall and Ladbroke Grove, but equally that type of experience does leave a lasting impression. I think when you experience something yourself, it always means a lot more than listening to someone else's story of it."

Despite having enjoyed his time at Thames, the accident caused Mark to think seriously about his career.

While he had grown up in the business, it was time to do something different. "So I applied for a job in Railtrack and headed up to Railtrack's head office at the very start of 2000, joining a team working on re-franchising as passenger negotiations manager," he says.

The Labour Party was in power, and Transport Secretary John Prescott was talking about exciting projects like reopening routes over the Pennines, changing the franchise map, and building tunnels under London.

Mark recalls the shock of joining the business. "Railtrack was, in some ways, a new organisation but in other ways very traditional. I remember occasionally getting called up to the 13th floor to brief the directors, and there were people like Gerald Corbett and Richard Middleton getting served their lunch on little silver trays by all these men running around in black waistcoats and bow ties!

"In Thames Trains we bought our own lunch; even the managing director went to the sandwich shop, so this was a very strange phenomenon. But it was a great experience and it was amazing to see what went on. I learned a lot, although don't think Railtrack learned much from me, because they weren't interested in people from TOCs."

Mark did not stay long at Railtrack. In late 2000, David Franks – one of the team who had been involved in running Thames Trains and was now managing director of First North Western – invited Mark to a meeting…

In Part 2: What happened at that meeting, and how did Mark's career progress? And find out why preserved locos gate-crashed his wedding! ■

■ *This feature was prepared some weeks before the discovery of cracks which has had a major impact on the GWR IET fleet – Ed.*

"British Rail was really good. In this day and age, a lot of people are very status-conscious and they'd all sort of barge in. But in those days, the senior managers used to just leave us to it, so initially it was just my boss and then me. We used to just deal with it ourselves."

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Leading an afternoon working from Nottingham to London St Pancras, blue and yellow power car No. 43052 *City of Peterborough* calls at Loughborough during the first month of operation in October 1982. FERNDALE MEDIA

FAREWELL TO HSTs ON THE MIDLAND MAIN LINE

For almost 39 years, InterCity 125 trains have been a staple of services on the Midland Main Line between Leeds, Sheffield, the East Midlands and London. Editor Chris Milner looks at the range of liveries carried by the power cars between 1982 and 2021.

From the mid-1980s, the HSTs were painted in InterCity livery, and power car No. 43049 heads south past Knighton Junction signalbox on June 25, 1986, just before the semaphore signalling in the 'Leicester Gap' was decommissioned. The line to the left serves Coalville. FERNDALE MEDIA

What were you doing on October 4, 1982? To jog your memory, Helmut Kohl was confirmed as West Germany's new chancellor, the newspapers were getting excited over the launch of Sony's compact disc (CD) player, Margaret Thatcher was Prime Minister and topping the pop charts was reggae band Musical Youth with Pass The Dutchie – a song probably best forgotten!

It was also an historic day on the Midland Main Line (MML) as the sleek blue and yellow InterCity 125 trains entered service between Sheffield and London St Pancras, starting a process that would displace the Class 45 'Peaks' which had been hauling trains since steam ended on the MML in the mid-1960s.

Average journey times were cut by around 13 minutes to 72 min, meaning Market Harborough and Leicester became commutable for those working in the capital. Even today, the fastest Leicester-London schedule is booked for 63 minutes

Repainting the power cars with a revised InterCity livery and a revised logo was a major improvement. Here No. 43118 heads south, past where East Midlands Parkway station now stands with the Up 'Master Cutler', on May 30, 1989. FERNDALE MEDIA

Under Privatisation, the MML HSTs were first painted teal and grey with the leaping deer logo. No. 43057 bursts into life at Sheffield, ready to work an express to St Pancras on April 8, 2003. CHRIS MILNER

With the arrival of the Meridian Class 222s, East Midlands Trains rebranded with trains receiving an ocean blue, white and grey livery. On February 9, 2004, No. 43007 passes Barrow-upon-Soar on its way to the capital. CHRIS MILNER

thanks to infrastructure and signalling improvements, and faster accelerating trains.

After this initial impact and running alongside the Peaks, from the mid-1980s the popular blue and yellow HST livery began to give way to BR's slightly drab InterCity livery with 'InterCity 125' on the side of the Class 43 power cars. Within a few years, a smarter fresher livery was being applied to the power cars with the words InterCity in restyled typeface along with a swallow emblem.

Radical livery

When Privatisation came, the Midland Main Line franchise was awarded to National Express in April 1996, which adopted a fondly remembered but radical teal and cream livery with a triple orange stripe. It suited the HSTs well and also the Class 170 Turbostars, which were introduced from 1999 to provide additional MML services.

An order for 23 Class 222 DEMUs from Bombardier in 2003 would allow the Class ▶

Between 2007 and 2019, the Midland Main Line franchise was operated by the Stagecoach Group, and HSTs were repainted into blue and white with the red and yellow flashes. No. 43081 leads a diverted St Pancras-Sheffield train through Oakham on July 14, 2019, just a month before Abellio took over the franchise. CHRIS MILNER

The final few weeks of HSTs on the Midland have attracted a lot of attention, particularly with 'celebrity' power cars Nos. 43102 and 43274, both posed here at Neville Hill on May 11. CHRIS MILNER

East Midlands Railway HST Class 43 No. 43102 *The Journey Shrinker* leaves Leeds with 1C43 the 10.50 to London St Pancras International, with 43274 on the rear, on Sunday, April 25. IAN DIXON

170s to be cascaded elsewhere, but also provided the opportunity for a rebranding of the franchise as part of the plan for the new trains, and early in 2003, HSTs began to emerge in an ocean blue, grey and white colour scheme. While this was primarily for the Meridians, it suited the HSTs too.

Redefining the franchise map in 2006 to include some Central Trains services saw National Express lose the franchise in 2007 to rival Stagecoach, which repainted trains in a blue and white livery with orange and red flashes for East Midlands Trains. There are a handful of Class 222 trains still in Stagecoach livery even though Abellio took over the MML franchise in August 2019 under the brand name East Midlands Railway.

With changes to accessibility legislation, without extensive and costly modification it was known the HSTs' days were numbered. Some power cars were withdrawn and sold on, and still run in the old EMT livery; in late 2019/early 2020, EMR inherited a number of HST sets from LNER which were more compliant for accessibility and for around 18 months has seen red-liveried sets on the MML route.

EMR's franchise plans also included a Corby-St Pancras electric service with Class 360s from May 15 (see p102), so this allowed a reshuffle of Class 180 and 222 diagrams without the HSTs. A new timetable designed around the electric services would mean fewer direct trains from the north to intermediate stations south of Kettering, which would become an interchange for the new half-hourly service.

Final ride

With the acceptance of all the Class 180 Adelantes, at the start of 2021, there were just two weekday HST diagrams left. In their last few weeks, these trains have proved very popular with enthusiasts wanting a final ride on an Mk3 carriage on the Midland.

One of the power cars acquired from LNER was No. 43302, the record-breaking loco that reached 148.5mph

A superbly executed pan of power car No. 43274 passing Rearsby near Melton Mowbray, with the Branch Line Society special from London St Pancras to Leicester and back on May 13. JACK BOSKETT

Above: In addition to the 'celebrity' HST set, EMR has run a second set most weekdays. On May 10, No. 43251 approaches Market Harborough with the 16.45 Nottingham-London St Pancras. Power car 43272 was on the rear. GEORGE HUTTON

Left: Purple power car No. 43274 emerges into a lucky patch of sun at Kilby Bridge on April 14 with the 15.34 St Pancras to Nottingham, and the driver providing acknowledgment to the waiting enthusiasts. CHRIS MILNER

on November 1, 1987. Destined for the National Collection, the loco was repainted in InterCity livery and renumbered 43102 (as it appeared in 1987) by staff at Neville Hill depot during February this year. Depot staff followed this up by painting 43274 in a one-off EMR aubergine livery, and these two celebrity power cars have commanded considerable attention in the final few weeks of services.

The final HST duty on the Midland was on May 15, when record breaker No. 43102 appropriately led the 20.02 St Pancras to Leeds train carrying a farewell headboard, with 43274 on the rear. Now retired, 43102 will take its place at Locomotion Shildon after decommissioning.

For staff, enthusiasts and passengers, it was the end of an era, probably not too dissimilar to how everyone lamented the end of the Peaks – the feelings were similar all those years later. At least HSTs live on in Scotland, the South West, occasional CrossCountry services and charter trains.

The HST was indeed the journey shrinker. ■

The final working of an East Midlands Railway HST from St Pancras International was on May 15 when No. 43102 worked the 20.02 to Leeds, carrying a special headboard 'The Last HST From London 1982-2021'. Leaving Derby for the final time, the set heads towards Chesterfield. GAVIN THOMSON

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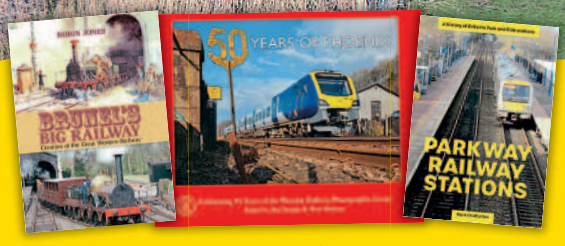
DRS's 'large logo'-liveried Nos. 37402 and 37407 make an impressive sight as they pass Great Cheverell in Wiltshire with 6Z37 11.36 Parkeston to Westbury aggregates on April 21. The train was thought to be carrying ballast from the former storage site at Harwich in Essex to the 'virtual quarry' at Westbury. GLEN BATTEN



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NB. Publication of a letter does not imply that the Editor or staff of *The Railway Magazine* necessarily agree with its contents.

Give us on-board ticket checks, not pay-as-you-leave farce

IT HAS long been the case that conductors on certain routes simply do not collect fares due to a total lack of discipline. For example on April 27, my wife and I took the 09.29 North Berwick to Edinburgh service and the conductor only got out of his seat at the rear of the train to close the doors at each station stop. It was the same on the 11.42 return from Waverley.

On arrival at Waverley we were met by three revenue protection officers, complete with ticket machines and they were joined by the conductor who then took some fares.

This created a delay of 10-15mins before passengers were cleared but on busier trains (with six-car Class 385 units) delays can be up to 30 minutes resulting in missed connections.

This pay-as-you-leave system destroys any perceived time advantage of travelling by train, especially on short journeys when in normal times express buses cover the same route. On travelling back there was no revenue protection at the platform at all and free travel was had by all who had not bought a ticket, which is now the norm as passengers know what to expect.

ScotRail have been aware of this issue for many years and its failure to address it is shameful. By all means fine passengers who deliberately evade fares, but at unstaffed stations, often with platform-based ticket machines out of order, it is wrong to blame passengers when the on board fare collectors are not doing their job.

Harry L Barker
North Berwick

Answering questions raised by Thompson feature

AS THE subject of Nicola Fox's interview in the lockdown of 2020, and having been researching and writing a book on Edward Thompson for nearly a decade, I feel I am well placed to answer the questions posed in your May 2021 Reader's Platform.

Robert Hope's question regarding the procurement of locomotive designs ignores that the four railway companies were still privately owned and run. Therefore, the LNER's B1 and L1 locomotives were designed to fit the needs of the LNER as was to be expected. The LMS 8F/LNER O6 was not intended to be a long term asset of the LNER. The agreement to build 68 examples was on the condition of these being on loan to the LNER: the GWR had a similar loan in place. The locomotives were returned to the LMS in 1946/47. (Strangely enough, the LMS 8F's design of pony truck was almost copied like for like, on the new Thompson L1, K1 and O1 locomotives).

Peter Calvert's question of "how original was Great Northern when rebuilt?" is simple enough to answer. The remaining components were driving wheel centres, some parts of the cartazzi setup, the tender frames and wheelsets and not much else. New frames, an A4 type boiler and a new tender tank together with a new cab (similar in footprint to the B1), and new cylinders and valve gear in the mould of the Thompson A2 sub classes were fitted together with a new smokebox and double chimney, echoing the A2/2s.

Stephen Smith's comments on the conjugated valve gear state that Nicola and I did not acknowledge that Holcroft designed it. He is correct that we did not acknowledge this fact: it wasn't relevant to the discussion at hand, which was whether or not Edward Thompson agreed with its continued use.

Stephen also suggests that Robert Riddles insisted Doncaster adopt the Swindon inside cylinder big end for the Gresley Pacifics: I would like to know where this information has come from. My understanding was that it was in fact K J Cook's influence in changing the setup of the frames at the ex-LNER works using Zeiss optical equipment that led to improvements in the reliability of the conjugated valve gear.

The issue of the middle big end overrun has never gone away. In fact the preserved LNER locomotives that use conjugated valve gear will all show signs of this overrun and normal wear and tear in the associated pins and combination lever as a result of use. The difference is that we now recognise its shortcomings, and with greater provision for preventative maintenance (as was the case pre-second world war) and overhaul we can be confident of its reliability.

I was delighted to see that the letters were receptive to the research and debate I have been working on for some years. Hopefully in future the tide can be turned on the body of work that has for many years characterised Thompson as a 'Richard III' of the railway world: and start to recognise what a remarkable, intelligent and heroic man he really was.

Simon A C Martin
By email

PUTTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT (*RM* MAY)

■ Our apologies to Gareth Jones for the incorrect picture credits on two of the images in the Talyllyn Railway feature on pages 48-54 in the May issue. In the same feature, the opening of the guest house was 2013, *advises reader David Kay*.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Publication of a letter does not imply that the editor or staff of *The Railway Magazine* necessarily agree with its contents.

STAR LETTER

Is ending photo charters and lineside permits the correct one?

THERE is something rather condescending (and discriminatory) about the statement general manager Helen Smith has made about the Severn Valley Railway ending photo charters and lineside passes. Simply because she expects other preserved railways to follow suit does not mean that her decision is the correct one!

Speaking as a qualified railway safety auditor, I would have expected a proper risk assessment to have been carried out before I labelled any activity as 'high risk', yet there is no mention of the SVR having undertaken one for photographic activities. How strange that the quoted safety incidents are unrelated to photography. The SVR's response is a lazy one and clearly all about trying to show the ORR it is 'doing something' about safety.

Photo charters have generated a lot of goodwill (and income) from both photographers and enthusiasts in the past. The Severn Valley (and others) should be careful about taking their support for granted, as many of them also serve as unpaid volunteers!

Andrew Royle
By email

Time for electrification

THE Why Electrification report that is on your website argues very well that a programme of electrification is needed, and the sooner it starts the better. On the other hand, it is disappointing that it is not more proactive in recommending a specific programme and a list of schemes, other than to suggest some freight routes could be electrified, mostly in the south and midlands.

An 80 page report that only includes one map, and doesn't give much impression of which routes are electrified and which aren't, is a lost opportunity.

From the perspective of large cities such as Sheffield, Nottingham, Leicester and Derby it remains unacceptable that electrification has yet to be programmed as a top priority.

It is now exactly 40 years since Sir Peter Parker's report urging an electrification programme, one that would have included MML as a fairly high priority!

David Smith
Sheffield

Last workings on Bude line

MAY I through the letters section make a request for any information regarding train workings on the final day of rail services over the Bude and North Cornwall Lines on Saturday, October 1, 1966.

I have an on-going project to identify which DMUs worked particular services on that final Saturday, and while some information has come to light via several well-known websites and elsewhere, I would be extremely grateful to hear from anyone who might still have notes or other useful information/photos. My email is: mark.harrison27016@gmail.com

Any help would be gratefully received.

Mark Harrison
by email

A3 No. 60107 *Royal Lancer* on Stoke Bank in June 1962, as featured in the April issue. T E WILLIAMS

Tom Williams' pictures evoke so many memories of steam days

MOST recently I very much enjoyed the article on Tom Williams railway photography in the April edition.

The photo of *Royal Lancer* taken on June 2, 1962 gave me special pleasure. That summer Saturday was my 13th birthday. Having by then grown out of birthday parties, my father gamely elected to drive me and several like-minded friends on a spotters' tour of London termini . We finished up at King's Cross, the highlight of the outing.

I do still have photos from that day taken with my modest Brownie camera, but sadly my spotting book has irretrievably vanished. Although *Royal Lancer* is not among those photos, my summer 1962 combined volume does contain a line under 60107.

As I made no other visits to the East Coast Main Line that year, I feel confident that my friends and I witnessed *Royal Lancer* setting off from the 'Cross that summer's afternoon ahead of her rendezvous with Tom Williams on Stoke Bank. Whether fact or fancy, your article and Tom Williams' photo brought back a flood of memories of a wonderful day out in another era.

John Arnold OBE
Shaftesbury

Panorama

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Liverpool Lime Street memories on April 22, 1967, as AL6 electric No. E3190 (left) waits time with the 10.30 to London Euston, and E3172 is in charge of a relief to the Capital. On the right a DMU is about to leave with the 10.15 to Manchester Exchange.
RM ARCHIVE/P GERALD

NCB Peckett 0-4-0ST No. 66 *Charles Nelson* (No. 1748 of 1928) propelling four full coal wagons away from Ravensworth Park drift mine over Kingsway on the Team Valley Trading Estate, Gateshead, on April 8, 1968. Today the location has transformed beyond recognition and you'd find it difficult to trace an industrial line that once ran across the dual carriageway.
TREVOR ERMEL

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The exhaust of 1929 BMAG 2-10-0T No. 99.1748 catches the first rays of the rising sun on the climb to Olbersdorf Niederdorf on the Zittauer-Schmalspurbahn with a freight working at 06.15 on April 22, 2018. The former Deutsche Reichsbahn narrow gauge line connects Zittau, Germany, with the spa towns of Kurort Oybin and Kurort Jonsdorf. MELVYN HOPWOOD

While there may be no trains, coloured lighting gives Worksop station an eerie feeling. CHRIS BOOTH

There's an incredible level of activity on the platform as an overnight Indian sleeper train from Kalka towards Agra eases to a stop at Ghaziabad Junction in the early morning of February 19, 2008. CHRIS MILNER

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GWR HST Power Car No. 43155 is artistically framed between the GWR bench on the platform at Bristol Temple Meads on April 30. JACK BOSKETT

'Jinty' 0-6-0T No. 47406 and Derby Lightweight DMU No. 79900 *Iris* create a '50s feeling at Wirksworth station on the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway on August 23, 2017, during a Time Line Events photo charter. ROBERT FALCONER

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A dramatic view of East Midlands Parkway station and Ratcliffe Power Station from a drone as celebrity East Midlands Railway HST with power cars Nos. 43274 and 43102 call with the 17.45 Nottingham to St Pancras International EMR service on April 19. STEVE DONALD

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FROM *THE RAILWAY MAGAZINE* ARCHIVES

100 YEARS AGO JUNE 1921

The New Grouping Scheme

AS first promulgated, the Government proposals for the grouping of railways met with very limited approval and were condemned in nearly every quarter of importance.

As an alternative, the Railway Companies' Association produced a four-group scheme. The new proposals of the Government Bill represent in some degree a compromise between the two, by combining the Eastern with the North Eastern instead of isolating the North Eastern and Hull & Barnsley Railways into a group by themselves.

There will be four English groups: Southern (L&SW, LB&SC, SE and LC&D), Western (GW and Welsh railways), North Western and Midland (L&NW, L&Y, Midland, North Staffs, Furness and Maryport & Carlisle), and North Eastern and Eastern (GE, GC, GN, NE and H & B Railways). Two Scottish groups are proposed, West Scottish (Caledonian, G&SW and Highland) and East Scottish (North British and Great North of Scotland). The separation of the Scottish lines from their English associates remains, however, a bone of contention.

The Scottish companies claim they are most seriously placed by the changed conditions, and the general view of the companies seems to be that the only logical course is to associate them with the appropriate English companies.

20 YEARS AGO – Special livery for Spain-bound 37s: EWS has given a bright new look to the Class 37s it is sending to Spain for use on high-speed line construction. The livery was unveiled on Class 37 No. 37899 at Thornaby on April 10, incorporating the initials of Spanish infrastructure company GIF. EWS's decision is in stark contrast to the situation in the late 1990s when the company won a similar contract from high-speed line builders in France. On that occasion, a motley collection of Class 37s in old – and often extremely scruffy – liveries was sent abroad. RON COVER

50 YEARS AGO JUNE 1971

Last day for L.T. steam

TO celebrate the end of steam locomotive operation on the Underground, London Transport is arranging a commemorative run on Sunday, June 6, to be made by 0-6-0 pannier-tank No. L.94, hauling a train of engineering vehicles from Moorgate and Barbican over the City Widened Lines, and Circle and Metropolitan Lines to Neasden Depot. Barbican Station will be opened for the occasion, and special trains of C69 stock will be run from there to Neasden Depot to witness the arrival of the steam train.

Plans to construct railway tunnel under the city of Manchester

SUBJECT to certain approvals, South East Lancashire & North East Cheshire (Selnec) Passenger Transport Executive is likely to promote a Bill in the next session of Parliament to obtain powers for the construction of an underground railway in Manchester, between Piccadilly and Victoria Stations.

Present proposals are for the new line from Ardwick Junction and passing under the central area, with underground stations at Piccadilly Station, Princess Street/Whitworth Street, St. Peters Square/Albert Square, Market Street, and Victoria, rejoining the existing Bury line at Queens Road Jct. The new alignment would be 2.75 miles long, of which 2.18 miles would be in tunnel.

20 YEARS AGO JUNE 2001

SWT retains franchise – and places biggest ever train order

STAGECOACH has been chosen as the preferred bidder for the new 20-year South West Trains franchise, beating off opposition from GNER and a First Group/Dutch Railways consortium.

Just days later, the company celebrated by announcing what it described as Britain's biggest-ever single train order – a billion-pound contract with Siemens TransportationSystems for 785 'Desiro' vehicles to replace SWT's ageing slam-door Mk1 stock.

RCTS
Britain's leading Railway Society

The RCTS: Then and now

THE pandemic has seen a vast drop in rail passenger journeys and if pre-pandemic service levels are to be maintained, it is essential that the number of travellers rises quickly as restrictions are reduced. It has been suggested by some that the operators should launch cheap fare offers to tempt the public back.

Forty years ago the country was in the grip of a severe economic depression and then the railways took initiatives to try to fill the trains, one such being the offer in late 1980 of £1 tickets for holders of Senior Citizen Railcards to travel anywhere in the country after 09.30.

The Railway Observer recorded the activities of one member who clocked up more than 6000 miles for the princely sum of £15. The person concerned was lucky in that they were based near central London. HSTs were starting to make their presence felt, and on the first two days he had reached Inverness via the East Coast route and returned to base via the West Coast line.

The next day trip was from Paddington to Penzance and return, with visits to Manchester and Exeter from Waterloo following. A more sedate day was had wandering around East Anglia but getting as far as Sheringham. Charing Cross to Ramsgate via Dover and Waterloo to Weymouth occupied the next two days.

Another trip to East Anglia, simply to travel on the experimental Leyland railbus LEV1, provided more entertainment. The Flying Scotsman and The Talisman were employed for a trip to Newcastle, on that occasion to sample the then new Tyneside Metro system. Three further days were spent riding the West Coast electrics, firstly to Liverpool and then Scotland to reach Mallaig and Oban, while the final day used an HST for an out and back trip to Swansea.

Our traveller was generally very impressed with the service. A total of 68% of the trains were within five minutes of right time, with the Scottish region being top of the class. Only two trains were more than 30 minutes late, and one of those was caused by the train hitting an obstruction, with a replacement engine being required.

Positive reports were made about the cleanliness of most trains, with buffet car staff frequently clearing rubbish on Eastern and Western services but not on the Midland, where he endured 10 hours on the Clansman without sight of any rubbish clearing.

As evidenced by this view of the rebuilt Glasgow Queen Street in November 2020, the railways have an uphill battle to regain substantial passenger numbers. The recent IET problems and the arrival of the Indian variant of Covid-19 will do little to help. MURDOCH CURRIE/RCTS

The original offer was for travel in November, but BR extended it for a further two weeks and another eight days of travel followed, which took in Cambridge twice, Leeds and York before a four-day extravaganza to end with, which allowed our intrepid traveller to reach the Isle of Skye.

The Railway Observer has in the past 12 months reported on the many service changes made due to the pandemic. Hopefully it will soon be able to record full trains running to the original timetables once more.

For information on the society, visit www.rcts.org.uk, Britain's leading railway society.

TRACKRECORD

The Railway Magazine news digest

BR Standard Class 4MT 2-6-4T No. 80080 arrives at Shottle on the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway with the 12.10pm Duffield to Wirksworth service on May 2. IAN DIXON

P66 STEAM P72 INDUSTRIAL P76 IRISH P78 NARROW GAUGE P80 METRO P82 NETWORK
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SIDELINES

Bitton break-in

A NUMBER of specialists parts were stolen from the Avon Valley Railway (AVR) on May 5 – including a South African chime steam whistle; a Gresham & Craven vertical injector & water valve; a Gresham & Craven backhead injector; a new copper main steam pipe; three BR Class 08 push-button whistle valves; several BR Standard washout plugs of various sizes; several BR/Nabic fusible plugs of various sizes; several gauge glass fittings & valves; several BR Mk. 1 steam heat traps; several coupling rod brasses of various sizes; and a large quantity of brass and bronze billets and offcuts.

Any information should be passed to Avon & Somerset Police using crime reference RAC-4RQKN. Although many AVR assets are protected with Smart Water forensic tagging, unfortunately these items weren't included.

'Night Owl' cylinders

THE Great Western Society's project to recreate a GWR '47XX' 'Night Owl' 2-8-0 has taken a key step forward with the casting of the second cylinder at Boro Foundry in Smethwick.

It will now join its sibling, cast several weeks ago. Both will be heat treated to relieve internal stresses, after which they will be machined and eventually, joined as a pair.

'Manor' on course

THE return to steam of GWR 4-6-0 No. 7812 *Erlestoke Manor* moved a stage closer at the start of May with the news that, following repair work at Tyseley Locomotive Works, its boiler had been filled with water for the first time since withdrawal at the end of 2017.

The safety valves and clacks remain to be fitted shortly and the boiler will then undergo a hydraulic test. That will be followed by steam testing before refitting to the frames. The new ashpan has also arrived at Tyseley.

It is anticipated that No. 7812 will return to the Severn Valley Railway later this year.

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Summer reopening for Llangollen?

THE Llangollen Railway Trust (LRT) hopes public services will be able to resume by August. It follows the collapse of the Llangollen Railway plc, some of the assets of which were sold at auction on May 12.

On April 28, the trust announced it had completed a deal with the plc's administrator, Cowgill Holloway Business Recovery LLP, for an undisclosed sum, to purchase certain assets belonging to the railway along with the right to use the railway. This was the first key step towards recovery.

Thoughts then turned fully to the task of preparing for reopening.

The trust said talks have been initiated with the Welsh Government, Business Wales, Denbighshire County Council and the National Heritage Lottery Fund, all of which have been positive.

Pioneering spirit: *Austin 1* was the first steam locomotive to operate at Llangollen in the heritage era in 1981. On May 18, it made a welcome return to the station in full steam to be there again at a new beginning as part of crew training. RHYS LLOYD

Approval

The Safety Management System is being updated and fresh approval is being sought from the Office of Rail & Road – a task helped by Liz Parkes, head of operations & safety at the North Yorkshire Moors Railway.

Bidding for the plc's assets was described by the trust as 'fast and furious' – particularly for the coaches and larger plant items.

"Prices paid were substantially in excess of our expectations, which is good news for the plc's administrators and we are glad all the creditors, including those who are unsecured, will benefit accordingly," the trust said in a statement.

A buyer's premium of 16%, plus 20% VAT was payable on each winning bid.

The trust secured assets it deemed essential – namely one accessible-adapted Mk.1 coach; a road rail excavator (£30,250); a Plasser Thurer 12t rail crane (£24,000); and Lowmac wagon No. B904534 with Atlas crane (£11,000).

An unidentified TSO and Mk.1 function coach No. M34584 (£8,000) were purchased by a supporter to remain at the LR.

The Mid-Norfolk Railway confirmed it had bought Mk.1 TSO No. 4702 (£38,250), while TSO No. M4947 (£30,250) has arrived at the Epping Ongar Railway.

It is understood three Mk.1s are destined for conversion into holiday accommodation in south Wales – details remain to be confirmed.

EE 0-6-0 shunter *Davy* was bought by a local scrap dealer for breaking for £11,250.

It was later resold to the Battlefield Line, arriving at Shackerstone on May 24.

Agreement

Cowans Sheldon 50t rail mounted crane No. ADRC96718 was bought by Sandbach Commercial Dismantlers Ltd. Agreement was subsequently reached for LRT to buy it over an extended period, including offsetting the value raised from supplying day-to-day scrap materials.

Prior to the auction, RMB No. 1864 was sold to Spa Valley Railway.

Pete Edwards, trust chairman, said: "It was important to secure the principal assets that will enable us to continue preparations for reopening without further interruption. The support we've received from so many donors, without which we may well not be able to look forward to running again this year, is very much appreciated. Friendly bidders have acquired two further coaches and a significant amount of machine tools which will remain on the railway."

The trust owns two steam locomotives – GWR 0-6-0PT No. 7754, which is under overhaul – and Kitson 0-6-0ST *Austin 1*. The latter is to go on hire to the Somerset & Dorset Railway at Midsomer Norton until September. Due to arrive for crew training in June, the locomotive is to star in the July 2-4 mixed traction gala and is also set to run on other dates throughout the summer, which remain to be confirmed.

Work to reopen the railway is well underway – including completing repairs on the Dee Bridge and in the tunnel, as well as safety and regulatory matters.

"We are on target to reopen in late July or early August," Pete concluded.

■ Donations can be made online at https://llangollenrailway.enthuse.com or by cheques to payable to Llangollen Railway Trust Ltd, sent to: The Station, Abbey Road, Llangollen LL20 8SN.

Eddystone makes Swanage return after £350k overhaul

'West Country' class Bulleid Pacific No. 35028 *Eddystone* is back in action on Swanage Railway metals following a three-year £350,000 overhaul.

Rescued from the Barry scrapyard, where it languished for 22 years after being withdrawn from BR service in 1964, restoration of *Eddystone* began in 1986. Completed by Southern Locomotives Limited (SLL) in 2003, the locomotive hauled its first Swanage Railway train in the autumn of 2003. Withdrawn in 2014, work started on its major overhaul in 2018.

Swanage Railway locomotive, carriage and wagon director Kevin Potts said: "*Eddystone* looks fantastic after much hard work from a relatively small team of staff and volunteers. Despite delays caused by Covid-19 – and subject to restrictions in working practices – the overhaul has been completed to a high standard. No. 34028 is one of the Swanage Railway's steam fleet operated as part of a long-standing agreement with SLL."

Minus its tender, the 4-6-2 was transported by road on April 26 from the Swanage Railway's non rail connected engineering works at Herston to the heritage line's road-rail interchange, west of Norden station, where it was towed by rail the 5½ miles to Swanage station.

BR Standard '4MT' 2-6-4T No. 80104's boiler certificate expired on May 11. To support the fleet – including SR 'U' 2-6-0 No. 31806 – Darlington Railway Preservation Society-owned BR '2MT' No. 78018 has been hired on a short-term basis from the Great Central Railway. *Eddystone* formally entered public service on May 24 after being run in.

No. 34028 *Eddystone* hauls a test train at Harman's Cross on May 18. ANDREW P M WRIGHT

Ian Riley's LMS 'Black Five' No. 44871 passes Moorgate on May 15 on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway. MICHAEL ANDERSON

'Black Five' duo among North Yorkshire Moors 2021 steam line-up

TWO LMS 'Black Fives' will form part of the operational steam fleet this year on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway.

Resident No. 5428 *Eric Treacy* has returned to action after an 18 month absence following the completion of extensive maintenance. On May 7, it ran light engine and also double-headed with SR 'S15' No. 825 to Goathland on the 2.30pm from Grosmont, followed by further light engine trips up the bank.

Riley & Son (E) Ltd's No. 44871 has been hired to provide further flexibility. The 4-6-0 arrived under its own power from Carnforth on May 11.

Other locos available for use include SR 'S15' 4-6-0 No. 825, BR '9F' 2-10-0 No. 92134, BR Standard '4MT' 2-6-4T No. 80136, Kitson 0-6-2T Lambton No. 29 and Cockerill 0-4-0VBT *Lucie*.

Volunteers sought to help progress Fairburn overhaul

The overhaul of No. 42085, one of the Lakeside & Haverthwaite Railway's (LHR) two BR Fairburn 2-6-4Ts, is progressing – with volunteers welcome to assist the project. The BR 4MT was lifted on April 12 to release the bogie, pony truck and driving wheels. This task was led by the John Fowler & Co engineering team.

The focus is now on volunteer efforts to get all the dismantled sub assemblies cleaned down, inspected and repainted.

Repairs to the boiler are complete – the work having included the replacement of lower sections of the firebox outer wrapper and throat plate, plus a new front tube plate. A new smokebox and ashpan have also been fabricated.

"Unfortunately, a consequence of the coronavirus pandemic is that capital expenditure funds to complete the overhaul of the No. 42085's chassis are no longer available," said Stephen Maher, custodian of No 42085 and director of Lakeside and Haverthwaite Railway Co. Ltd.

Resources

"This will delay the overhaul of axleboxes and motion, plus fabrication of new frame stretchers and bunker until funds can be generated to proceed. There is, however, much that we can do with volunteer effort to refurbish other stripped components ready for re-assembly.

"Any potential volunteers who would like to help us get No. 42085 running again would be most welcome. Please contact the railway."

Meanwhile, the push is on to get Ivatt '2MT' No. 46441 re-assembled and back in steam. The rebore of the valves and cylinders is expected take place at Haverthwaite soon.

No. 42085 was lifted off its wheels on April 12. STEPHEN MAHER

Work on the boiler at Carnforth continues outside of normal working hours. The firebox lower sides have been cut and the foundation ring rivets removed, ready for removal. Both lower sides will be replaced, as will the lower part of the throat plate. The rear plate is fit for further service and will remain as is. Off site work has continued on boiler fitting refurbishment and production of new studding. Repairs to the tender drag box and water tank were completed last year by John Fowler & Co.

Fabrication

Under supervision of Chris Beet, members of the team are currently working on a new smokebox.

Last steamed in 2002, No. 46441 was displayed at the Ribble Steam Railway until April 2018, when it moved to the LHR to be returned to action.

The line currently has five operational steam locomotives – BR Fairburn '4MT' No. 42073, Bagnall 0-6-0ST *Princess*, Barclay 0-4-0ST *David*, Bagnall 0-6-0ST *Victor* and Barclay 0-6-0T No. 1245. Hunslet Austerity 0-6-0ST *Repulse* is undergoing overhaul to its motion and is expected to be available for service later this season.

SIDELINES

Bridgnorth upgrade

THE Severn Valley Railway has launched a £425,000 Home & Dry appeal to transform Bridgnorth locomotive works.

It will fund a new roof with insulated panels, at least 15% of which will be translucent to maximise daylight. People, rolling stock and machinery will be properly sheltered and protected. Energy-efficient LED lighting will be installed, saving electricity and providing well-illuminated conditions. An overhead travelling crane is also part of the plans. Donations of any amount are welcome, but those giving £75 or more will received a signed, limited-edition print depicting Bridgnorth locomotive works by resident artist Alan Reade, and donations of £1,000 or more will be acknowledged on a permanent scroll of honour within the building. Details at www.svrtrust.org.uk

Nene Valley visitor

DIDCOT Railway Centre-based GWR large prairie No. 4144 is to make its inaugural visit to the Nene Valley Railway from mid-June until late August. The 2-6-2T will be available for passenger services, driver experience courses. SR Battle of Britain Pacific No. 34081 *92 Squadron* was despatched to Locomotive Maintenance Services of Loughborough on April 30 for a replacement section of plate to be welded into the firebox crownsheet.

New 'mess' facilities

GLOUCESTERSHIRE Warwickshire Steam Railway volunteers took occupation of a new welfare building on April 17, which is a tasteful extension of the GWR-built goods shed at Toddington. Known as 'The Goods Shed' it offers around 4,200sq ft arranged over two floors, including an 872sq ft ground floor yet-to-be-fitted-out extension to the machine shop, which occupies the original building. Costing approximately £500,000, the welfare facilities replace a Mk.1 coach which had been used since the 1980s.

J27 in Tyneside gala

THE North Tyneside Steam Railway celebrates its 30th anniversary with a gala from July 9-11 featuring visiting J27 No. 65894. Owned by the North Eastern Locomotive Preservation Group, the 0-6-0 is based at North Yorkshire.

'N7' progress

THE overhaul of GER 'N7' 0-6-2T No. 9621 continues at the East Anglian Railway Museum. The tanks and buffer beam have been sign written after being coach painted. Inside the boiler barrel has been needlegunned, while the outside of the firebox has received aluminium paint.

'Rare track' trips

THE Nene Valley Railway Wagon Group is offering the chance to travel behind Aveling & Porter 2-2-0WT *Blue Circle* over 'rare track' on June 6 and 20. For a small donation to the group, brake van rides will be available in Wansford yard.

West Somerset plc board rejects charity restructure

THE West Somerset Railway plc board has dismissed proposals for a radical organisational restructure, involving the creation of a new incorporated charity to own the line's physical assets, with a controlled subsidiary to operate the railway.

The plans were developed following the initial report by John Bailey in May 2020 on behalf of the Heritage Railway Association into conflicts and acrimonious disputes between different groups within the WSR umbrella.

In a statement the WSR plc said: "Although much sound progress has been made with our earlier financial recovery plans from 2017-2019, the railway has not yet fully recovered from the challenges of these years before Covid-19.

"Attempting to re-position the WSR plc now as a subsidiary organisation of a brand-new charity, complete with all the attendant financial risk around assets, accountability and financial responsibilities, is not something that the WSR plc board feels it can support.

"The plc board is also not convinced that the proposals will deliver the anticipated full range of benefits required to justify the scale and scope of organisational change.

"In the outline questionnaire circulated to all 8,311 WSR plc shareholders seeking their views on the Bailey reforms, only 391 shareholders responded, representing just 4.7%. It was considered that the response rate was too low to justify taking further action on the proposals at the present time.

"The indicative costs of implementation of the current Bailey reform proposals are felt to be considerable and likely to run to at least six figures. In the current financial climate, the board does not feel that this would be a sensible use of the plc's limited resources."

The plc added: "One of the key requirements facing us will be the need to convince the Office of Rail and Road as regulator, and other key stakeholders, that these proposals will not only fully deliver significant additional benefits over a long period of time, but also that they will not impede the corporate responsibilities of the plc for the safe and effective operation of the WSR and the stewardship of its assets. The board considers that such a case has not been made convincingly.

"The board readily recognises that one motivation for the Bailey proposals was the belief that this would offer us a better opportunity for external fundraising. The board has considered and researched the experiences of other heritage railways, and other similar organisations, and has concluded that the present structures in place do not preclude effective fund-raising.

"There will need to be renewed fund raising efforts in the coming months, and the board looks forward to working with all of its partners to achieve significant results."

WSR plc chairman Jonathan Jones-Pratt said: "We recognise that some of those who've worked on this initial feasibility investigation will be disappointed by our decision, but we believe that this is the time that all the members of the railway family really need to work together and focus on getting our line back in action first and foremost.

"I am certain that when we pull together, we will succeed. We've come through challenging times in the past and we can again!"

Meanwhile, a year's free membership is being offered to all working volunteers on the railway who do not yet belong to the WSR Association. The supporting body is celebrating its 50th anniversary.

WSR services resumed on May 22, running out and back from Bishops Lydeard to Williton only. Tickets can be booked at www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk

'Heavy freight' reaches frame milestone

THE major overhaul of GWR '2884' 2-8-0 No. 3850 at the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Steam Railway (GWSR) has taken a significant step forward with the alignment of the new front end to the mainframes.

"We've built a complete new front end in the workshops at Toddington," explained Mike Solloway, vice-chairman of Dinmore Manor Locomotive Ltd (DMLL), which owns the engine.

"We've had two new cylinders cast and machined, with valve liners fitted, two new extension frames, a new racking plate and two new supporting angles. The only original parts in this assembly are the pony truck suspension beam pivot casting underneath."

On May 10, No. 3850's new front end was turned over and through 180° at Toddington ready to go into the frames.

Process

"As per Swindon practice, we've built it upside down," added Mike. "It's so much easier. They used a jig – we did similarly, ours being based on a scrap smokebox from No. 2874.

"We cut the bottom out of the smokebox and used the bit that would sit on the saddle as a means of building this new front end – it meant we had something which had all the matching bolt holes for where the smokebox would usually sit on the saddle, so that was used as a jig. It worked perfectly."

May 15 saw the new assembly moved carefully into place – the next stage being optically aligning the old and new.

"We're now looking at the alignment work – including drilling, reaming and bolting it up. The cylinders are key to everything that follows next, such as the wheelcentres," said Mike.

"A host of components, including the overhauled wheelsets are ready for fitting, but we cannot fit them until the front end is all in place – we'll then work backwards."

The boiler is well advanced at Riley & Son (E) Ltd, with the majority of major expense carried out. It now awaits the new front barrel section fitting and tubing – the tubes and tubeplate are to hand.

Background

The tender is substantially complete – with only final painting and the welding in of a replacement section of flooring in the coal space and some pipework outstanding.

DMLL owns three locomotives – No. 3850, which was withdrawn for overhaul in 2015; WR 'Manor' 4-6-0 No. 7820 *Dinmore Manor* is operational on the GWSR; and '2884' 2-8-0 No. 3845, which is stored at a private site awaiting restoration from Barry condition.

No. 3850's new front end was turned over and through 180° at Toddington on May 10, ready to go into the frames. DMLL

Ernie will take up his new role in the summer. SDR

New South Devon general manager

ERNEST Elsworth-Wilson has been appointed as the the South Devon Railway's new general manager.

Ernie, 27, has been a volunteer on the South Devon Railway for over 15 years – including operating, permanent way and locomotive departments.

After nearly two years employed full-time in the SDR's operations management team from 2011-13 as a management trainee, he moved to First Great Western (now GWR) as a guard. He progressed to area operations manager and to train service delivery manager for the West of England before progressing to lead area operations manager – Central and West, with GWR.

While working at GWR, he has completed an HND in Railway Operations Management with the Institute of Railway Operators.

Living up to its name: With colourful flora adorning the cuttings on the Bluebell Railway, Standard '4MT' 2-6-4T No. 80151 heads one of the members specials operated on May 19 prior to reopening to the public the following day. DAVE BOWLES

Western power tackles the 'Alps': The Mid-Hants Railway held its spring steam gala from April 30 to May 3 featuring two GWR visitors – '55XX' 2-6-2T No. 5526 from the South Devon Railway and '57XX 0-6-0PT No. 4612 from the Bodmin & Wenford. Resident performers included 'Schools' 4-4-0 No. 30925 *Cheltenham*, BR '4MT' 2-6-0 No. 76017, Urie 'S15' 4-6-0 No. 506 and BR '2MT' No. 41312. No. 5526 departs Ropley on May 3. JAMES HAMILTON

Wheel progress is made on *County of Montgomery*

THE Churchward County Trust (CCT) project to construct No. 3840 *County of Montgomery* has taken a significant step forward with the casting of the first pair of four 6ft 8½in coupled wheels.

The first two wheels for the rear wheelset were cast at Trefoil Steel in Sheffield during April using the pattern kindly loaned to the CCT by the Great Western Society at Didcot, which had previously been used to cast the wheels for 'Saint' 4-6-0 No. 2999 *Lady of Legend*.

Before the second pair of wheels are cast, Trefoil Steel will modify the pattern to increase the size of the centre boss.

The original Churchward 'Counties' had two different designs of wheel; the leading driven wheels having a 5¾in centre boss and the rear wheels a 4¾in centre boss. The pattern as loaned has the smaller boss, hence the need to make the alteration. The modification work will cost £2,700 to complete.

■ Details of how you can support the project can be found at the website www.churchwardcounty.org.uk

Strathspey 'Black Five' back in action!

THE oldest surviving LMS 'Black Five' No. 5025 moved under its own steam on the Strathspey Railway for the first time in 28 years on May 12.

Built in 1934, No. 5025 entered traffic on the Highland Main Line, spending most of subsequent working life in North West England. In 1968, it was bought directly from BR by Ted Watkinson for the embryonic Strathspey project – the 4-6-0 hauling trains on that line after it opened in 1978. It also worked some main line specials.

Withdrawn for overhaul in 1993, dismantling commenced in 2010. It soon became apparent that complete renewal of some of the locomotive's components was necessary, so it was decided to restore it to its 'as new' condition – including its original chimney height.

Undertaking

A new smokebox, cylinders, front end frames, cab, injectors and tender tank have been fitted as part of the overhaul, together with major boiler repairs.

The overhaul has been carried out by a small team of Strathspey staff led by Nathan Lightowler, the line's engine shed foreman, and volunteers from the railway and WEC Watkinson Trust, which owns No. 5025.

The WEC Watkinson Trust started to raise finance for the overhaul in the mid-2000s and has been helped by grants from the Lottery Heritage Fund, the Strathspey Railway Company, the Strathspey Railway Association, the Strathspey Railway Trust and donations from the many individuals.

After repainting in its original LMS livery, No. 5025 is expected to enter service on the Strathspey Railway later in the in the year. JAYNE EMSLEY

SIDELINES

Workshop open days

THE G5 Locomotive Company is hoping to resume its open days, starting on July 3 at 10am. Covid-19 measures will be in place, including masks and contact details for track and trace. The workshop can be found at Hackworth Industrial Park, Shildon, DL4 1HF. More details from www.g5locomotiveltd.co.uk or 07764 304210.

Bluebell trademarked

THE Bluebell Railway is now a registered trademark after a successful application to the Intellectual Property Office. The railway's logo now appears with the letter R inside a circle to show it is a registered trademark.

Tanfield refresh

GREAT Northern Railway carriage No. 1441 (TR No. 6) has returned to the Tanfield Railway following its renovation at Stanegate Restorations in Haltwhistle.

No. 1441 has had its compartments reinstated, returning it to its original design. In addition to fresh paintwork, new seats have been fitted and doors have been replaced or repaired as required. The renovation was made possible thanks to the Government's Culture Recovery Fund.

'Coal Tank' progress

LNWR 'Coal Tank' No. 1054 remains on target to return to action by the autumn.

Currently under overhaul by the Bahamas Locomotive Society at the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway, the 0-6-2T's boiler has passed its out of frames and will shortly be returned to frames, followed by another test. As the sole operational LNWR locomotive, No. 1054 is set to play a pivotal role in next year's commemorations to mark the centenary of the merger of the Lancashire & Yorkshire and the London & North Western Railways. Several exciting ideas are currently under discussion, involving main line and heritage sectors alike.

'Prairie' visitor

THE South Devon Railway GWR 'prairie' No. 5526 has arrived at Dartmouth Steam Railway, where it is due to spend the season.

£40k 'Jinty' appeal

THE East Lancashire Railway (ELR) is appealing for £40,000 to help complete the overhaul of its LMS 'Jinty' 0-6-0T No. 47324 by 2023.

Prior to Covid-19, most of the repairs had been completed on the frames to get them ready for re-wheeling, while many of the cab fittings have also been refurbished. Copper welding on the firebox has been undertaken and a new foundation ring made.

Donations are sought to complete the boiler work, which requires crown stays in the firebox, plus welding in new plate work, stays and tubes. Visit www.justgiving.com/campaign/ELR-Jinty

Best practice celebrated in HRA industry awards

THE preservation movement showcased its plethora of achievements in the face of adversity arising from the Covid-19 pandemic when the industry's trade body, Heritage Railway Association (HRA), announced the winners of its annual awards in an online ceremony on April 28.

The Dartmouth Steam Railway took the Outstanding Visitor Attraction trophy, placing the Lynton & Lynmouth Cliff Railway, Didcot Railway Centre, the Seaton Tramway and the Statfold Barn Railway as runners-up.

The Lord Faulkner Award for the Young Volunteer of the Year, which acknowledges a distinguished contribution made by one or more young persons under the age of 26, was won by Oliver Edwards of the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway (WLLR). Runners-up were the Severn Valley Railway's Tom Mills and the Somerset & Dorset Railway Heritage Trust's Michael Abbott.

The Morgan Award for Preservation was won by the Mid-Suffolk Light Railway for its Shredded Wheat Fowler 0-4-0DM. Runners-up were the Midland & Great Northern Joint Railway Society for the restoration of GNR/M&GN Third No. 129; the Great Central Railway (Quorn Wagon & Wagon) for the restoration of three containers; and the Railway Preservation Society of Ireland for the Guinness Grain Van No. 504.

The Mid-Hants Railway's Watercress Line film unit won the Award for External Communications. The runners-up were the Didcot Railway Centre for its marketing communications; Swanage Railway's 'Save Our Service' film-makers; the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railway's (FfWHR) media and communications department; and the Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway Preservation Society's 60-year celebration book It's Still a Lot of Fun!.

Innovation

In the Internal Communications category, the award was taken by the Talyllyn Railway for its Control Centre public on-line subscription service. Runners-up were the Midland & Great Northern Joint Railway Society for their summer/autumn issue of Joint Line; the Great Western Society for the *Great Western Echo* magazine; the Bluebell Railway for *The Bluebell Times*; and the WLLR for 'The Earl' supporters' newsletter.

The new award for Most Innovative Fundraising Idea saw five contenders, with the Seaton Tramway's Tramathon Live 2020 as the winner, and the Talyllyn Railway's Virtual Visit Appeal, the Mid-Hants Railway and Bahamas Locomotive Society's Autumn Gala, and Bluebell Railway's 'Steam Returns to Bluebell Railway' film as runners-up.

The Coiley Award is presented to an HRA member who has completed an outstanding engineering project in the field of locomotive overhaul, restoration or preservation. Top honour for 2021 went to the FfWHR for its restoration of the Large England 0-4-0STT *Welsh Pony*, with the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway's 'Skeggy Simplex', and the Tanfield's 1904 Barclay 0-6-0ST *Horden* as runners-up.

The HRA Award for Small Groups drew seven nominations, with the trophy going to the Downs Light Railway Trust for its achievements with youth engagement. Runners-up were the Southern Electric Traction Group CIC for 4VEP unit No 3417; the Hull and Barnsley Railway Stock Fund for its move to Hull College; the Tarka Valley Railway CIO for Steaming Ahead; the Bahamas Locomotive Society for Steve Allsop's 50 years' service; the East Somerset Railway for its platform, museum and outreach project; and the Great Central Railway for the Quorn Wagon and Wagon Group.

The HRA Annual Award (Large Groups) was won by the Lynton & Lynmouth Cliff Railway for its Top Wheel installation. The Isle of Wight Steam Railway platform teams, the Swanage Railway's social media team and the Dartmouth Steam Railway & Riverboat Company were the runners-up.

Excellence

In recognition of 30 years of Class 50 preservation excellence, the new Diesel Locomotion Award was won by the Class 50 Alliance. The Mid-Suffolk Light Railway's Shredded Wheat locomotive and the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway 'Skeggy Simplex' were runners-up.

Ian Smith of the Middleton Railway won *The Railway Magazine* Lifetime Achievement Award. The *Heritage Railway* magazine Interpretation Award went to the Narrow Gauge Railway Museum at Tywyn. The *Rail Express* Modern Traction Award was taken by the Engineering Team at Island Line.

While Cockerill 0-4-0VBT *Lucie* won *Steam Railway* magazine's readers' poll.

HRA chief executive Steve Oates said: "We were delighted by the huge positive response we saw, with record numbers of entries in several categories. Throughout these almost impossible times, the heritage rail sector has not only continued to deliver the highest standards in restoration and preservation, but it's also set new benchmarks."

SERVICE WITH A SMILE: "I think the Great Central should be marketed as 'the friendly railway' – 95% of the drivers give you a wave," writes photographer Alan Weaver. BR Standard '9F' 2-10-0 No. 92214 *City of Leicester* is seen at Kinchley Lane on April 17, complete with a friendly wave from the driver. Immediately behind the locomotive is LMS inspection saloon No. 999503, which has recently been refurbished and provides ideal accommodation for small private functions. Trains run on weekends and selected weekdays. ALAN WEAVER

DOUBLE-HEADED DELIGHT AT CRANMORE: **A week after it resumed operations, the East Somerset Railway held a spring gala over the weekend of April 24/25. Ivatt 2-6-0 No. 46447 and GWR 2-6-2T No. 4555, recently returned from boiler work at Tyseley, were in operation on a four-coach passenger train. Barclay 0-4-0ST *Lady Nan* was used on the 'local' four-wagon demonstration goods service between the locomotive shed and the tanker sidings by the station. The mogul and prairie, which is in the middle of a three-year hire period from the Dartmouth Steam Railway, took their turns on the goods during the day. Coupled back-to-back, the pair double headed the last train of the day at 4pm to Mendip Vale on April 25. PETER NICHOLSON**

ORR launches risk management tool tailored for heritage railways

THE ORR (Office of Rail and Road), the safety and economic regulator for Britain's railways, has launched a risk management model tailored for heritage railways to help control health and safety risks.

The new model – Topic Set 1 – is designed to help railway organisations understand the maturity of their safety management system to improve reliability, performance, and overall satisfaction of staff and passengers.

ORR said it has worked with the heritage sector to develop the criteria of its Risk Management Maturity Model (RM3). This has more focused RM3 descriptors relevant in a heritage railway environment, making it a smaller and more readily applicable set of criteria than the 26 found in the full RM3 2019.

The intent is to provide descriptors which reflect the heritage sector's operating characteristics and risk profile.

The new tool followed a trial of the topic set at six heritage railway focused RM3 briefings in late 2019. Building on the positive feedback, the ORR consulted with the industry in 2020, and used this to further develop the Topic Set to reflect the needs of the sector. A key new element describes what good governance looks and feels like, intended to help heritage groups develop their leadership and governance capability; areas ORR see as critical for the future health of the sector.

Ian Skinner, head of non-mainline and lead for heritage railways at the ORR, said: "RM3 is relevant to the minor and heritage railway sector and is a useful tool to help both ORR and the railways consider safety management system capability, identify areas for development and provide a benchmark for year-on-year comparisons.

Ian Skinner, ORR's head of non-mainline and lead for heritage railways. GARETH EVANS

"We believe our tailored tool now makes the RM3 approach more accessible and meaningful as a tool for those responsible for implementing, analysing and improving heritage railway safety management. Users should find that the additional examples of heritage-centred evidence make it easier to determine maturity levels in their organisation."

Volunteers back on *Duke of Gloucester*

WITH the resumption of working parties in a Covid-19 secure area at Tyseley Locomotive Works (TLW), physical volunteer activity is now underway once again on No. 71000 *Duke of Gloucester*, which is being returned to main line action. This allows four people to attend on each Wednesday and six on each Saturday. BR Class 8 Steam Locomotive Trust volunteers are currently working on the Pacific's cab, Caprotti boxes and the tender.

Meanwhile, TLW staff are progressing with the completion of the machining of the piston heads and rods – plus the front and rear cylinder covers. This will mean that the cylinders can be reassembled and connected to the slide bars, which is one of the improvements being carried out during the Pacific's current rebuild.

The cab is among the areas currently receiving attention on No. 71000. BRC8SLT

Midsomer Norton wagon fleet strengthened

THE Somerset & Dorset Railway Trust (SDRT) at Midsomer Norton has boosted its wagon fleet with the acquisition of an ex-British Railways 'SNCF' 16T mineral wagon from the National Railway Museum.

Built for use in liberated France post-Second World War, these wagons were imported back into Britain in 1950 and became a part of BR's coal wagon fleet. The trust says it has photographic evidence of these wagons around the Somerset coal fields and S&D, often being hauled by a Fowler 7F 2-8-0.

No. B 192437 arrived on April 21 and following cosmetic restoration, it will join the line's demonstration freight train.

Work has recently started on the restoration of PalVan No. B 779696, donated by the Swanage Railway last year.

Meanwhile, BR Mk.3a restaurant car No. 10023, which previously served as the buffet at Midsomer Norton station is to move to Chant Cider Farm at West Pennard, Glastonbury.

The site is already home to Thomas Hill 4wDH No. 136C of 1964. Volunteers from the SDRT were on site at the farm on May 2 to lay track ready for the coach to be installed on. The carriage is to serve as a café at the farm, which is alongside the A361 road.

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SIDELINES

Kerr, Stuart well tank moves to Barry

BILL Parker's Kerr, Stuart 0-4-0WT *Willy* (3063/1918) moved to the Barry Tourist Railway on April 23 as the line's second resident steam loco.

The former National Shipyard, Chepstow, loco worked the line's reopening brakevan rides on May 2 and will share future duties with Sentinel 4wVBT *Susan* (9537/1952). *Willy* is expected to stay in South Wales until its boiler certificate expires next year.

Cover at last for Scolton Manor's *Margaret*

FORMER Great Western Railway Fox Walker & Co 0-6-0ST No. 1378 *Margaret* (410/1878) has finally been given protection from the elements as part of its ongoing cosmetic restoration at Scolton Manor Museum in Pembrokeshire.

A specially-built canopy and platform has been constructed over and around the ex-Kidwelly Tinplate Company survivor, which will help prevent further deterioration of the loco.

Tyneside 'Austerity' stripped down for assessment

THE North Tyneside Steam Railway (Stephenson Steam Railway) has stripped down Hunslet 'Austerity' 0-6-0ST No. 69 (3785/1953) in order to have the boiler assessed.

The loco, which arrived at Middle Engine Lane from Embsay last August, will be taken into the workshop for work to begin once the railway has completed the overhaul of Peckett 0-6-0ST *Ashington No. 5*.

'Black Five' owner acquires Barclay *Harry*

PETER Best, the owner of 'Black Five' No. 44806, 'S160' 2-8-0 No. 2253 *Omaha* and 2ft gauge 'NG/G16' No. 130, has added Andrew Barclay 0-4-0ST *Harry* (1823/1924) to his growing locomotive collection.

Harry, which famously worked for Crossley's Scrap Merchants at Shipley well into the 1980s, arrived at Mr Best's home from the Pontypool & Blaenavon Railway on May 9, where it will stay until it is sent away for restoration.

Unique four-coupled Manning, Wardle goes on the market

THE only standard gauge Manning, Wardle 0-4-0ST remaining in the UK, No. 14 *E B Wilson* (1795/1912), is being offered for sale by its owner for offers in the region of £40,000.

The Barrow Hill-based locomotive has been the subject of an extensive yet incomplete restoration, which has seen much of the heavy engineering already completed. However, progress halted owing to the owner's other commitments, and consequently the reluctant decision was made to sell the loco rather than see it deteriorate.

Repairs

The 1948-built boiler is in a good state of repair, with all work complete apart from re-tubing. It has a full set of (mostly) original boiler fittings with it, including new Manning, Wardle injectors, non-ferrous and other mechanical parts.

Below the running plate new tyres have been fitted, new crown brasses provided and journals turned, the cylinders re-bored and new piston rings fitted. Additionally, all necessary components are present to finish the restoration, including vacuum braking equipment, platework, bolts, shims and fixings.

The loco has had a varied career, going new in 1912 to Thomas W Ward's Albion Works in Sheffield. Its time in Sheffield was brief and it moved the following year to John Lysaght & Co's steelworks in Scunthorpe, and later to the Wensley Lime Co Ltd at Preston-under-Scar, North Yorkshire, in the mid-1930s. Here it received a new boiler, supplied by Robert Stephenson & Hawthorns in 1948.

By 1957 the Preston-under-Scar site had been modernised and No. 1795, now in the ownership of the South Durham Steel & Iron Company Ltd, was sent to the firm's Irchester Quarries, where it received the number 14.

It proved to be a popular loco at Irchester, being set aside for preservation in August 1969 upon its withdrawal after 57 years' service.

Its first home was at Quainton Road, where restoration commenced – it even received the name *Brill* for a short time. After a few years the loco was sold to the Northamptonshire Ironstone Railway, but it eventually fell into a state of disrepair and returned to Quainton in October 1998 under new ownership.

Manning, Wardle 0-4-0ST *E B Wilson* at Barrow Hill Roundhouse, showing the extent of the restoration work carried out to date. GARY BOYD-HOPE

More moves

Further restoration was completed over the course of the next few years, but it moved again in March 2005 to the Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway, and yet again the following year to the Middleton Railway, where the current restoration was started. It moved to its current home at Barrow Hill Roundhouse in 2012.

Viewing of the loco can be arranged by appointment only, and serious enquiries should be directed to steambuff@btinternet.com

Beamish celebrates 150 years of resident *Coffee Pot*

INDUSTRIAL steam on two gauges was the centrepiece of Beamish Museum's celebrations over the recent early May Bank Holiday, marking the 150th anniversary of its resident Head, Wrightson 0-4-0VBT *Coffee Pot No. 1*.

The museum's 1900s colliery was the setting for the event, which featured no fewer than five locomotives in steam. These included the 1871-built *Coffee Pot*, alongside Stephen Lewin 0-4-0ST No. 18 and Chris Beet's former Yates Duxbury & Sons Peckett 'R2' 0-4-0ST *May* (1370/1915), the latter having been especially transferred by low-loader from the museum's Rowley station demonstration line to the colliery.

Joining them were two of the 2ft gauge resident locos – ex-Penrhyn Quarry Andrew Barclay 0-4-0WT *Glyder* (1994/1931) and the replica Stephen Lewin 0-4-0GT *Samson*. All five provided shunting demonstrations; the other rail and tramway systems are out of use until the museum reopens fully.

Head, Wrightson 0-4-0VBT No. 1 passes Peckett No. 1370 in the Beamish Colliery yard during the *Coffee Pot* 150th anniversary celebrations on May 1. MATT DITCH

1953-built 0-6-0STs return in Staffordshire

Above: Hunslet 0-6-0ST *Holly Bank No. 3* undertakes some trial shunting at the Chasewater Railway's Brownhills West yard during its first steaming on April 25. ALISTAIR GRIEVE

Left: Foxfield-based *Florence No. 2* is pulled into the sunlight on April 25 for the first time following its overhaul and repaint. KIERON RIGBY

THE Chasewater and Foxfield railways were both preparing to welcome back two of their popular 0-6-0STs during early May following the completion of respective 10-yearly overhauls.

On April 30 the NCB blue-liveried Hunslet 0-6-0ST *Holly Bank No. 3* (3783/1953) successfully passed its steam test at Chasewater in front of the boiler inspector, paving the way for a return to traffic.

The loco's boiler was overhauled by Locomotive Maintenance Services in Loughborough, and had actually passed its out-of-frames steam test back in June 2019.

The boiler was returned to the loco's frames at Chasewater, but then the coronavirus struck and the rebuild was inevitably delayed.

The overhaul has included extensive refurbishment of the rear wheelset springing and axleboxes, which has significantly improved its riding characteristics. The completed loco made its first post-overhaul moves at Brownhills West on April 25 and, once minor cosmetic work has been completed, the former *Darfield No. 1* hauled the railway's first steam-hauled passenger trains of 2021 on May 23.

A few miles away at the Foxfield Railway, Dave Donkin's Giesl ejector-fitted Bagnall 0-6-0ST *Florence No. 2* (3059/1953) is back in one piece, having last run in 2015. This was the second major overhaul the former Florence Colliery loco has received since arriving at Foxfield in 2000, the boiler being sent to Israel Newton & Son at Cromford for repair. Bottom end work was carried out by Mr Donkin and Kieron Rigby; the latter also completing a repaint of the loco at Caverswall Road. A final steam test was expected in mid-May, after which the loco will re-enter service on the FR's heavier services.

EX-MARSTONS BREWERY LOCO ON THE CUSP OF LONG-AWAITED FOXFIELD COMEBACK

THE long-awaited return to steam of Hawthorn Leslie 0-4-0ST *Marston, Thompson & Evershed No. 3* (3581/1924) occurred at the Foxfield Railway on May 10.

The former Burton upon Trent brewery locomotive has been the subject of a lengthy restoration by the Mitchell family at Caverswall Road, and was due to undergo its final steam test in mid-May.

The overhauled boiler passed its hydraulic test and was steamed both out and in the frames during February, and the loco has been rapidly reassembled since then.

"The restoration is now very much on the home straight," Simon Mitchell told *The RM*.

"The remaining jobs include the pipework for the steam supply to the vacuum ejector and steam heating, and the lubrication pipework to the axle boxes from an additional mechanical lubricator.

"Machining and fitting of new crosshead slippers is in progress, which will allow the setting of the slide bars."

No. 3 underwent a final steam test on May 10 at the same time as *Florence No. 2*, with running in commencing as soon as the motion has been fitted.

This will see the 1924-built loco move under its own steam for the first time in 45 years.

No. 3 has spent the greater part of its 97-year existence in Staffordshire, having gone new to Marston's brewery in Burton, where it remained in regular used until 1955 when it was relegated to spare engine.

It continued in this capacity, seeing just five weeks' use a year until finally being sold for preservation in 1967 when it moved to Foxfield.

However, it left again in 1970 for the fledgling Great Central Railway at Loughborough.

It did see some use in the early years but was out of use by the mid-1970s. It returned to Foxfield in 1996.

An immaculate *Marston, Thompson & Evershed No. 3* shows off its recently-applied lining at Caverswall Road during its steam test at the Foxfield Railway on May 10. DAVE SCRAGG

Empress leads Blaenavon line's reopening weekend

THE Pontypool & Blaenavon Railway ran its first trains of 2021 on May 1 following the easing of coronavirus restrictions in Wales. Former NCB Measham Colliery Bagnall 0-6-0ST *Empress* (3061/1954) provided the motive power for the reopening services, and is seen shunting at Furnace Sidings before returning to the shed. ALISTAIR GRIEVE

First moves for *Hastings* following half a century

MIKE Hart's Hunslet 0-6-0ST *Hastings* (469/1888) made its first independent moves at Statfold Engineering Ltd on May 7, a little over a year after it arrived there for completion and more than 56 years since it last steamed.

The former Sproxton ironstone quarry loco, resplendent in its vivid blue livery and minus its coupling rods, made a number of runs up and down the short section of standard gauge track outside the Statfold workshops.

All went well and the loco, pictured here between runs that day, is set to make its public debut at Statfold's Trangkil 150 event on June 13.

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Steam Portfolio Track Record

Carrying an appropriate headboard, BR Standard '4MT' 2-6-4T No. 80097 heads past Springside Farm with the 10.00 from Bury to Ramsbottom on May 1, 2021 – the day public services resumed on the East Lancashire Railway following the third Covid-19 lockdown. MARTYN TATTAM

The lowdown: GER Y14 0-6-0 No. 564 climbs away from Weybourne on the North Norfolk Railway with the 11.45 from Sheringham to Holt on May 9. Note the glow from the firehole door reflecting on the tender. GRAHAM NUTTALL

Visiting from the Didcot Railway Centre, 'Saint' 4-6-0 No. 2999 *Lady of Legend* climbs Eardington bank at full cry (25mph) with the evening empty coaching stock at the Severn Valley Railway on May 7. JOHN TITLOW

LMS 10000 'Gaining Traction' Fund

Constructing the 3rd class D16/1 as a living memorial for Britain's first mainline diesel locomotive, 10000.

Progress in 2020/21

"It's an ill wind..." they say. Despite the hardships of 2020, the lockdown enabled much progress to be made by volunteers at home and at the Ivatt Diesel Re-creation Society's workshop.

We completed movement of the power unit, bogies, chassis, electrical components and steam heat boiler to our base. Meanwhile work on the detailed design work has accelerated during the lockdown period.

Our Centenary Works, Wirksworth, Derbyshire is named in honour of our President's 100th birthday and is our base for storing and refurbishing parts.

We now have regular working parties again. Work includes preparing the bogies for refurbishment and overhauling the Spanner Mk2 steam heat boilers.

To the side of the workshop lies our English Electric 16SVT power unit IH1861 of 1947. This is key to the projects viability; a power unit built in the same batch as those in the original two LMS-designed locomotives 10000 and 10001.

Locomotive 58022 has already been stripped, leaving only the cabs to be removed. One will be sold and the other retained as a museum piece.

Open days

Centenary Works will be open to the public during galas at the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway. Come along to see progress on August 6th-8th and September 3rd-5th.

Help us raise £180,000 to buy create a rolling chassis and refurbish the traction motors.

The next steps

Creating 10000's rolling chassis and overhauling the traction motors.

These two tasks together will cost an estimated £180,000 and will be a visible leap forward in the journey to finish the new class D16/1 locomotive.

Having been in the process of consultation with industry specialists, the engineering drawings are now undergoing independent checking before approval is given.

The former EM2 bogies were moved to Centenary Works and our volunteers have begun the task of cleaning and overhauling them.

A Sturgeon wagon has been obtain which will host the chassis of 58022 positioned upside down on the wagon in order to access and modify the lower side to match the ex-EM2 bogies.

To contribute to the Gaining Traction Fund please send a cheque made out to the Ivatt Diesel Recreation Society, sent to IDRS, 46 Biddick Village Centre, Washington, NE38 7NP. Or donate to the Society account: 30-94-77 50405860.

Set your own Membership rate!

Membership is usually by monthly donation of at least £2. All donors of £24 or more per year are entitled to be members of the Society at no extra cost.

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See our website for the benefits offered to donors.

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SIDELINES

Cavan & Leitrim re-lay passes half-way stage

A MAJOR re-lay of the 3ft gauge Cavan & Leitrim Railway (C&LR) between Dromod and Clooncolry has passed the midway point. The small p-way team has steadily been lifting the 60lb rails, replacing rotten sleepers and re-fixing the rail with screws instead of the previous dog spikes throughout. Fishplate bolts are also being renewed.

The C&LR is hoping to take delivery of extra rail from Bord na Móna during the year, including some crucial point work. This will allow run-round loops to be installed at Clooncolry and Dromod, helping to increase the line's operational flexibility. The material is not being donated by Bord na Móna and needs to be purchased; a fund has been created for donations at www.cavanandleitrimrailway.com/covid

New fencing installed at DCDR's Inch Abbey

THE Downpatrick & County Down Railway has completed the installation of new metal fencing at its Inch Abbey terminus. The fencing runs along the railway's exterior boundary and along the pathway that leads to the platform, and will hopefully help reduce the number of trespass incidents recorded on the line, which have increased in recent months.

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RPSI Mogul recreation continues despite pandemic disruption

THE Railway Preservation Society of Ireland's (RPSI) activities have been severely disrupted by the coronavirus pandemic yet, behind the scenes, progress has continued to be made on its project to recreate an LMS-NCC 'W' Class Mogul at Whitehead.

Despite the lockdowns, some contract work on the new No. 105 has continued, along with pattern-making and light machining. A major milestone saw the completion of the main frames, which have now been shot-blasted at Whitehead and await the next stage in the project.

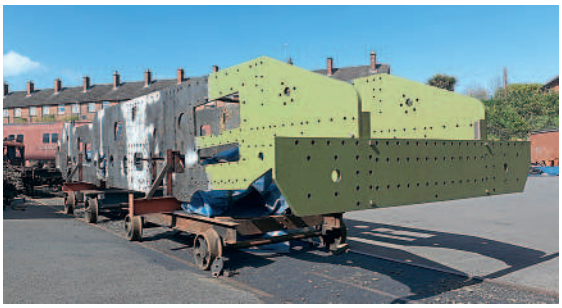
Traditional patterns

The locomotive's two cylinders were also cast last year at Taylors Foundry near Glasgow using traditional patterns made using original 1932 drawings. Machining has been completed by Cooke Bros, near Newtownards, leaving only the valve liners to be fitted. Additional progress has seen the motion brackets, crosshead brackets, reverser brackets and other major cast steel parts produced, with machining now under way.

No. 105 is being built using a combination of original components and new material. Physically the 'W' Class 2-6-4Ts, such as the RPSI's preserved No. 4, and 'WTs' shared many common components.

Consequently, No. 105 will incorporate the coupled wheels and other parts salvaged from 'WT' No. 53 and other classmates scrapped in 1971, which have been in store at Whitehead ever since. New tyres have been fitted to the wheels and the journals are being skimmed.

A spare 'WT' boiler – a modified version of the LMS G8 AS boiler with the firebox widened to take advantage of the wider 5ft 3in gauge – acquired in 1971 for No. 4 is being overhauled at Whitehead. This will give the RPSI two serviceable boilers, which could be carried by either No. 105 or No. 4.



The first coats of primer are applied to the completed frames of LMS-NCC 'W' 2-6-0 No. 105 at Whitehead following shot blasting on May 6. PETER SCOTT

"The strategy has been to get significant parts of the loco underway using up-front funding from interested parties," the RPSI's chief engineer and locomotive officer, Peter Scott, told *The RM*.

Funding appeal

"As it takes shape and begins to look more like a locomotive, and other more immediate RPSI overhaul work has been completed, a wider appeal for funding should follow.

"The work completed to date has been done with funding subscribed by a few donors. It is hoped that many more will come forward as the project progresses. It is worth acknowledging the unexpected donation of several significant parts, for example a chimney and a connecting rod. It is amazing what has survived, for whatever reason."

Full timetable is reintroduced on Irish Rail network

IARNRÓD Eireann-Irish Rail reintroduced its full timetable on May 4 ahead of Covid-19 restrictions being relaxed from May 10. On the Tralee line, the Monday-only 04.40 Tralee-Mallow service, plus the weekday 05.50 Tralee-Cork and 21.00 Cork-Tralee services have been reinstated, and the 22000 Class units allocated to the Mallow-Tralee services changed back from three-car to four-car sets. The changeover took place on May 3 at Cork, with the two three-car sets being sent to Dublin on the 05.45 and 06.15 Cork-Heuston services. The two four-car sets arrived that night on the 21.00 Heuston-Cork train, and were deployed on the Tralee line from the following morning. Here No. 22044 passes Minish with the 11.05 Tralee-Mallow service on May 5. NEIL DINNEN

Lottery grant supports Foyle Valley museum development and upgrade plans

DETAILS of the first phase of a two-year project to refurbish and develop the Foyle Valley Railway Museum in Derry/Londonderry have been released by Destined, the charity that took over the museum back in 2016.

Destined, which supports adults and children with learning difficulties, was awarded a grant of £242,100 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund last year, which will help revitalise and transform the west bank of the River Foyle (to the south of the Craigavon Bridge) and will also go towards community events, and a cultural research project.

This includes undertaking vital repairs to the existing museum building which occupies the site of the Great Northern Railway (Ireland)'s Foyle Road station, the development and construction of a new Interpretive Centre and exhibition space, and the delivery of training for museum guides.

Upgrades

Work already undertaken at the museum includes the extension and upgrading of the car park, installation of disabled accessible facilities, an upgraded security system, electronic entrance doors and installation of mains gas heating system. Additional refurbishment works to the building's exterior are now in the planning process.

The funding is also being used to develop a new exhibition planned for 2022, which will celebrate the role of the GNR(I) in the community, and the diverse history of the Foyle Road and Bishop Street areas.

Destined members are interviewing people who grew up, lived and worked around the area, along with people who worked on the railway, or had family members who did. Pupils and students from local primary, post-primary and special schools are assisting in the preparation of the exhibition.

Project administrator Aisling Doherty told *The RM* that the museum will host a series of seasonal celebration events throughout the lifetime of the project, and hopes that it will attract upward of 5,000 visitors a year.

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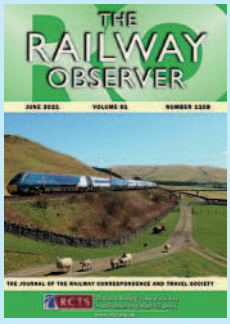

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Narrow Gauge making a return to 'normal'?

NOTABLE examples of further lines reopening following coronavirus lockdowns include Heatherslaw Light Railway, which managed to reopen earlier than projected on April 12 following efforts to deal with the significant landslip that occurred in January.

Old Kiln Light Railway reopened following a lengthy closure, with Jim Haylock's 0-4-0T *Emmet* providing steam services over May 1-3. Amberley anticipated running steam and offering passenger rides for the first time in over six months during an Industrial Trains Day on May 23.

Lynton & Barnstaple Railway resumed operating on April 13 and Amerton Railway on April 17.

Launceston Steam Railway anticipates reopening on June 21, with Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway hoping to reopen on July 24.

Guest Engineering-built 2-4-2 *Siân*, owned by the Siân Project Group and currently based at Kirklees Light Railway, pictured between Skelmanthorpe and Cuckoo's Nest working the 13.10 Shelley to Clayton West service on April 17 – the first day that the 15in gauge Kirklees line opened to the public following lockdown. MARK ALLATT

Welsh updates

In Wales, Teifi Valley Railway recommenced operating on May 1 and Llanberis Lake Railway on May 19, and Welsh Highland Heritage Railway was expected to restart diesel services on May 29, with steam to follow in July.

Snowdon Mountain Railway aimed to run diesel trains between Llanberis and Clogwyn from May 22 but now says there will be no steam services during 2021, and Hafod Eryri at the summit will remain closed this year.

Corris Railway intended to reopen on May 30-31, and Vale of Rheidol Railway by the end of May following implementation of coronavirus precautions, neither of these lines having operated since 2019.

Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway reopened as planned but unfortunately without steam after its on-hire U-class 0-6-2T No. 2 *Zillertal* developed a boiler problem, meaning May 1-9 became Diema Diesel Days.

Isle of Man Transport also intended to open as follows: Manx Electric Railway on May 22; Isle of Man Steam Railway on May 27; and Snaefell Mountain Railway on May 29.

TR secures £300k grant contribution to carriage construction

THE Talyllyn Railway (TR) has secured a £300,000 Coastal Communities Fund grant towards a £450,000 project to construct three new bogie carriages.

These vehicles will allow TR to withdraw its original four-wheel carriages and restored pair of Glyn Valley Tramway coaches from everyday traffic and limit their use to special appearances. When not running they will be displayed in the planned new heritage building at Tywyn Wharf.

The new carriages will look similar to current TR standard bogie carriages. Two will be first/third class composites, and the other third class only. All will have wheelchair-accessible compartments.

The intention is for them to be constructed in Wales (Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railway and Vale of Rheidol Railway seem obvious contenders for the contract), with the aim of the first being delivered in 2022, the second in 2023, and the third in 2024.

The grant from the Coastal Communities Fund will finance two of the new vehicles, with TR to raise the money for the third.

Bonnie Dundee makes a return to steam at Cleethorpes

BONNIE DUNDEE returned to Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway (CCLR) at the end of April following a major overhaul undertaken by John Fowler Engineering.

The locomotive was originally 2ft gauge Kerr Stuart 0-4-0WT KS720/1901, constructed for Dundee Gas Commissioners. It entered preservation when purchased by the late Ian Fraser, arriving at Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway (R&ER) in 1976, where work completed in 1981 produced a 15in gauge 0-4-2WT.A further rebuild in 1996 resulted in today's 0-4-2 tender configuration. The locomotive is owned by R&ER.

Having been out of service for some years, it went to CCLR in 2016 and was dispatched to John Fowler Engineering in January 2019 for a contracted overhaul, funded by CCLR. *Bonnie Dundee* is expected to enter CCLR service this summer.

Meanwhile, Severn Lamb/J. Hayton steam outline 0-8-2DH (built 1975, rebuilt 1989) *Ceawlin*, which commenced a visit to CCLR in early 2019, has now been purchased from Longleat Railway.

The nameplates will be returned to Lord Viscount Weymouth and the loco, currently known as No. 5, will receive a new name.

***Bonnie Dundee* pictured on April 26 following its return to Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway after a major overhaul undertaken by John Fowler Engineering.** CLEETHORPES COAST LIGHT RAILWAY

New look set for South Tynedale's *Barber* due to safety requirements

SOUTH Tynedale Railway Preservation Society (STRPS) has confirmed that earlier proposals to modify the cab of Thomas Green & Company 0-6-2ST *Barber* (441/1908) will be progressed while the loco undergoes work at Alston.

As-built *Barber* had a distinctive low rounded cab to provide clearance for working through confined tunnels at Harrogate gasworks, together with an escape hatch in the cab backsheet. This appearance was retained when *Barber* was returned to steam in 2015 for the first time since retirement from industrial service in 1949.

Raise the roof

STRPS has prepared a Conservation Management Plan which identifies modifications, including raising the cab roof and chimney height by 35cm, placing a metal baffle between the raised whistle and the cab front, and fitting safety chains to the cab openings.

The changes are identified as being required on health and safety grounds, on the basis of providing full standing height and reducing noise levels inside the cab, preventing crew from falling off the footplate, and improving forward visibility. The changes will be reversible.

Barber is the only complete survivor of 33 locomotives built by Thomas Green & Company at Smithfield Ironworks Leeds, a firm better known for producing lawn mowers and road rollers.

Controversial

Altering the appearance of a historic locomotive can be controversial but is not unknown in preservation; indeed, the cab of ex-Harrogate gasworks Peckett 0-6-0ST 2050/1944 *Harrogate* was similarly altered many years ago for similar reasons.

Other work undertaken latterly encompasses replacement of the cylinders and pistons, repairs to the valve gear, correcting a misalignment of the chimney and blast pipe, and replacing all six sets of springs. *Barber* passed its annual boiler test in March and should return to service this summer.

WLLR launches appeal to fund premium dining train

THE Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway (WLLR) has launched an appeal tagged A Railway Transformed, with the objective of financing overhauling Baguley 0-6-0DM No. 7 *Chattenden* (likely to cost £120,000) and developing a premium dining train.

Chattenden was built in 1949 for naval service, initially on the Lodge Hill & Upnor Railway in Kent. It arrived at WLLR in 1968 and is primarily employed on works trains.

The dining train project centres on construction of a new carriage replicating the 'Queen's Coach' built for Sierra Leone Railway (SLR) in 1961, which features a glazed observation section at one end and a first-class central saloon.

Although built for the visit of HM Queen Elizabeth II to Sierra Leone, in the event, she never travelled in the carriage, but it survived the 1975 closure of the SLR system and is displayed in the Sierra Leone National Railway Museum.

The WLLR replica will include facilities enabling the railway to greatly increase the range of on-train catering it can offer, as well as wheelchair access – not currently possible with the existing ex-SLR vehicles.

To accompany the new vehicle, WLLR's two existing ex-SLR bogie carriages will be upgraded. One of these is currently third class with bench seats, with the appeal seeking to fund conversion to second class with conventional seating.

The other ex-SLR carriage is a first class vehicle with white leather armchairs which will soon need to be replaced, hopefully with appeal proceeds.

These carriages date from 1961 and were acquired by the WLLR with Hunslet 2-6-2T No. 85 after the SLR system closed.

With its ex-SLR equipment and being formerly twinned with the Sierra Leone National Railway Museum, the new appeal was launched on April 27 – the 60th anniversary of Sierra Leone Independence Day.

Donations can be directed to either the overhaul of *Chattenden* or the carriage element of the appeal, and a range of incentives are offered according to the value of the donation. Find out more at www.wllr.org.uk

The original Queen's Coach, which WLLR aims to replicate, pictured in the Sierra Leone National Railway Museum. WILLIAM BICKERS-JONES/W&LLR

Corris traverser ordered, install next winter

CORRIS Railway has contracted Statfold Engineering to build the traverser which forms an essential element in the reconstruction of Corris station.

The traverser will enable locomotives to run round trains at the Corris terminus for the first time since the revival of the line.

The shortfall in funding due to a reduced grant award has been made up by generous donations.

Work on the new track and platform layout at Corris, incorporating the traverser at the north end of the site and a newly ordered point for the south end, will be undertaken between the end of December 2021 and the end of March 2022.

The railway still needs to raise £14,000 to fully finance the works, which will cost almost £58,000.

New carriage

Volunteers have resumed work on the brake gear of the line's new carriage, No. 23, at Maespoeth Jct. The third of four new recreations of Corris carriages was expected to be ready to enter service when the railway reopened at the end of May.

Building of the fourth vehicle, No. 24, is advancing at Maespoeth.

The main components for the cab of new-build Falcon 0-4-2ST No. 10 have been laser cut by Optimized Metal Fabrications Ltd in Rochester and delivered to a Corris volunteer's workshop in Nottingham.

Bredgar & Wormshill Light Railway's O&K 0-4-0WT *Eigiau* pictured with a demonstration goods train at Stony Shaw station on May 2. ALAN CROTTY

Action returns to Bredgar & Wormshill LR

AFTER a lengthy period of closure due to Covid-19 lockdowns and following the death of its founder Bill Best on April 9 last year, the Bredgar & Wormshill Light Railway held an Open Day on May 2.

With the line now running under the guidance of Bill's eldest son, Bill Best Jnr, O&K 0-4-0WT *Eigiau*, Decauville 0-4-2ST *Victory*, Baguley-Drewry 3775/1983 4wDH *Bredgar*, Schoma CHL-30G 5239/1991 *Jenny*, and Andrew Barclay 0-4-0DM 765/1988 MoD No. NG54 *Milstead* operated goods trains and provided shunting demonstrations.

No passenger rides were offered due to Covid-19 restrictions but will hopefully be available at the Open Day planned to take place on Sunday, June 6.

In addition to the previously reported sales of ex-MoD Andrew Barclay 0-4-0DM NG51 (*RM* March) and Schwartzkopf 0-4-0WT *Bronhilde* (*RM* April), Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0 diesel No 11 *Wormshill* has also now been sold.

THE Ffestiniog Railway has now recommenced operating passenger services, but on April 22 the photographer had the good fortune to see this unusual engineering special climbing Gwyndy Bank behind Hunslet 2-4-0STT *Blanche*. The train was arranged at the expense of the local power company which needed to replace a pole further up the line beyond Tan-y-Bwlch – only accessible by rail. JAMES WAITE

SINGLE LINES

■ THE East Suffolk Light Railway's completed extension – which doubles the length of the 2ft gauge line at the East Anglia Transport Museum – was brought into operation on April 18. The new western terminus of the line is named Mutford Thorpe station (*RM* March 2020).

■ PRIVATELY-OWNED ex-Dinorwic Hunslet 0-4-0ST 678/1898 *Jonathan* will be displayed at Statfold Barn Railway's '150 Years of the Quarry Hunslet' event on July 10 and 11. Originally named *The First* and later *Bernstein*, this will probably be its first public appearance since leaving West Lancashire Light Railway in 2004.

■ LYNTON & Barnstaple Railway's Chelfham station building returned to its original 1898 form following removal on April 24 of the extensions added to the platform side of the building after the railway closed in 1935. The following day the original appearance of the station was further enhanced by installation of the wooden 'Up' starting signal post and ladder support.

■ THE rock face was de-scaled from Steeplehouse cutting and Dark Lane Quarry above Steeple Grange Light Railway's (SGLR) track at the end of April by Derbyshire Geotechnical Ltd. The work was required following February's rockfall, which prevented SGLR reopening as hoped at the end of lockdown (*RM* April). The specialists' report and conclusions are awaited.

DIARY

NOTE: All subject to Covid-19 restrictions in force at the time. Please check with railway before travelling.

June
6 Bredgar & Wormshill Light Railway open day
12/13 Bala Lake Railway Town station site 're-railed'
12/13 Statfold Barn Railway (SBR) *Trangkil* 50

July
10/11 Apedale Valley Light Railway (AVLR) classic diesels and steam
10/11 Evesham Vale Light Railway (EVLR) annual gala
10/11 SBR 150 years of Quarry Hunslets
17/18 Amerton Railway steam gala

August
7/8 AVLR military trains
28-30 Bala LR steam gala
30 AVLR cars and steam trains

September
TBC Alan Keef open day
4/5 Corris Railway No. 4 100th anniversary
11 Amerton Railway Everything Goes Gala
11/12 SBR Road, Rail and Ale
11/12 Talyllyn Railway No. 4 100th anniversary
25 EVLR diesel day

October
2/3 AVLR steam gala
17 Bala LR diesel day

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T&W depot project enters next phase

WORK on laying new track foundations for the Tyne & Wear Metro's new £70 million depot at South Gosforth in Newcastle is to start during June.

The current depot at the site is being demolished in four phases. Phase one, which began in March, involved the demolition of a section of the main building. Around a third of the old sidings have been removed in preparation for new track foundations, which will be laid by boring hollow steel tubes into the ground and filling them with concrete.

Recycled material

Foundation work on the new main building is due to be carried out in July, with demolition of an old stabling shed to the west of the depot expected later this year. Rubble from the demolition will be recycled and used to build a road at the site.

The facility, which will be the base for the system's 42 new five-car trains being built by Stadler, is due for completion in 2025. Production of the new trains is to begin in August.

Meanwhile, a £4.2m upgrade has been carried out on the system's security cameras. A total of 740 advanced CCTV cameras have been installed, covering all 60 Metro stations.

Better monitoring

The new equipment is capable of capturing clearer images, and more than 100 of the new cameras have pan, tilt and zoom functions to allow control room staff to monitor any issues.

First new WMM tram is delivered

THE first of eight new 'Urbos' trams for West Midlands Metro has been delivered to the depot at Wednesbury.

The trams are being built by CAF in Zaragoza, Spain, with the other seven due to arrive over the next few months. The first five will enter service ahead of the line extensions to Edgbaston and Wolverhampton railway station later this year. They can run using overhead power or onboard batteries.

A further 13 trams will be delivered in 2023 for the future extension from Wednesbury to Brierley Hill, which is currently under construction. Increasing the size of the Metro system will help meet the region's plans to be carbon neutral within 20 years.

The purchase of the 21 vehicles is part of an £83.5 million deal signed between West Midlands Metro and CAF in 2019.

Mayor wants extended Metrolink routes

THE re-elected Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham, is seeking £1 billion from the Government to extend Metrolink into Bolton, Middleton and Stockport.

He said that replacing trains with trams on the Oldham loop to Rochdale had led to a six-fold rise in the number of passengers, and that further expansion of the network would help meet his goal of creating a London-style transport system in Manchester, integrating bus and tram operations under one brand.

Fatal Croydon crash inquest is underway

A CORONER'S inquest has begun into the fatal accident on November 9, 2016, when Croydon tram No. 2551 overturned on the sharp bend at Sandilands.

Proceedings began with a minute's silence for the seven victims of the crash, which also injured a further 51 people. A jury was sworn in on May 17.

An investigation by the RAIB found the tram derailed while travelling at almost four times the speed limit for the bend. Driver Alfred Dorris was arrested, but all charges were dropped.

Railways in Parliament

by Jon Longman

SWR's 442 upgrades halted

EASINGTON MP Grahame Morris asked what assessment has been made of the value for money for the public purse of the South Western Railway's (SWR) decision to withdraw the Class 442 fleet.

Transport Minister Chris Heaton-Harris said: "The impact of Covid-19 on passenger numbers travelling on SWR services has been significant and is not expected to return to previous levels for some time when restrictions are lifted.

"The 442 fleet is no longer needed to deliver SWR's planned timetable. SWR decided to withdraw it with immediate effect and cease the programme of modifications that were underway to avoid incurring further costs to the taxpayer to reintroduce and operate these trains.

"The withdrawal of the fleet is expected to save circa £8 million a year in operational costs.

"The 442s would have been withdrawn in August 2024 as they are not compliant with requirements for persons with reduced mobility.

"This decision brings this forward and removes a fleet that is not fully accessible from the rail network sooner than originally planned."

Leeds-York wires review

SLOUGH MP Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi asked what plans the Department for Transport (DfT) has to electrify the route between Leeds and Church Fenton via Cross Gates, Garforth, East Garforth and Micklefield.

Mr Heaton-Harris replied: "In July 2020, the Government released £589 million of funding for the TransPennine Route Upgrade (TRU) programme.

"This has enabled further development of electrification design for the section between Church Fenton and York.

"We are actively reviewing the case for TRU to deliver full electrification on the route, including Cross Gates, Garforth, East Garforth and Micklefield.

"Construction decisions are to be taken once TRU's full business case is approved."

Protecting rail revival

LIFE peer Baroness Randerson asked the DfT if it intends to review plans by Highways England to demolish historic rail bridges and tunnels, and whether it has plans to instruct Highways England to prioritise measures that encourage walking and cycling.

Baroness Vere of Norbiton, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State within the DfT, said: "Highways England manages the Historical Railways Estate on behalf of the Secretary of State for Transport and has been in touch with all the local authorities affected to advise them of its plans, and to see if they have any use for the structures.

"Highways England is pausing works where local authorities have raised queries about the works, and where there is credible interest for possible repurposing and transfer of ownership of the assets.

"The DfT has also asked Highways England to consult with the relevant local authorities concerning the retention, where practicable, of access for pedestrians and cyclists.

"Highways England continues to work with local authorities and other groups to protect routes for active travel or future rail use.

"Indeed, several structures are being transferred this year to assist with this."

LNER single-leg ticket trial

BARONESS Randerson asked what plans the DfT has to publish the results of the trial of single-leg pricing on the East Coast Main Line.

Baroness Vere replied: "We launched a single-leg pricing trial on LNER routes from London to Leeds, Newcastle and Edinburgh on January 2, 2020.

"Due to the pandemic, passenger numbers fell to five per cent of usual demand. Once demand recovers and further data is collected, the trial will be evaluated and those findings used to inform the development of wider plans for improving fares."

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Miles of damaged sleepers replaced on the WCML

A MAJOR operation was launched over the early May Bank Holiday to replace a two-mile stretch of damaged sleepers between Symington and Thankerton on the West Coast Main Line in Scotland.

Nineteen trains, 10 road-rail machines and on-track plant were involved in work to repair damage, which occurred in April.

£17m ticket machine installation is now complete

NORTHERN has completed a £17 million scheme to install 620 new touchscreen ticket vending machines.

The machines are at 420 locations across its network and are designed to make it easier for customers to access a range of fares, including discounts and concessions. They also offer suggestions of cheaper alternatives.

Work begins on improving ticket gates for summer

WORK got underway at the end of April on improvements to ticket gates for platforms 11-17 at London Liverpool Street.

The Department for Transport-funded project will see the number of wide aisle gates increased from four to eight.

Automatic operation, allowing customers to use them without staff assistance, will be installed.

The scheme is due for completion in the summer.

Competition winner to formally develop design

EDINBURGH-BASED 7N Architects has won a competition held by Network Rail and the Royal Institute of British Architects to encourage new approaches to station design.

More than 200 entries were received from around the globe. Designers were asked to address how passenger experiences could be improved by looking at new concepts for small and medium-sized stations.

7N's entry included a clock tower designed to serve as a local landmark and meeting place. The station's modular design is intended to allow it to be integrated into a variety of locations and complement its surroundings.

It also incorporated capacity to generate renewable energy through translucent photovoltaic panels, which form the roof to the platform canopies.

A visualisation from competition winner 7N Architects of how smaller stations could look in the future. 7N ARCHITECTS

Unique opportunity

The judging panel highlighted that, as well as aligning with Network Rail's plans to be carbon neutral by 2050, the design created an open and flexible concept for station construction with minimum component parts.

Network Rail's head of buildings and architecture, Anthony Dewar, said: "This competition offered a unique opportunity to reimagine what a railway station can be in the 21st century, creating an environment that better serves the passengers and communities who rely on the British railway network and leave a lasting legacy on station design.

"I would like to congratulate 7N Architects on their winning entry and I look forward to seeing how they will bring their design to life."

Judging panel member Lucy Musgrave is the founding director of London-based design practice Publica.

She added: "Network Rail's leadership has encouraged all involved to consider how society is changing, and how we can address the climate emergency and the evolving civic role of our infrastructure. 7N's winning proposal showed a confident expression and understanding of the opportunity to celebrate our local identities, the specificity and integration with our urban and rural landscapes, and the strength of our national identity through our railway infrastructure."

7N, which has worked on a wide range of urban developments in Scotland, will develop its design into a formal proposal for Network Rail.

An artist's impression of how the rockfall shelter extension at Parsons Tunnel will look once completed next year. NETWORK RAIL

£28m rockfall shelter work expected to start in August

CONSTRUCTION of a 209m-long extension to a rockfall shelter over the railway between Dawlish and Holcombe is expected to begin in August after Network Rail was granted approval by Teignbridge District Council.

Morgan Sindall Infrastructure has been awarded the contract, worth £28 million, to construct the extension north of Parsons Tunnel, which will take around a year to complete. Unlike the previous extension a century ago, the new section will be open-sided and constructed with modern materials.

Network Rail says that preparation work on top of the cliffs, which began in March, is being closely monitored to minimise disruption to wildlife and biodiversity.

The shelter extension is the third phase of work being carried out as part of the South West Rail Resilience Programme following the creation of new sections of sea wall in Dawlish.

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Installation at Brading

ON THE Isle of Wight, work on infrastructure improvements has continued ahead of the Island Line's reopening.

This was the scene on April 17 at Brading, where a passing loop is being installed, allowing services to run at regular half-hourly intervals and improving connections with Wightlink ferries.

The resumption of trains has been delayed by software issues affecting the Vivarail-supplied Class 484 trains, which will take over services following the withdrawal of the Class 483s before the closure for engineering work.

Although no firm date has yet been provided for reopening, South Western Railway has indicated that services could resume before the end of the summer.

PICTURE: PHIL MARSH

Major upgrades completed over holiday

THE Bank Holiday weekend at the beginning of May saw phases of work completed on major projects in Network Rail's North West & Central region.

More than 100 precast concrete beams were lifted over the West Coast Main Line to create a deck for a new railway flyover for the East West Rail project at Bletchley.

Track upgrades took place on the WCML between Euston and Milton Keynes and Preston and Penrith, as well as on the Cumbrian Coast route, where Siddick Bridge at the Port of Workington was also removed and replaced with a new structure.

Over the late May Bank Holiday weekend, there were no direct services between Liverpool or Scotland and Euston. Signalling improvements were due to continue at Trafford in Manchester and at Carstairs. While track replacement work was scheduled at Halton in Cheshire, Harrow and Wealdstone and Cheddington, upgrades to track foundation stones were planned between Crewe and Carlisle.

The deck of the new Bletchley Flyover takes shape above the West Coast Main Line in early May. NETWORK RAIL

Private sector invited to take a stake in upgrade to telecommunications

NETWORK Rail is inviting the private sector to invest £1 billion in upgrades to Britain's railway telecommunications network.

Companies would be able to put spare capacity to commercial use in return for the stake in modernising the trackside fibre-optic cable network. NR says this would improve reliability, safety and communications for passengers.

There are 16,000km of data cables running alongside the railway, carrying information for signalling, trackside sensors, CCTV, and internet connections for trains, depots and railway offices.

NR believes using the railway infrastructure will cut costs for communications firms and support them in supplying faster broadband services to harder to reach areas. The upgraded system could also be connected to lineside masts to improve passenger internet services.

NR is seeking to finalise plans with a preferred bidder by the end of the year.

Northumberland cuts claim branded 'scaremongering'

RAIL Minister Chris Heaton-Harris has dismissed reports that a station could be removed from the Northumberland Line scheme as "scaremongering".

It was reported in March that Northumberland County Council had reluctantly decided to drop Blyth Bebside from the plans after apparently being instructed by Government officials to find savings. The currently freight-only route between Newcastle and Ashington could see the resumption of passenger services in 2024.

Mr Heaton-Harris confirmed that the focus remained on delivering the project on time and on budget with all six intended stations.

Lease agreed for Amlwch line

THE Anglesey Central Railway announced at the end of April that it had agreed a 99-year lease with Network Rail for the disused Amlwch branch following six years of detailed negotiations.

ACR has been carrying out vegetation and drainage clearance work. It plans to bring the 18-mile route, which joins the North Wales Main Line at Gaerwen, back into passenger use.

Passenger services ceased in 1964, although the line remained open for chemical traffic to the Octel plant at Amlwch until 1993 and rails are still in place.

Public consulted on Ely's capacity

A SIX-WEEK public consultation began on May 24 on a plan to increase rail capacity through Ely, which aims to improve reliability and connectivity for passenger services and trains serving the Port of Felixstowe.

Changes to the Soham branch line and Ely Dock Junction as well as track and platforms at Ely station are planned, as are upgrades to Stutney Road bridge and two bridges over the Great Ouse at Ely Marina.

Kiln Lane level crossing could be closed, although there are options to maintain pedestrian and vehicle access to the eastern side of the railway.

Landslip prevention at cutting

BUSES will replace trains between Maidstone East and Ashford International for nine days in August while landslip prevention work takes place on the 150-year-old Bearstead cutting.

Engineers will use soil nailing, a stabilisation technique which involves inserting steel bars into the slope face and attaching mesh to them. Improvements to other earthworks, drainage, flood mitigation and track and signalling work will also be carried out while the line is closed.

The most recent landslip in the area happened following heavy rain on New Year's Day.

Although major work will take place between August 7-15, there will also be weekend closures on July 3/4 and July 24/25.

Architect's impressions of the planned new-look ramps for platforms 8-11 at Euston. NETWORK RAIL

Euston access ramp revamp

COMPUTER-GENERATED images have been released showing how access ramps to platforms 8-11 at Euston station should look following an £8 million upgrade by Network Rail.

Removal of the shops and creation of more space began in December 2020 and is due for completion in the autumn.

It is intended to ease bottlenecks and crowds when trains are ready to board.

£3.6m bridge lift underway

WORK to raise a bridge on the Cambrian Line which has been repeatedly flooded is expected to be completed in late June.

The £3.6 million project aims to resolve a problem dating back over 30 years, which has seen large sections of the route between Mid Wales and Shrewsbury cut off during bad weather as a result of Black Bridge, near Machynlleth, being overwhelmed by rising water from the River Dulas.

The line will be closed until June 28 while the bridge is raised by a metre and the track reprofiled.

Buses will operate between Machynlleth and Shrewsbury. An amended timetable will be in operation for services between Machynlleth and Pwllheli and Aberystwyth.

An image from a surveillance camera showing the impact of flooding on Black Bridge, near Machynlleth. NETWORK RAIL

Project will stop erosion

ENGINEERS have begun a six-month project to repair the four piers of Redbridge Viaduct on the Borders Railway and protect them from further erosion.

The sandstone bridge over the River Tweed between Tweedbank and Galashiels was built in 1849. Preparation for the £2.4 million project began in April and is scheduled to finish in October.

Falcons lead to bridge plan change

A PAIR of peregrine falcons found to be nesting on the Grade II listed Britannia Bridge, which links Anglesey with the Welsh mainland, have forced a change of plan for refurbishments.

Work to install fibre-reinforced plastic support beams on the Anglesey and Caernarfon towers will continue, but the central tower will be left undisturbed until the birds and their fledglings have left.

Station gets green light after 15 years

HIGHLAND Council has granted planning permission for a two-platform station serving Inverness Airport.

The idea was first put forward 15 years ago. Car parking, electric vehicle charging and cycle spaces are planned for the site, along with a bus drop-off area.

Phase 1 is complete and Phase 2 is in progress as engineering teams tackle the reconstruction of Platforms 7-11 on the western side of the station. The more streamlined track layout for Platforms 0-6 is clearly visible as No. 700021 departs with a northbound Thameslink service on May 12. The £1.2 billion East Coast Upgrade promises to add more than 10,000 extra seats per day on trains to and from King's Cross. KEN BRUNT

King's Cross: Unblocking the Throat

In one of the biggest engineering projects of recent years, Network Rail is remodelling the approaches to London's King's Cross station, including reopening the disused third bore of Gasworks Tunnel. With Phase 1 complete and Phase 2 due to end in June, *The RM* takes an inside look at this impressive scheme with signalling project engineer **Joanne Thomas**.

The most high-profile part of the King's Cross remodelling project is the reopening of the disused eastern bore of Gasworks Tunnel immediately to the north of the station. Closed since 1976, the first engineering trains ran through the bore in late March, with scheduled passenger trains returning on April 28. GBRf No. 66722 stands inside the eastern bore with an engineering train.

Work to remodel the track layout in Phase 1 included rebuilding and lengthening platforms 0-6. Here Network Rail JNA wagons are loaded with waste material from the old platforms. Between February and May, GBRf operated 100-plus trains to remove the material to NR processing facilities at Whitemoor and Doncaster. ALL PICTURES JOANNE THOMAS/NETWORK RAIL (UNLESS STATED).

Network Rail engineers spent many months prior to the blockade renovating the eastern bore and removing old material before installing the new slab track.

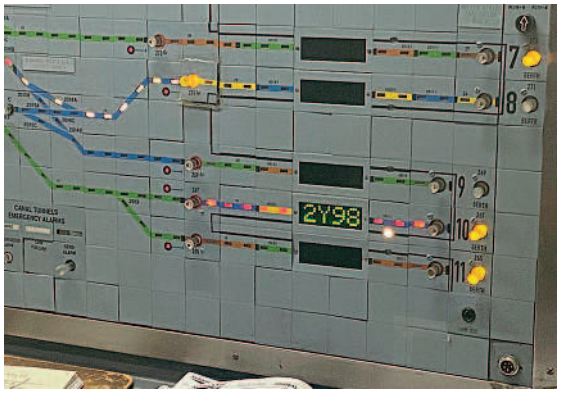
New walls rise on Platforms 1 and 2, extending their length to accommodate longer trains.

The new track layout required new overhead line equipment (OLE) and signalling systems. Here two road-rail vehicles manoeuvre a new gantry into position during an overnight shift.

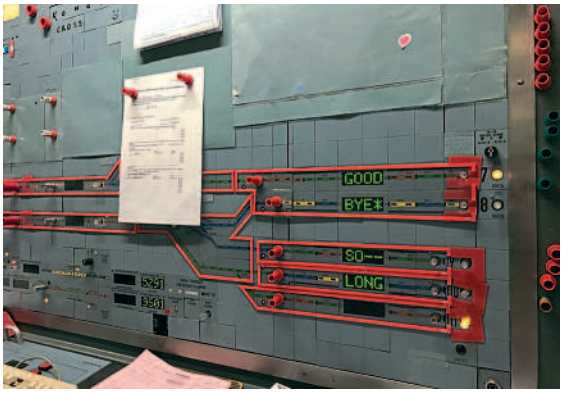
At the south end of Holloway Tunnel, new connections have been laid to the additional tracks through Gasworks Tunnel. Visible to the right is the disused eastern bore of Holloway Tunnel. It cannot be reopened as it is blocked by a 1970s flying junction at its northern end.

Looking out from the north end of Gasworks Tunnel's middle bore towards Holloway Tunnel and the enclosed bridge carrying HS1 over the East Coast Main Line. Work has been ongoing since Christmas 2020 to relay existing track through the tunnels and pointwork, as well as renewing signalling and OLE dating from the last rebuild in the mid-1970s. More than 2.8km of new or replacement track has been laid as part of this project.

New pointwork in position in the station throat in early April. Before the new, streamlined track layout could be laid, Network Rail had to dig out and replace parts of the major Camden Sewer in January, removing thousands of tonnes of waste material and redundant equipment, and before fresh ballast could be brought in by train. All this had to be done while maintaining LNER and Thameslink/Great Northern services into the western part of the station.



Left: King's Cross Signalling Centre closed on April 28, with control transferring to York Railway Operating Centre after the departure of 2Y98, the 01.40 Great Northern service to Welwyn Garden City. Shortly before it was switched off for the last time, the old KX panel shows its final train.



Right: The King's Cross Signalling Centre panel bids farewell to signallers early on April 28, already showing Platforms 7-11 closed for Phase 2 of the project.

Almost ready! Engineers put the final touches to OLE, signalling and trackwork on April 27. Although signalling is now controlled from York Railway Operating Centre (ROC), the old King's Cross Signalling Centre will be retained for local engineering teams.

An impressive sight inside the refurbished eastern bore with new concrete slab track and OLE completed ready for testing and commissioning. The unusual wall-mounted brackets for the 25kV AC wires are derived from a Korean design.

Hemmed in by the new developments rising above the western side of the station and Gasworks Tunnel, Phase 2 work was proceeding apace in mid-May. Old track, ballast and drainage has been removed and will be taken away in the wagons. The magnitude of the work is clear from the amount of specialist machinery and the number of people involved. KEN BRUNT

Left: With Platforms 0-6 in full operation, attention is now focused on Platforms 7-11. Track, pointwork, signalling and OLE is being renewed, although the work is not quite as extensive as Phase 1 as it is not possible to extend some of the platforms. On May 12, GBRf No. 66702 *Blue Lightning* waits in Platform 7 as NR staff prepare hundreds of new OLE parts for installation. During the most intensive period of work in March, up to 25 GBRf locomotives were needed on site. KEN BRUNT

Above: A hive of activity in early April as Network Rail staff and contractors rebuild the trackbed at the end of Platforms 3-6. By this stage engineering trains were able to gain access to the site via the eastern bore of Gasworks Tunnel, following completion of trackwork and connection of its pointwork to existing lines.

Right: The restored southern portal of Gasworks Tunnel awaiting the completion of OLE installation in mid-April. A further full closure is planned for June 20/21, during which existing OLE will be replaced on the approaches to King's Cross.

Below: The interior of the famous train shed showing Platforms 1 and 2 complete and ready to accept trains again from April 28. Freshly relaid track and rebuilt platforms are the most obvious signs of this major investment.

Job well done. A Network Rail engineer heads for the station and home after completing another day's work. The King's Cross remodelling project looks set to transform the famous old station, and the quality of the finished work is a credit to the hundreds of NR managers, engineers and contractors who have been working 24 hours a day over several months to deliver it.

‘Florence’ launched as Chiltern tunnelling gets underway

THE first of HS2’s giant Tunnel Boring Machines (TBMs) began digging its way north under the Chilterns on May 13.

Named Florence by local schoolchildren in honour of Florence Nightingale, the 170m-long 2000-tonne TBM is the largest machine of its kind ever deployed in Britain.

It will dig the eastern bore of the twin 10-mile Chiltern Tunnels over the next three years. A second machine named Cecilia, after astronomer and astrophysicist Cecilia Payne-Gaposchkin, is planned to launch this month, also heading north from the southern portal of the tunnels in Buckinghamshire.

Designed specifically by German company Herrenknecht for the mix of chalk and flints under the Chilterns, the identical TBMs will dig separate tunnels for north and southbound trains.

Weighing in at 2000 tonnes and 170m long, tunnel boring machine Florence started its three-year journey under the Chilterns on May 13. A second TBM is due to start work on the second bore of the 10-mile Chiltern Tunnels this month. HS2

Underground factory

Each machine operates as a self-contained underground factory, digging the tunnel, lining it with concrete wall segments, and grouting them into place at a speed of about 15m a day. Each of the Chiltern tunnels will require 56,000 fibre-reinforced segments – all made at an on-site factory at the south portal.

A crew of 17 operates each TBM, working in shifts to keep the machines running 24 hours a day, and each crew is supported by more than 100 people on the surface.

Chalk excavated from the tunnels will be used for landscaping at the south portal site once construction is complete, creating chalk grassland habitats across 127 hectares of the southern Chiltern Hills. In total, 10 TBMs are being built to construct 64 miles of tunnels on the Phase 1 route between Euston and Birmingham.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said: “The tunnels these machines dig will ensure the benefits of our new high-capacity, high-speed railway run to the great cities of the North and Midlands.

Transformative project

“This is not only a landmark moment for the project, but the ground-breaking evidence that shows our commitment to levelling up transport links across the UK.”

HS2 Ltd’s chief executive, Mark Thurston, added: “With more than 16,000 jobs already supported by the project and thousands of companies big and small benefiting from contracts, HS2 is providing a major boost to the economy in these difficult times.

“The start of tunnelling is a moment of genuine excitement for everyone involved and I hope the entire country will get behind this truly transformative project.”

Curzon Street inspired by past Victorian grand designs

SPANISH joint venture Mace Dragados has been awarded a £570 million contract to design and build the new Curzon Street station in Birmingham.

Due to open in 2029-33, the city centre station will be located close to the existing Moor Street station for regional rail services. It will have its own Midlands Metro tram link, local and express bus services.

Up to nine high-speed trains an hour will provide fast links to London and the north of England via Phase 2a and, if it proceeds, Phase 2b of the ‘Y’ shaped network.

HS2 worked with WSP and Grimshaw Architects on the design of Curzon Street, which is inspired by the arched roofs of Britain’s Victorian railway stations. Mace Dragados will now work with HS2 Ltd to finalise the detailed design and then build the station.

Significant progress has been made on-site over the last two years. Site clearance is now complete and an extensive archaeological programme unearthed the world’s oldest railway roundhouse, dating from the late 1830s.

A computer-generated image of the £570 million Curzon Street station in Birmingham, which will be the northern terminus of HS2 Phase 1, served by up to nine high-speed trains per hour from the mid-2030s. HS2

Curzon Street will be net zero carbon in operation and adopt the latest eco-friendly design and sustainable technologies, including capturing rainwater and utilising solar panels on platform canopies to generate its own electricity.

Mace and Dragados have delivered some of the world’s most complex infrastructure projects, including the refurbishment of Birmingham New Street, Battersea Power Station (phase 2) and work on the Spanish high-speed rail network, including Madrid Atocha and Barcelona Sants stations.

They are also working together in a separate joint venture to build HS2’s new Euston terminus.

Archaeologists uncover nine centuries of Bucks history

ARCHAEOLOGISTS working for HS2 have discovered almost 900 years of history at the former St Mary’s Church in Stoke Mandeville, Buckinghamshire.

The original church in Stoke Mandeville was built in 1080AD and renovated in the 13th, 14th and 17th centuries before being demolished and largely forgotten after it was replaced by a new church in the 1880s.

The original site sits on the route of HS2 and is being carefully removed by a team from LP-Archaeology working with HS2’s enabling works contractor, Fusion-JV.

A team of 40 archaeologists are constructing a picture of the role of St Mary’s in the community, from its construction in the 11th century through to its decline in the late 19th century.

HS2 signs R&D agreement

ON May 14 HS2 Ltd signed an agreement with leading infrastructure research centres in UK universities, which will enable it to access world-leading research capability, knowledge and facilities.

The agreement with the UK Collaboratorium for Research on Infrastructure and Cities (UKCRIC) means HS2 Ltd can draw on key centres of British academic excellence across a broad range of disciplines.

Co-ordinated by the Universities of Loughborough and Southampton, the agreement will enable HS2 Ltd to commission research from across the whole of UKCRIC and provide a channel for academic institutions to put forward findings that could be employed on the project.

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£2.5b benefit to economy, says new rail freight report

A NEW report has concluded that rail freight contributes £2.5 billion in economic and social benefits to the UK every year, with the highest benefits in the north of England, Wales and Scotland.

The report, prepared by Deloitte for the Rail Delivery Group, is designed to inform future decisions about how capacity is allocated. For example, an intermodal train travelling 200 miles contributes about £1.5m per year in benefits to the UK economy.

Freight chief appointed by Porterbrook

RAIL vehicle management specialist Porterbrook has appointed Mark Wyborn as its new Head of Freight Commercial.

Previously with GB Railfreight, Mr Wyborn will be responsible for developing Porterbrook's first dedicated freight strategy and building partnerships with existing freight operating companies, new market entrants and Network Rail.

Port Talbot coke hauled by DB Cargo

A NEW weekly flow of coke nuts has commenced from Newport Docks to Tata Steel's Port Talbot plant in South Wales.

Each 21-wagon train carries 1,500 tonnes of the imported product, which is used in the steel-making process, removing 50 heavy lorries from the M4 corridor.

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Freight revival at Tinsley as new container depot opens

NEWELL & Wright's container depot on the site of the old Tinsley Yard is now open, and welcomed its first train on May 5.

Although some trains ran to a temporary facility last year, the permanent concrete hard standing and access roads are now complete. The facility occupies part of what was the reception sidings of the old marshalling yard, opened in 1965. It features a single transfer siding, capable of handling 750m-long trains. Trains are propelled into the siding as a run-round loop is provided further down the yard.

As the Treeton Junction end of the Sheffield District Line has been closed for many years, trains are routed via Aldwarke Junction and Rotherham Central to Tinsley South Junction and Shepcote Lane East Junction.

GB Railfreight (GBRf) is now operating five trains per week from Felixstowe to Tinsley for Danish shipping giant Maersk. GBRf has signed a two-year deal – its first with Maersk – to operate trains to and from the Sheffield terminal.

The new train incorporates five sets of the new 'Ecofret 2' triple-set wagons recently acquired from VTG.

Decorated in Newell & Wright colours, GBRf's No. 66747 Made in Sheffield after arrival at Tinsley with 4E53 05.38 Felixstowe North to Tinsley Yard on May 5, the first working into the Newell & Wright container depot. CHRIS BOOTH

Freightliner hauls record tonnage for Mendip Rail

MARCH 2021 saw Freightliner haul a record volume of aggregates for Mendip Rail.

The operator surpassed its own monthly record of 761,000 tonnes set a year earlier, moving a total of 796,000t in an average of 120 trains per week.

Freightliner took over the Mendip Rail haulage contract from DB Cargo in November 2019, and has continued to move large tonnages of aggregate from Somerset to London and the south-east of England despite the Covid-19 pandemic.

During that time Freightliner has also run trials with 4000t trains – the longest and heaviest on the UK network with a single locomotive – using hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) rather than diesel fuel.

The operator's Merehead depot has also recently been awarded ISO14001 Environmental Management Systems standard.

Carrying Freightliner's latest corporate livery, No. 59206 *John F Yeoman Rail Pioneer* hauls a train of bogie box wagons loaded with aggregate. FREIGHTLINER

In its Biffa livery, No. 66783 *The Flying Dustman* sits at the Renwick Road waste site on May 6, to be loaded with the first train of recovered fly-tipped waste. GBRF

Biffa opens Barking waste terminal

WASTE management specialist Biffa and GB Railfreight have opened a new rail terminal near Barking in East London.

The £4.2 million Renwick Road site despatched its first train on May 6 and occupies previously disused railway land between Barking and Dagenham Dock.

More than 14,000 tonnes of fly-tipped waste and material was removed from the land before it could be redeveloped.

Five trains a week are now moving waste from North and East London to sites at Roxby near Scunthorpe, Leeds and Manchester. Biffa expects to transport 250,000t of waste a year from London by rail, and plans to shift 50% of all its waste traffic to rail by 2025.

Since its partnership with GBRf was launched in 2018, Biffa has shipped more than one million tonnes of waste by rail, saving more than the same amount of CO2 equivalent emissions. New transfer stations were opened in Manchester in 2017 and in Leeds the following year.

First 'Ecofret2' sets are delivered to GBRf's new Peterborough HQ

GB Railfreight has taken delivery of its first 'Ecofret2' triple-container flat wagon sets from VTG Rail.

The wagons were delivered to GBRf's new headquarters in Peterborough – completed in April – following successful prototype testing and approvals.

The 'Ecofret2' sets are designed to reduce the empty spaces between more conventional wagons which can cause turbulence and increase drag, making them more efficient to operate.

GBRf and VTG Rail are investing £50 million in the new wagon fleet.

GB Railfreight started to take delivery of its new 'Ecofret2' intermodal triple sets from VTG Rail in late April. GB RAILFREIGHT

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➲ **Your reports and pictures are most welcome. Highly competitive rates are paid, especially if exclusive to *The RM*.**

On Thursday, May 20, No. 60103 *Flying Scotsman* worked an early evening Steam Dreams Surrey Hills circular tour from London Victoria. The National Collection-owned A3 Pacific passes Merstham during its second lap. DAVE BOWLES

Bahamas booked for 10 London tours!

LMS 'Jubilee' No. 45596 *Bahamas* is set for a busy few months with 11 main line charters in the diary, the vast majority of which will see the popular 4-6-0 in London, plus a visit to a main line connected heritage line.

Signed up by two tour operators – Steam Dreams (SD) and Railway Touring Company (RTC) – the popular 4-6-0 will stretch its legs 'down south' away from its traditional north of England stomping ground.

Having worked its last main line tour on February 22, 2020 from the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway to Carlisle, the bookings provide welcome news for the locomotive's owner, the Bahamas Locomotive Society (BLS).

"This is the most ambitious programme we have ever undertaken in the 49 years since No. 45596 returned to the main line," said Keith Whitmore, BLS chairman.

"*Bahamas* has no fewer than 11 main line trips booked between August 18 and October 3. Most of these will be from London, marking the first time that No. 45596 will have ventured in and out of London main line stations under our ownership. We're looking forward to a new audience seeing *Bahamas*.

Appetite

"Last year's Mid-Hants Railway visit led to increased interest in our locomotive in the south of England. The double-headed tour with *Mayflower* from Paddington to Penzance will be an iconic trip.

"After the famine of the last 12 months, the feast of income, which we expect to generate from these excursions, will be most welcome and essential."

The excursions are: July 18 London Paddington to Salisbury and return (SD); July 22 London Victoria to Faversham and return (RTC); July 24 London Paddington to the West Somerset Railway and return (RTC); August 1 Taunton to Par and return (RTC); August 5 London Victoria to Weymouth and return (RTC); September 8 Holyhead to London Paddington (SD); September 23 London Paddington to Cardiff and return (SD); September 28 London Paddington to Penzance (SD); September 30 Plymouth and Par shuttles (SD); October 1 Penzance to London Paddington (SD); and October 3 London to York (SD).

Following this last trip No. 45596 is due to return to its Keighley & Worth Valley Railway home for the winter.

More good news is that *Bahamas* will star at the Nene Valley Railway's (NVR) Jubilee Gala weekend over the August 28-30 bank holiday. The 4-6-0 will also be operational on service trains over the previous weekend, August 21/22. Furthermore, there will be footplate experience, dining trains and an evening charter while the locomotive is at the Cambridgeshire heritage line. The NVR is of course, accessible via the East Coast Main Line – presenting further opportunities to see *Bahamas* on the main line.

David Buck, chairman of Steam Dreams, said: "We are extremely pleased to have teamed up with The Bahamas Locomotive Society for an exciting series of rail tours this summer.

"We're delighted with the routes which allow *Bahamas* not only to steam out of London for the first time since preservation but also to traverse lines which the loco may never have visited, even in the days of steam. We look forward to announcing one more tour with the locomotive which will take place in September."

Bookings

Kelly Osborne, RTC's managing director, said: "We are very excited to have secured these dates with *Bahamas*. We look forward to working with the *Bahamas* crew.

"Already a number of our steam excursions for this summer are full. After a very tough 15 months for the heritage rail industry, it's tremendous to see such enthusiasm and support from people."

Left: The North East Locomotive Preservation Group's K1 2-6-0 No. 62005 climbs to Polnish with West Coast Railways' 10.15am Fort William to Mallaig 'Jacobite' on April 29. SIMON KERRY

Right: The welcome sight of a locomotive-hauled charter train against an unmistakeable foreground and backdrop: May 19's 'Snowdonia Statesman' from Hull to Blaenau Ffestiniog was top and tailed by a pair of LSL Class 47s. No. 47593 *Galloway Princess* prepares to head the return working along the Conwy Valley line. No. 47805 *Roger Hosking MA 1925-2013* was at the rear. TOM MACATEE

JUNE: STEAM RAILTOURS

Date	Tour Name	Steam-Hauled From-To	Motive Power	Promoter
June				
1-30	Jacobite	Fort William – Mallaig x 2	45407/45212	WCRC
1	Dalesman	Hellifield – Carlisle	46115/35018/45699	WCRC
3	Welsh Marches Whistler	Crewe – Bristol	2x TBA	ST
3	Dalesman	Hellifield – Carlisle	46115/35018/45699	WCRC
4	British Pullman	London Victoria circular	35028	BEL
5	Scarborough Flyer	Manchester Victoria – Scarborough	46115/35018/45699	RTC
6	English Riviera Express	Bristol Temple Meads – Kingswear	46100 or 34046	ST
6	Steam Dreams Excursion	London Paddington – Southampton	60103	SD
6	Steam Dreams Excursion	Southampton circular	60103	SD
8	Pendle Dalesman	Lancaster – Carlisle	46115/35018/45699	WCRC
8	Royal Windsor Express	London Victoria – Windsor x3	61306	SD
8	Sunset Steam Express	London Victoria circular	61306	SD
9	Devonian Express	Bristol Temple Meads – Plymouth	46100 or 34046	ST
10	Scarborough Spa Express	Carnforth – York	46115/35018/45699	WCRC
12	Tynesider	Cleethorpes – Morpeth	46115/35018/45699	RTC
12	Cotswold Venturer	London Paddington – Worcester	60103	RTC
13	English Riviera Express	Bristol Temple Meads – Kingswear	46100 or 34046	ST
15	Pendle Dalesman	Lancaster – Carlisle	46115/35018/45699	WCRC
15	Royal Windsor Express	London Victoria – Windsor x3	61306	SD
15	Sunset Steam Express	London Victoria circular	61306	SD
16	Portsmouth Harbour Express	Bristol Temple Meads – Portsmouth	46100 or 34046	ST
17	Steam Dreams Excursion	London King's Cross – Cambridge	60103	SD
17	Steam Dreams Excursion	Cambridge circular	60103	SD
17	Dalesman	Hellifield – Carlisle	46115/35018/45699	WCRC
19	White Rose	London King's Cross – York	60103	RTC
19	Edinburgh Flyer	York – Edinburgh	60163	RTC
20	English Riviera Express	Bristol Temple Meads – Kingswear	46100 or 34046	ST
20	Steam Dreams Excursion	London Paddington – Portsmouth	61306 + TBA	SD
20	Steam Dreams Excursion	Portsmouth circular	61306 + TBA	SD
22	Dalesman	Hellifield – Carlisle	46115/35018/45699	WCRC
22	Royal Windsor Express	London Victoria - Windsor x3	61306	SD
22	Sunset Steam Express	London Victoria circular	61306	SD
23	Torbay Riviera Explorer	Bristol Temple Meads – Kingswear	46100 or 34046	ST
24	Scarborough Spa Express	Carnforth – York	46115/35018/45699	WCRC
25	Steam Dreams Excursion	Edinburgh circular x3	60103	SD
26	Fen & Fells Flyer	York – Carlisle	60163	TR
26	Northern Belle	Carnforth – Carlisle	6201	NB
26	Cumbrian Mountain Express	Carnforth – Carlisle	46115/35018/45699	RTC
27	English Riviera Express	Bristol Temple Meads – Kingswear	46100 or 34046	ST
29	Pendle Dalesman	Lancaster – Carlisle	46115/35018/45699	WCRC
29	Royal Windsor Express	London Victoria – Windsor x3	61306	SD
29	Sunset Steam Express	London Victoria circular	61306	SD
July				
One to 30	Jacobite	Fort William – Mallaig x2	45407/45212/62005	WCRC
1	Bristol Forty	Bristol Temple Meads – Crewe	2xTBA	ST
1	Dalesman	Hellifield – Carlisle	46115/35018/45699	WCRC
3	Cumbrian Explorer	Darlington North Road – Carlisle – Carnforth	60163	TR
3	Man of Kent	London – Margate – London	35028	PT
3	Bournemouth Express	London Waterloo – Bournemouth – Waterloo	35018	RTC
3	Northern Belle	Carnforth – Carlisle	6201	NB
5	Northern Belle	London Victoria – Bournemouth	TBA	NB
6	Royal Windsor Express	London Victoria – Windsor x3	61306	SD
6	Sunset Steam Express	London Victoria circular	61306	SD
7	Fellsman	Crewe – Carlisle – Crewe	TBA	ST
8	Scarborough Spa Express	Carnforth - York	46115/35018/45699	WCRC
9	End of Southern Steam	London Waterloo – Yeovil Junction	35018	RTC
10	Steam Dreams Excursion	Southend East – Hastings. Eastbourne – London	TBA	SD
10	Lakelander	Rugby – Carlisle – Rugby	TBA	ST
11	Royal Duchy	Taunton – Par – Taunton	60163	RTC
11	Waverley	York – Calisle – York	60103	RTC
13	Royal Windsor Express	London Victoria – Windsor x3	61306	SD
13	Sunset Steam Express	London Victoria circular	61306	SD
14	Fellsman	Crewe – Carlisle – Crewe	TBA	ST
15	Cheshireman	London Euston – Chester – Euston	60163	RTC
15	Scarborough Spa Express	Carnforth – York	46115/35018/45699	WCRC
17	Cumbrian Mountain Express	Liverpool Lime Street – Carlisle – Lime Street	46115/35018/45699	RTC
17	Shakespeare Express	Birmingham Snow Hill – Stratford upon Avon	7029/5043	VT
18	North Wales Coast Express	Liverpool Lime Street – Holyhead – Lime Street	46115/35018/45699	RTC
18	Shakespeare Express	Birmingham Snow Hill – Stratford – Snow Hill	7029/5043	VT
18	Shakespeare Express	Stratford – Birmingham Snow Hill – Stratford	7029/5043	VT
18	Steam Dreams Excursion	London Paddington – Salisbury – Paddington	45596	SD
18	Steam Dreams Excursion	Salisbury circular	45596	SD
17-22	Staycation Express	Skipton – Carlisle	HST	RCS
20	Viking Venturer	York – Edinburgh	60163	TR
20	Royal Windsor Express	London Victoria – Windsor x3	61306	SD
20	Sunset Steam Express	London Victoria circular	61306	SD
20	Welsh Mountaineer	Preston – Blaenau Ffestiniog – Preston	46115/35018/45699	RTC

'Deltic' haulage on the ECML for Saphos mini break

THE unmistakable sound of a 'Deltic' is set to return to the East Coast Main Line (ECML) at the end of July as part of Saphos Trains' 'Elizabethan' charter from London to Edinburgh.

On Saturday, July 24 the distinctive Napier roar will echo at King's Cross as the excursion heads north, picking up at Potters Bar, Stevenage, Huntingdon and Peterborough.

Traction

'Deltic' No. 55022 *Royal Scots Grey* is due to work the excursion to York, where it will hand over to steam traction – which is expected to be LMS 'Royal Scot' 4-6-0 No. 46100 *Royal Scot* or LMS Princess Royal Pacific No. 46233 *Duchess of Sutherland*.

Passengers can then enjoy a two-night break in the Scottish capital – although overnight accommodation must be booked separately by individuals.

Excursion

If a day of leisure in Edinburgh does not appeal, a welcome attraction is the opportunity to join another Saphos charter on the Sunday – 'The Aberdonian' – which will be steam-hauled throughout to the Granite City and return. The steam locomotive allocation is expected to mirror that of the 'Elizabethan'. Departing Waverley at 9.15am, the trip is expected to return by 9pm.

The 'Elizabethan' returns south on July 26, departing Edinburgh at 9am, steam-hauled to York, with No. 55022 *Royal Scots Grey* working the final leg to King's Cross.

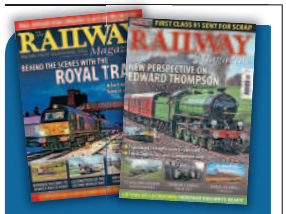
Railtours Track Record

BOOKING CONTACTS

BEL – Belmond
0845 077 2222
BLS – Branch Line Society
www.branchline.org.uk
IC – Intercity
0800 038 5364
MP – Midland Pullman
0800 038 5360
NB – Northern Belle
0844 840 4525
RCS – Rail Charter Services
https://railcharterservices.info
RTC – Railway Touring Company
01553 661500
SD - Steam Dreams
01483 209888
SR – Statesman Rail
0345 310 2458
SRPS – Scottish Railway Preservation Society
0131 202 1033
ST – Saphos Trains
0800 038 5320
TR – Tornado Railtours
01325 488215
UKR – UK Railtours
01438 715050
VT – Vintage Trains
0121 708 4960
WCRC – West Coast Railways
0333 996 6720

COVID-19

- NOTE: This list was current at the time of writing in mid-May. However, the ongoing uncertainty over Covid-19 may result in some or all trains being postponed or cancelled. Please check with the individual operators.
- Tours may start and finish elsewhere.



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JUNE: DIESEL & ELECTRIC RAILTOURS

Date	Tour Name	From-To	Motive Power	Promoter	
June					
2	Cornish Riviera Statesman	Wolverhampton – Penzance	LSL Class 47s	SR	
4	Northern Belle	Manchester Victoria – Edinburgh	WCRC Class 47/57	NB	
5	Settle & Carlisle Coastal Statesman	Cardiff – Appleby	LSL Class 47s	SR	
5	Galloway Fifties	Tame Bridge Parkway – Stranraer	Class 50 x2	PT	
5	Northern Belle	Manchester Victoria – Bath	WCRC Class 47/57	NB	
6	Northern Belle	Wakefield circular	WCRC Class 47/57	NB	
8	Northern Belle	Liverpool – Bristol	WCRC Class 47/57	NB	
9	British Pullman	London Victoria – Bath	DBC Class 67 x2	BEL	
9	Northern Belle	Chester – Scarborough	WCRC Class 47/57	NB	
11	Northern Belle	Sheffield circular	WCRC Class 47/57	NB	
12	Settle & Carlisle Pullman	Bristol Temple Meads – Carlisle	Blue Pullman HST	MP	
12	Northern Belle	Norwich – Chesterfield	WCRC Class 47/57	NB	
13	Northern Belle	Norwich circular	WCRC Class 47/57	NB	
16	British Pullman	London Victoria – Bath	DBC Class 67 x2	BEL	
17	British Pullman	London Victoria circular	DBC Class 67 x2	BEL	
18	Northern Belle	Crewe circular	WCRC Class 47/57	NB	
18	British Pullman	London Victoria circular	DBC Class 67 x2	BEL	
19	Derbyshire Rose	London King's Cross – Chesterfield	DBC Class 66 x 2	UKR	
19	Northern Belle	Derby – Berwick upon Tweed	WCRC Class 47/57	NB	
19	Settle & Carlisle Circular	Worcester – Carlisle	LSL Class 47s	SR	
19	British Pullman	London Victoria – Margate	DBC Class 67 x2	BEL	
24	Northern Belle	Manchester Victoria – Edinburgh	WCRC Class 47/57	NB	
24	British Pullman	London Victoria – Oxford	DBC Class 67 x2	BEL	
25	Northern Belle	Crewe circular	WCRC Class 47/57	NB	
25	British Pullman	London Victoria circular	DBC Class 67 x2	BEL	
26	Mazey day Cornishman	Birmingham New Street – Penzance	Class 50/66	PT	
26	Settle to Carlisle & Jorvik Pullman	Ayr – York	Blue Pullman HST	MP	
26	British Pullman	London Victoria circular	DBC Class 67 x2	BEL	
27	Northern Belle	Cheltenham circular	WCRC Class 47/57	NB	
July					
1	Bristol Forty	Bangor – Bristol. Crewe - Bangor	LSL Class 40	ST	
2	Europort Explorer	Edinburgh – York	DBC Class 66 x2 + DRS Class 37 x2		BLS
3	Cornish Riviera Statesman	Derby – Penzance	LSL Class 47s	SR	
3	Sinfin Syphon	York circular	DRS Class 37 x2	BLS	
3	British Pullman	London Victoria – Worcester Shrub Hill	50007 and 50049	BEL	
4	Northern Belle	Birmingham International & Northampton circular	WCRC Class 47/57	NB	
4	Cromford and High Peak Explorer	York – Sheffield	DRS Class 37 x2	BLS	
5	Great Corby Syphon	York – Falkirk Grahamston	DBC Class 66 x2 + DRS Class 37 x2		BLS
7	Cornish Riviera Statesman	Shrewsbury – Penzance	LSL Class 47s	SR	
10	SRPS Excursion	Dunfermline – Scarborough	TBA	SRPS	
10	Blue Boys Merrymixer	Eastleigh – Crewe	DRS Class 37/57/66/68	PT	
10	Dorset Maiden	Peterborough – Bournemouth	TBA	UKR	
10	Northern Belle	Cardiff – Weymouth	WCRC Class 47/57	NB	
10	Yorkshire Coast Statesman	St Albans City – Scarborough	LSL Class 47s	SR	
11	Northern Belle	Coventry – Weymouth	WCRC Class 47/57	NB	
14	Northern Belle	Darlington – Dundee	WCRC Class 47/57	NB	
17	Cumbrian Freighter	Banbury – Appleby	DBC Class 66 x2	PT	
17	Northern Belle	Hull – Winchester	WCRC Class 47/57	NB	
17	Yorkshire Coast Statesman	Potters Bar – Scarborough	LSL Class 47s	SR	
17	Heart of Wales Pullman	Preston – Cardiff	Blue Pullman HST	MP	
18	Northern Belle	York – Llandudno Junction	WCRC Class 47/57	NB	
23	Northern Belle	Crewe – Edinburgh	WCRC Class 47/57	NB	
24	Northern Belle	Derby – Winchester	WCRC Class 47/57	NB	
24-26	Elizabethan	King's Cross – Edinburgh. York – King's Cross	55022	ST	
28	Cumbrian Coast Statesman	Hereford – Ravenglass	LSL Class 47s	SR	
30	Kennet Navigator	Bristol Parkway circular	Colas Class 37 x2	PT	
30-31	Taffy Buffer Puffer	Bristol Parkway circular	Colas Class 37 x2	PT	
31	Dorset Coast Statesman	Chester – Bournemouth	LSL Class 47s	SR	
31	Cotswold Canter	Bristol Parkway – Cheltenham Spa	Colas Class 37 x2	PT	
31	Thanet Thunderer	East Midlands Parkway – Margate	50008 + DBC Class 66 x2	BLS	

SRPS railtour programme to recommence in style with *Tornado* in July

THE Scottish Railway Preservation Society (SRPS) has announced the resumption of its railtours operation after being put on ice due to Covid-19.

The new programme is due to kick off on Saturday, July 10 with an excursion from Dunfermline Town to Scarborough – with York as an optional. Pick-ups are Glenrothes with Thornton, Kirkcaldy, Dalgety Bay, Dalmeny, Edinburgh Waverley, Drem and Berwick-upon-Tweed. Details of the locomotive remained to be confirmed as this issue went to press.

Steam

July 20 is due to see the first of three tours hauled by A1 Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado* – when the 4-6-2 has been booked to work the return northbound leg from York. Organised jointly with Tornado Railtours, the charter's outward leg is due to be diesel-hauled from Linlithgow, calling at Haymarket and Waverley, followed by the direct route to York. The return will be steam-hauled over the Settle & Carlisle line.

Tornado is set to work two 'The Forth Circle' trips on August 15. Morning and afternoon journeys will travel over the Forth Bridge, along the Fife Coast and round the Fife Circle, then through Culross, Kincardine and Alloa to Stirling, returning through Falkirk. Morning trips depart from Linlithgow, while afternoon journeys leave from Dalmeny and Inverkeithing.

Highlands

The north is not forgotten either – *Tornado* is booked to work August 28's excursion to Inverness – with an option to leave the train at Aviemore to ride on the Strathspey Railway.

Departing Linlithgow, the tour is due to run via Fife, Perth and then along the Highland Line through Dunkeld, Pitlochry, Blair Atholl and over Drumochter Summit, the highest point on the British railway network.

Railway Holidays

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SIDELINES

Recreation society catches a 'Sturgeon'

THE Ivatt Diesel Recreation Society has bought a 'Sturgeon' flat bogie wagon, number unknown, through RMS Locotec's Dartmoor Railway sale (*RM* April p71). It will carry the frames of donor Class 58 No. 58022 when the loco is dismantled.

More stock for Nant Mawr branch project

THE Tanat Valley Railway near Oswestry has purchased items of stock from the closed GWR Preservation Group at Southall. This includes 0-4-0DM Army 251 *Francis Baily of Thatcham* (Ruston & Hornsby 390772 of 1956), and 4wDM Ruston & Hornsby 416568 of 1957.

Restored 4-TC carriage delivered to Swanage

THE 4TC Group's second restored DTSO, No. 76322, arrived at the Swanage Railway on March 30. Restored by Rampart Engineering at Barrow Hill, volunteers at Swanage will now repair the electrical and braking systems.

Wensleydale 'Pacer' enters service

THE Wensleydale Railway ran a 'shakedown train' for volunteers on May 15 using 'Pacer' No.142090, prior to reopening the railway on May 22 (subject to ORR OK).

GCR marks a return to regular diesel running

THE Great Central Railway has returned to regular diesel operations with two Diesel Running Fridays. The first was with 'Peak' No. D123 on May 28, and the second, with Class 25 No. D5185, is on June 11.

There will be six round trips, a total of 96 miles, departing Loughborough Central at 12.30, 14.00, 15.30, 17.00, 18.30 and 20.05.

Bookings for this event must be made in advance. A compartment for up to six people is £75 or a table for two is £30. See the website www.gcrailway.co.uk

Public diesel operations are resumed on the SVR

THE Severn Valley Railway is running a further series of 'Pioneer' diesel-hauled trains in June.

Pre-booking is advised to guarantee travel, with tickets on sale until 15.30 the day before. Private compartments or reserved table seats are available. Trains depart Kidderminster at 09.45 with final return at 18.40 or 19.05, after three return runs.

All trains on Fridays run to Bridgnorth and return, while some trains work between Bridgnorth and Bewdley during the day on Wednesdays and Sundays.

Dates are: June 6 'Warship No. D821 *Greyhound*; 11th and 15th, Class 50; 18th, Class 17 No. D8568 + Class 14 No. D9551; and 20th, Class 52 No. D1015 *Western Champion*.

CLASS 40 No. 40106 *Atlantic Conveyor* is seen departing Foley Park Tunnel, Severn Valley Railway, with the 12.45 Kidderminster-Bridgnorth on April 23. This was the first day the SVR operated a public diesel turn this year. This is not a 'lineside pass view', but is from a public footpath which runs beside the line from the road above the tunnel to the bottom of the hill. ALISTAIR GRIEVE

Brake van rides are on offer through the Forest of Dean

THE Dean Forest Railway is running regular brake van rides this season, in addition to the usual steam service. Parties of up to six people will have a veranda (one end of a brake van) to themselves for a round trip of the line.

The diesel and two brake vans run non-stop from Norchard station to Lydney Junction, followed by a journey through the forest to Parkend. There, passengers can see the loco run round before returning to Norchard to complete the 1hr 20min journey. The verandas are cleaned between trips. Unfortunately, this experience is unsuitable for under-12s or dogs.

Trains run on selected Saturdays and Sundays until November 6. Haulage by Class 08 No. D3937 *Gladys* is £40, and £50 by Class 14 No. D9521.

Pre-booking is essential due to the limited number of spaces. See the website www.deanforestrailway.co.uk

Brake van rides on the Dean Forest Railway are proving popular. Here, Class 08 No. D3937 *Gladys* with 'Shark' No. 99301 and Southern 'Queen Mary' No. S55603, are seen on April 18. The location is Upper Forge foot crossing between Norchard and Tufts Junction. DAVID MEE

'Pacer' No. 142094 is seen stabled at Embsay station on May 6. The previous day it ran full line trips for assessment and crew familiarisation, as well as shuttles between Embsay and Bow Bridge. The destination blind is set optimistically for Ilkley. ANDREW WILSON

More 'Pacer's for preservation

THE Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway has taken delivery of 'Pacer' No. 142094 (DMS No. 55744 + DMSL No. 55790), previously stored at the Wensleydale Railway (*RM* April p71).

The Telford Steam Railway has received two Class 142 'Pacers'. Set No. 142058 (DMS No. 55708 + DMSL No. 55754) arrived on April 15. It is owned by the Telford Horsehay Steam Trust, but there are no current plans for the unit.

The other set, No. 142004 (DMS No. 55545 + DMSL No. 55595), which is privately owned, arrived at Horsehay on April 22. They join Class 144 'Pacer' No. 144013 (*RM* August p71).

Can you help 125 Group bring back the Valenta for future generations?

THE Paxman Valenta was the engine that transformed the performance of the 125 InterCity High Speed Train into the success it was.

The 125 Group is now restoring production power car No. 43044 (*RM* April p21) at Neville Hill, where it will be repainted by A1 Pro Paint in a livery appropriate for a Valenta-powered car.

Eventually it will be fitted with an operational Valenta engine and original Marston cooler group.

Some of the costs involved are: injectors, £1350; engine and cooler lifts, £2250; fuel pumps, £6000; and turbocharger, £8500.

Those able to help and make contributions can do so by visiting www.125group.org.uk/you-can-help

■ Our thanks to contributors: AC Locomotive Group; Mark Bladwell (DEPG); Josh Brinsford; Nigel Cockburn; East Somerset Railway/CTMS; Alan R. Hawkins (71A Locomotive Group); David Mee; Realtime Trains; Peter Singlehurst (MNR), and Steve Widdowson.

Working parties in full swing as 71A Group's 'Crompton' cabs undergo an overhaul

CLASS 33 No. D6515 *Lt Jenny Lewis RN* is in Eastleigh Works for corrosion attention to both cabs.

Only the lower parts of the cabs were repaired when the loco was overhauled to main line standard in 2009. The upper cab structures were serviceable at the time but, 12 years later, restoration was required – including the roofs.

The work was delayed in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, but on January 4 the 'Crompton' travelled light engine from Swanage to Eastleigh Works. The first 71A Locomotive Group working party took place the following weekend, and every weekend since, as allowed under Covid restrictions as applicable to volunteering and conducting work unable to be undertaken at home.

To help raise funds for this work, the group is looking for people to sponsor the required items. The group will be pleased to receive donations large and small, but a donation of £50 or more includes membership of the 71A Locomotive Group's Support Group. For details of how to contribute, visit http://71alocogroup.co.uk/71A_donate.htm

Class 33 No. D6515 (33012) inside Eastleigh Works on March 6 with both cab roofs removed. This photo was taken while there was access to a high-reach platform, providing a one-off opportunity to obtain such a high-level view.
ALAN R HAWKINS / 71A LOCOMOTIVE GROUP

Diesel use upped at KWVR thanks to gala successes

THE Keighley & Worth Valley Railway is increasing the operation of diesel locos this season thanks to their popularity at recent galas.

The two locos scheduled for use are Class 20 No. 20031 and Class 37 No. 37075.

Class 25 No. 25059 has been unavailable since January 2020 when it suffered serious flood water damage.

Dates planned for diesel operation, subject to Covid-19 restrictions in force at the time, are: June 5, 6, 12, 13, 19, 20 and 28; July 3, 10, 17, 24, 30 and 31; and August 7, 13, 14, 21 and 27.

Some days have all-day diesel running but others are morning diagrams only. There is a mixed traction event planned for September 10-12.

There is a possibility of a visiting loco for the summer, which will also be in operation during the September gala.

It is hoped to be able to run the popular Diesel and Ale Saturday service again this year. The first is on July 17, with other dates to be announced.

Award-winning DMU to make appearances at East Somerset

CLASS 108 DMU Set No. L231 (Nos. M51909 and M56271) will be in operation at the East Somerset Railway on July 31, Aug 14/15, Sept 15/16 and Oct 10.

The DMU has been restored and is operated by the Mendip Traction & Rolling Stock Group, the winner of the Railcar Association's Railcar of the Year award for 2020 (*RM* Feb. p68). The DMU departs Cranmore at 11.45 and 14.45 for a return trips to Mendip Vale. Standard fares apply, with a rover ticket allowing rides on all trains.

In addition, September 16 is a Diesel Day, when the DMU will run all day, departing Cranmore at 11.00, 12.30, 14.00 and 15.30.

For further details, including DMU driver taster sessions, visit the website https://eastsomersetrailway.com

EAST LANCS 'RAT' WORKS THE BALLAST: East Lancashire Railway's engineers' trains continue (*RM* April p70), making for some pleasing views. On April 22, it was the turn of Class 24 No. D5054 *Phil Southern* to participate. It is seen at Ramsbottom station on a ballast working. After some shunting, the train was propelled by the Type 2 towards Irwell Vale. GRAHAM LOMAX

Bluebell's 4-VEP restoration receives welcome Realtime Trains' sponsorship

THE restoration of Class 423 4-VEP EMU, set No. 3417 *Gordon Pettitt*, is to be sponsored by Realtime Trains.

The four-car EMU is owned by the Bluebell Railway and is in the care of the Southern Electric Traction Group (SETG) (*RM* June 2018).

It has been housed at Strawberry Hill depot since 2015, where it has been receiving attention for a return to operation. This will include the main line as well as loco-haulage on heritage railways. The BR blue-liveried train has already seen push-pull use during a few galas, such as the Swanage Railway, when first preserved in 2011.

Main line return

To comply with today's operating requirements, the unit is being fitted with GSM-R and OTMR (On-Train Monitoring and Recording), together with a CET toilet equipment and central door locking.

Tom Cairns, owner of Realtime Trains information service, said: "I am delighted to be able to help contribute towards the SETG's ongoing work to return 3417 to passenger service.

"Having seen the work firsthand at Strawberry Hill, the SETG team has demonstrated its will and capability to fulfil this goal. Since 3417 spent its entire operational life operating out of London Waterloo, a route I grew up with, it felt right to be supporting this project.

"Like many, I look forward to being able to ride aboard this classic train in the near future."

Lavender Line 'Thumper' restoration progresses

CLASS 205 DEMU DMBS No. S60117 is seen undergoing overhaul by CTMS on the East Somerset Railway on April 25.

The 'Thumper' arrived at the Cranmore workshop from the Lavender Line, East Sussex, on December 2 (*RM* Feb p68) for extensive bodywork and roof repairs, including sides, cab and rear end, followed by a repaint. Work on the carriage roof has been making use of the facility's new fall-arrest system for the person working at height.

PICTURE: PETER NICHOLSON

BLUE CLAYTON MAKES ITS DEBUT AT SVR GALA: Diesel Traction Group's unique Class 17, No. D8568, newly repainted in BR blue, was in action on May 13, the first day of the Severn Valley Railway's four-day diesel gala. It is arriving at Kidderminster on the rear of the 09.55 Bridgnorth-Kidderminster service, with Class 50 No. 50049 *Defiance* on the front. It mostly worked on the Kidderminster-Bewdley shuttle with Class 14 No. D9551.
STEVE WIDDOWSON

DIARY

Note: *All subject to Covid-19 restrictions in force at the time. Please check with railway before travelling.*

June
4-6 Isle of Wight Steam Railway (IWSR) 50th anniversary gala (Class 483 unveil)
25-27 Mid-Hants Railway diesel gala
26/27 Mid-Norfolk Railway (MNR) grand reopening
27 G/WR diesel enthusiasts' day (No. 47436)

July
1-3 East Lancashire Railway (ELR) diesel gala
2-4 S&D at Midsomer Norton mixed traction event
10/11 Chasewater Railway diesel gala

August
6-8 Spa Valley Railway diesel gala

September
3-5 Great Central Railway diesel gala
10-12 KWVR mixed traction gala
10-12 CPRR diesel gala
16 East Somerset Railway Diesel Day
17/18 ELR diesel gala
25/26 Chasewater Railway coal train days
25/26 MNR diesel gala
31-Oct 3 SVR diesel gala

October
10-12 Nene Valley Railway diesel gala (tbc)
17 IWSR Ryde Pier tram debut

November
13/14 ELR DMU gala

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Plenty for diesel fans on summer timetable

THE West Somerset Railway reopened on May 22 with trains running between Bishops Lydeard and Williton.

Prior to then, many non-public trains were run, steam and diesel. It has been busy time for the two Diesel & Electric Preservation Group (DEPG) 'Cromptons', Nos. D6566 (33048) and D6575 (33057). They have been used on crew training specials and moving empty coaching stock (ECS) so the newly-painted coaches were at Bishops Lydeard in readiness for the restart of public services.

The DEPG will remain busy supporting the WSR's gradual reopening from Bishops Lydeard through to Minehead. A diesel will be kept on standby during the steam-hauled services, first to Williton, then to Watchet from May 29, to Blue Anchor from June 8, and finally, right through to Minehead from July 1.

Summer services

When the 'Blue' timetable takes over on July 3, diesel haulage will be available on trains running through to Minehead.

Departing Minehead at 10.45, a 60-mile diesel-hauled service will run, with a stopover at Williton between 13.20 and 14.30. If there are sufficient volunteers available, the diesel depot will be open to visitors on such days.

Although Minehead might not be an ideal starting point for diesel fans, it is hoped they will support this service, making them a commercial success for the railway.

The WSR always needs to be reminded of the popularity of heritage diesel traction, and this is an excellent opportunity to do so.

This opportunity for diesel haulage has arisen due to the non-availability of the DMU this season. The current published timetable shows 27 days when the 'Blue' timetable is in operation, providing a significant amount of diesel running, including a Bishops Lydeard-Williton shuttle departing Bishops Lydeard at 12.50 and returning at 15.00.

Class 35 'Hymek' No. D7018 and Class 14 'Teddy Bear' No. D9526 will be used on some days, while the two Class 33s will cover the majority of the workings.

There are no gala events planned for the WSR this season.

DEPG's Class 33 No. D6575 approaches Williton on May 1 with the 13.35 crew-refresher working from Bishops Lydeard. It is about to pull into the up platform, from where the return to Bishops Lydeard departed behind No. D6566 at 14.20. PETER NICHOLSON

Main line return for unique Class 89 is on hold

PROTOTYPE AC electric loco, Class 89 No. 89001, completed low-speed movement testing at Soho depot, Birmingham (*RM* Dec. p75) on April 22. It returned by rail to the AC Locomotive Group's base at Barrow Hill on May 9.

During the testing of the armature convertors, a fault occurred which applied some unusual stresses to the traction motors in Group 1. This has caused a fault on traction motors one and three, which will need to be removed for further investigation.

The loco will be lifted and the traction motors removed for analysis.

Further work on returning this unique loco to main line service is on hold until the results of the analysis are known and the practicality of repair is understood.

Diesel days diary dates at Yeovil centre

THE Yeovil Railway Centre will be running trains hauled by Ruston & Hornsby and Fowler diesel shunters at its Yeovil Junction site on June 27, August 3, 10, 17, 24 and 31. Trains run from 11.00 to 15.00. Admission, including rides, is £4 for adults; children free or £1.

Refurbishments complete... Mid-Norfolk prepares for June reopening

THE Mid-Norfolk Railway has announced plans to reopen on June 23, followed by a Grand Reopening event on June 26/27, assuming the Government's Covid-19 roadmap conditions have been met.

The event features the debut in passenger service of the refurbished maroon Mk1 and Mk2 coaches, steam hauled.

This will also be the first use of the ex-Greater Anglia Mk3 coaches.

These will be hauled by newly refurbished Class 47 No. 47596 *Aldeburgh Festival,* repainted in BR two-tone green with original number D1933.

A diesel gala with the MNR's resident fleet in action is set for September 25/26.

Also in preparation for reopening, the MNR 'Pacer' No. 142061 made test runs on April 16.

This is believed to be the first Class 142 to operate in East Anglia, as no 'Pacers' ran in main line service in the region.

The trial saw the two-car unit operating from Dereham to Wymondham Abbey halt and back.

This tested the unit's systems following maintenance and servicing, as well as a chance for drivers and guards to become qualified to operate this type on the railway.

MNR Class 47 No. 47596 *Aldeburgh Festival,* newly repainted in BR two-tone green, with original number D1933. It was previously in Network SouthEast dark blue, red, white and light grey livery. PETER SINGLEHURST/MNR

'Pacer' No. 142061 is seen at Wymondham Abbey halt, Mid-Norfolk Railway, during its first test run on April 16. This was believed to have been the first Class 142 to run in East Anglia. IAN MCDONALD/MNR

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One of the Te Huia trains on test the day before the inaugural trip with the Prime Minister onboard, seen near the new Huntly station hauled by DFB 7295 on 24 March 2021. ROBERT SWEET

KiwiRail introduces new North Island service

THE new 'Te Huia' commuter service from Frankton station in Hamilton to Auckland began services on April 6 after a special working with New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern onboard had run the previous month.

The New Zealand government has provided 85% of the NZ$ 98 million (£50 million) funding for the trial service which includes two new stations at Rotokauri (Hamilton) and Huntly. Originally planned for introduction in August 2020, the new service's start was delayed by the pandemic.

The new service doesn't serve central Auckland but terminates at Papakura in the suburbs where passengers have to transfer to suburban electric trains.

Two trains run each way on weekdays, heading north in the morning and returning in the evening; a single train pair will run on Saturdays.

For the new services KiwiRail has refurbished 12 ex-BR Mark 2 coaches, previously used for services around Auckland and has dedicated three Class DFB locos equipped with door control equipment to the new service (DFB locomotives 7077, 7295 & 7335). The locomotives are turned at Westfield in between trips as the empty stock is stabled there whilst in Auckland.

■ *Our thanks to Robert Sweet for some of the information in this item.*

ČD Class 162/163 locos with short push-pull sets will be replaced from December by Regiojet trains, likely to be hauled by modern Class 388.2 'Traxx 3' locos. 162 018 arrives at Ústí nad Labem-Střekov shortly after crossing the river Labem on April 3, 2016 with a service from Ústí nad Labem-západ to Kolín. KEITH FENDER

RegioJet to replace ČD and new Traxx in use

CZECH private operator RegioJet won its third concession tender in April and will replace Czech Railways' (ČD) Class 163 hauled push-pull trains running semi-fast trains on the 'R23' inter-regional route from Ústí nad Labem-západ and Kolín in December this year.

RegioJet has previously won contracts for local services around Ústí nad Labem (where it uses ex DB Class 628 DMUs from Germany but has seven brand new Elf II EMUs on order, due for delivery from Polish manufacturer Pesa this year).

RegioJet has also operated the 'R8' Brno-Bohumín route since December 2019 initially using leased Siemens Vectron MS locos but now using its new Bombardier Traxx MS3 Class 388.2 locos. Regiojet has 15 of these on order and by mid-May around half were in use, mostly working route 'R8'. It is likely the new locos will also be used for the new 'R23' Ústí nad Labem-Kolín contract from December.

German Tatra trams set to be replaced

THE cities of Cottbus, Frankfurt an der Oder and Brandenburg in eastern Germany have placed a joint order with Czech firm Škoda for 24 new 'ForCity Plus' metre gauge three section uni-directional trams and options for a further 21 vehicles. Including all the options the contract is worth €110 million.

Deliveries of the new trams – described as '70%' low floor – will begin in 2023 and should be complete by 2024. Four will go to Brandenburg with an option for eight more between 2023 and 2026. Frankfurt an der Oder operator SVF has ordered 13 vehicles which will allow replacement of all its remaining 15 KT4D 'Tatra' trams, while nearby Cottbus has initially ordered seven 'ForCity Plus' with an option for up to 13 more.

These orders mean that the numbers of older 'Tatra' trams in use in Germany will decline further. Over 1750 'Tatra' type KT4D two section articulated trams were built in Prague by ČKD Tatra for East German cities between 1974 and 1997, although most were built in the 1980s. The last 20 KT4D Tatra trams in Berlin were due to be withdrawn in February but were kept in service until early May to provide extra capacity for 'social distancing' on school services in the eastern suburb of Marzahn-Hellersdorf. The last of the former Berlin vehicles have been sold to Ukrainian tram operators; many other ex-Berlin vehicles are in use across Eastern Europe.

One of the soon to be replaced Frankfurt an der Oder KT4D trams; No. 225 seen in the city centre on September 21, 2012. KEITH FENDER

Some German cities still have 'Tatra' trams in use; Gera, Plauen, Görlitz, Zwickau and Gotha all have the KT4D type in regular use while Leipzig still has a large fleet of T3D vehicles, although most of the Leipzig ones will be replaced in the next few years as similar vehicles in nearby Chemnitz already have been. In most cases new trams will be ordered to replace the remaining 'Tatra' vehicles in the next few years, or they may be replaced even sooner by more modern but surplus trams from other cities, as even trams built in the late 1990s are now being replaced in some German cities.

Achenseebahn saved

THE 'Achenseebahn' 6.8km long part-rack metre gauge railway linking Jenbach and the Achensee lake in the Austrian Tyrol region will re-open after a two-year hiatus in April 2022.

On May 21 future operation was transferred to new company Achenseebahn Infrastruktur- und Betriebs-GmbH which is majority (60%) owned by the state of Tyrol with Zillertalbahn operator Zillertaler Verkehrsbetriebe (ZVB) and a consortium of local councils in Eben am Achensee, Jenbach and Achenkirch both owning 20% stakes.

Track renewal

This followed agreement in March by Tyrol to invest up to €10 million with experienced rail operator ZVB, which runs the 760mm gauge Zillertalbahn on the other side of the Kufstein – Innsbruck mainline at Jenbach taking control of operation. Around €5 million will be invested in track and trains between now and April 2022 with the 3km adhesion section of the line between Eben and Seespitz to be completely renewed. Plans to introduce a year-round service using DEMUs converted from former Appenzellerbahn EMUs bought from Switzerland in 2019 have been dropped and the vehicles scrapped.

Now scrapped – second-hand Appenzellerbahn EMU vehicles bought (for conversion to DEMU) by the Achenseebahn at its Jenbach depot on March 28, 2019 with diesel shunter D1 visible on the left. KEITH FENDER

New trains replace DMUs in Scandinavia

LARGE numbers of diesel-powered trains in both Denmark and Sweden will be replaced in the next few years after two big manufacturing contracts were awarded.

The largest contract was awarded by Danish state operator DSB to Alstom for 100 new single deck 200kph five car EMUs based on the Alstom Coradia Stream design and similar to the ICNG trains that Alstom is currently delivering to Netherlands Railways (NS).

An option for 50 more trains was included in the contract worth 20 billion Danish Kroner (£2.32bn) As part of the contract Alstom will also be responsible for maintaining the trains for up to 40 years at two new dedicated depots in Aarhus and Copenhagen. Stadler, which lost out on the Danish contract, has started legal action against the decision.

In Sweden, CAF has received an order from a contract it won in 2014 which until now hadn't been taken up. The order is worth more than €250 million with Swedish regional government owned ROSCO AB Transito which buys trains for regional councils, who then concession their operation.

The order for CAF 'Civity Nordic' trains includes eight three car plus 'power car' 67m long, 140-seat bi-mode electric/diesel units as well as 20 four car, 76 metre, 15kV AC EMUs with 190 seats. The new trains will be introduced from 2023 operating the Krösatågen and Kustpilen concession contracts replacing older EMUs. The bi-mode trains, which will run only on bio-diesel will mainly be used on the mostly non-electrified Linköping – Kalmar /Västervik Kustpilen routes.

The CAF trains will have a cranberry red livery and are designed for extreme Swedish weather conditions (from -40ºC to +40ºC). All the new trains will have a maximum speed of 200kph as EMUs although the bi-mode units will be restricted to 160kph when operating in diesel mode.

DSB will replace all its IC3 and the newer, but less reliable, IC4 DMUs with the new EMU fleet as largescale electrification is planned, or in some cases complete. The first of the new trains will enter service in 2024 with deliveries lasting five years. DSB IC3 DMU 5067 seen at Høje-Taastrup, west of Copenhagen on May 20, 2019. KEITH FENDER

Right: The new CAF Nordic bi-mode trains will mainly be used on the mostly non electrified Linköping – Kalmar /Västervik Kustpilen routes. These are currently operated by a mixture of Class Y2 DMUs which is similar to the Danish IC3 design and dates from 1989 plus newer Bombardier 'Itino' Class Y31 DMUs built around 10 years ago. Kustpilen Y31 1424 seen at Linköping on April 28, 2018 with a service for Kalmar. KEITH FENDER

CAF begins 15-year deal to take over Jerusalem light rail system

CAF, with local partner Shapir Engineering, started a 15 year concession contract to operate and expand the Jerusalem light rail network on April 16 replacing the previous CityPass consortium which was sold to the Israeli government in 2020.

The new concession will build and operate the new 20.6km long 'Green Line' and construct a 6.8km extension for the existing 14km long 'Red Line' opened by CityPass in 2011. CAF is supplying 114 Urbos trams for the new 'Green Line', and will refurbish the 46 Alstom Citadis trams used on the 'Red Line'.

High speed competition starts in Spain

FRENCH Railways (SNCF) began operating its 'OuiGo' low cost high speed trains in Spain on May 10, offering services between Madrid and Barcelona using modified four TGV Duplex double deck TGVs.

In the next year 10 more TGVs will be added to the Spanish OuiGo fleet along with services from Madrid to Valencia, Alicante, Cordoba, Seville and Malaga.

Spanish national operator RENFE also plans to start its low cost high speed service branded 'Avlo' using purple liveried Class 112 AVE trains that have been converted to the new 'Avlo' specification with 20% more seating than before on June 23, and has already announced plans to expand the service adding the Madrid to Seville route from 2022.

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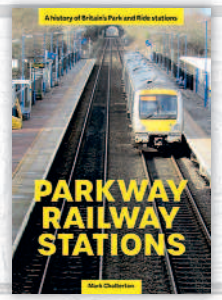

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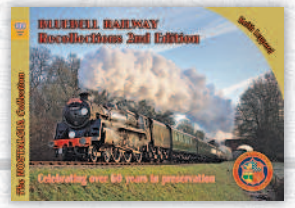

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Waterman to relaunch Heaton Park services

RAIL enthusiast and record producer Pete Waterman was invited to formally reopen the Heaton Park Tramway in Manchester on June 2.

The resumption of passenger operations following the easing of Covid restrictions was also due to be marked with the re-entry into service of recently overhauled Stockport 5, which dates from 1901, and the attendance of two former Stockport buses.

The tramway will be open on weekends and options are being reviewed for additional days.

Beamish aims for phased reopening

AS Covid-19 restrictions ease, Beamish Museum is planning a phased reopening of its tramway, with a circular tour starting and ending at Foulbridge from September 4.

Although the frequency and number of trams will be reviewed according to Government restrictions, it's likely the tour will be non-stop and use Blackpool 31.

Council leader airs personal tramway view

DOUGLAS Borough Council leader David Christian says that the relaying of the Douglas Horse Tramway should only go as far as the Sefton Hotel on the promenade.

Explaining this was his personal view rather than that of the council, he added it would speed up the area's regeneration. The horse trams are expected to be a major attraction as tourists return.

Wirral-built horse trams come home

TWO Birkenhead-built former Douglas Corporation horse trams have returned to the town for restoration and addition to the collection at the Wirral Transport Museum.

Believed to have been built in 1886 by the Starbuck Car & Wagon Company shortly after its takeover by G F Milnes, Horse Tram No. 11 is one of the earliest surviving examples of its kind. It was stored in various locations on the Isle of Man following its withdrawal from service in 1978 and spent several years exposed to the elements.

Built by Milnes Voss & Company in 1911, Horse Tram No. 47 was also withdrawn from service in 1978 and has also spent over a decade outside.

Both are an important addition to the museum's collection and will be given time to dry out in a shipping container before any restoration work takes place.

Work is also planned on Warrington 28. After almost 18 months off-site, its truck was returned to the museum at the beginning of April following a complete overhaul at Alan Keef Ltd near Ross-on-Wye. The truck, which had been configured for Lisbon narrow gauge, was also converted to standard gauge.

Douglas Corporation Tramcars 47 and 11 pictured following their arrival at the Wirral Transport Museum. ROB JONES

Tram changes as Crich exhibitions reopen

FOLLOWING the Government's mid-May confirmation that the majority of indoor venues could reopen to the public, exhibition spaces at Crich Tramway Village began welcoming visitors once again from May 17.

Vehicles have been reorganised in order to improve displays and continue restoration projects. Workshop space is being cleared for Brush Blackpool Railcoach 298, which has been stored off-site. Its new underframe, being constructed at the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways' Boston Lodge Works, will be mounted temporarily on accommodation trucks which originate from the long since scrapped Blackpool 638.

Testing of London Passenger Transport Board 1622 took place in April and May as part of the commissioning process following its overhaul.

Cardiff Horsecar No. 21 is being returned to the National Museum of Wales after 12 years on loan to Crich. Derby 1 and Halle 902 (which spent time on loan in Blackpool) are to be put in store.

The reorganised exhibition hall at Crich Tramway Village, showing trams Southampton No. 45 and Gateshead No. 5 either side of the Barnsley & District Combination Car bus. CRICH TRAMWAY VILLAGE

The display in the Exhibition Hall has been refreshed, allowing Gateshead 5 and Southampton 45 to be more easily viewed by visitors either side of the Barnsley & District Combination Car, a recently acquired bus dating from 1913.

Work has started on preparing 671 for its repaint back into 1960s condition as twin-car motor 281 in all-cream livery. One of the first jobs was to strip off the Metro Coastlines graphics it carried before being withdrawn from service in 2010. FYLDE TRANSPORT TRUST

Repaint for No. 671

WORK is underway to repaint the Fylde Transport Trust's Blackpool tram, No. 671, which was moved from Blackpool Transport's Rigby Road depot to the North West Museum of Road Transport in St Helens on April 18.

The single-deck car, which last ran in Blackpool in 2010, is being repainted into 1960s all-cream livery. It will be displayed on a surviving section of the original St Helen's tram track.

In Blackpool, No. 621, which also belongs to the trust, was used for driver and conductor refresher training in mid-May, ahead of the resumption of heritage tours on May 29.

Award-winning Seaton 'Tramathon' to return

DEVON'S Seaton Tramway is planning to live-stream a continuous 24-hour tram journey from June 5-6, following a similar event last year which won a Heritage Railway Association Award.

The tramway took the accolade for Most Innovative Fundraising Idea at the HRA's 2021 online awards ceremony on April 28.

Last year's 'Tramathon' event on Facebook saw a team of volunteers share shifts to screen journeys between Seaton and Colyton stations, lasting a full 24 hours – the culmination of a week-long appeal which raised more than £30,000. It also included live online insights into ongoing projects, a driver's eye view experience, and a question and answer session.

Having welcomed back visitors on April 12, the tramway is open daily until October 31.

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Progress on Avanti liveries

WORK to vinyl the Class 390 Pendolino trains with a second phase of the full body wrap has progressed, with more sets having been treated.

As of May 18, the following 390s had been fully branded: 390104; 008; 117; 119 (Pride); 123; 128; 130; 136; 137; 141; 043; 044; 047; 148; 049; 153; 155; and 156.

With the Class 221 Voyagers remaining in the fleet for another two years at most, sets are receiving cab-end AWC vinyls, and these have been completed: 221101; 103; 104; 105; 106; 107; 108; 109; 110; 111; 112; 113; 114; 115; 116; 117; and 142.

No timescale has been given for the completion of the rebranding.

Work begins on new EMR Aurora fleet

WORK to construct the 33 five-car Class 810 'Aurora' bi-mode trains for East Midlands Railway is underway at Hitachi's Newton Aycliffe site.

Unlike previous fleets, where finished bodyshells were received from Kasado, Japan, investment at the Newton Aycliffe site in welding and painting equipment means more can be achieved locally. About 40 welders and painters have been taken on.

The 'Aurora' is due to enter traffic in 2023, but this could change depending on the severity of repairs to IET fleets (see p6-7). Carriages will be 24m long, slightly shorter than the IET at 26m.

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East Midlands Railway begins electric services from Corby

A NEW electric service between Corby and London, operated by East Midlands Railway (EMR), officially got underway on May 16.

The service, operated by Class 360/1 EMUs, had a low-key introduction on May 9, initially replacing the Class 222 on the Kettering-Corby shuttles. EMR says carbon emissions between Corby and St Pancras will be reduced by 77% through using electric trains.

EMR has recruited additional staff for the service and says more are planned. During the pandemic, 87 drivers and 107 train managers were trained across four crew depots working within Covid-secure bubbles. Each instructor and trainee took Covid-19 tests each week.

Electrification from Bedford to Corby, along with track and other infrastructure upgrades has cost around £1.5 billion, with the new route completed in January 2021.

The new half-hourly service, which runs from 06.00 on weekdays, provides additional passenger capacity and has also allowed EMR to make a number of significant timetable changes. Journey time from Corby to St Pancras is 70 mins.

Class 360 set Nos. 360102/112 prepare to work the 11.41 Corby-St Pancras on May 16, the first of the new electric services to London. CHRIS MILNER

Making connections

Branded EMR Connect, the fleet of 21 EMUs was built by Siemens at Krefeld in 2002/3 for First Great Eastern (later Greater Anglia). The cascaded sets will form the backbone of the service, with the units running as two pairs – eight carriages.

Although platforms have been lengthened to accommodate 12-car Class 360 formations at 240m in length (as well as 10-car formations of the new 24m-long Class 810 Aurora bi-mode trains currently being built by Hitachi), EMR envisages eight-car electric train formations as normal.

Testing of the trains and route has included the longer formations with three pantographs raised. Stations have 12-car stop boards too.

The Corby electric services call at Kettering, Wellingborough, Bedford, Luton and Luton Airport Parkway. It has allowed EMR to reintroduce peak-time Wellingborough-Bedford services after they were suspended some years ago and replace with a coach service.

For the start of services, EMR has reliveried two sets using vinyl, Nos. 360102 and 360112, which were used on the inaugural Corby-St Pancras electric working on May 15.

The pandemic has prevented a wider refurbishment, though that will now be progressed. All units have been upgraded to permit running at 110mph.

Timetable changes

With the new electric service come wider timetable changes, and these mean far fewer trains from Sheffield or Nottingham will call at the intermediate stations of Wellingborough, Bedford, Luton or Luton Airport Parkway, so passengers will have to change at Kettering.

There are a two new early Sheffield-St Pancras trains at 04.58 and 05.15. There is a 08.15 Melton Mowbray-Kettering, a 19.38 Kettering-Melton, plus a 10.45 (WX) St Pancras-Melton and 13.15 return. On Wednesday, the train terminates at Corby. There are also new later evening departures from St Pancras at 22.32 and 23.05 to Sheffield (previously last was at 22.20), a 23.35 to Nottingham (was 23.08), a new 00.15 (MSSuX) to Derby and a 23.55 to Corby. The 04.52 Leicester-St Pancras starts back at Derby at 03.56 and runs via Nottingham, but a change of stopping pattern gives a 06.10 arrival in the Capital.

Will Rogers, EMR's managing director, said: "It's our greenest-ever fleet and will enable a significant reduction in carbon emissions and noise levels, while at the same time provide more seats, later services and a simpler and more resilient timetable."

Four more Class 91s dispatched for scrap to Newport

FOLLOWING the dispatch of Class 91 No. 91132 to be scrapped by Sims at Beeston in March, a further four of the class were dispatched on May 10 from Doncaster Belmont Yard to Sims' Newport disposal facility.

The four were Nos. 91102, 91113, 91126 and 91129, hauled there by ROG Class 57 No. 57305.

What was surprising was that nameplates were still attached to Nos. 91102 and 91126. However, Eversholt has confirmed to *The RM* that the plates were removed on arrival at the scrapyard and they will be auctioned for charity at a future date.

With LNER needing only 10 Class 91s for the six Mk 4 carriage sets it is retaining, further disposals are envisaged. Likely candidates are Nos. 91103/10 4/108/112/115/116/118/121 and 125.

Because of the situation with cracks being found in the Hitachi IET fleets, the Class 91 and Mk 4 sets made an early return to service from May 11 with one diagram. A second was added from May 13.

When temporarily withdrawn, LNER had indicated their return would be from June 1. Locos reported on the diagrams include Nos. 91106, 91110 *Battle of Britain Memorial Flight*, 91111 *For the Fallen*, 91114 and 91119 *Bounds Green*.

Threading their way to the breakers yard on May 10 are Class 91 Nos. 91102, 91126, 91113 and 91129. MATTHEW PLUMPTON

A welcome return to front line service for a number of LNER's Class 91s to help with the IET crisis. On May 12, No. 91111 *For the Fallen* arrives at Leeds with empty stock from Neville Hill, preparing to undertake an 08.40 test run to Peterborough and back. CHRIS GEE

GBRf Class 69 outhopped in BR large logo blue livery

THE first GB Railfreight Class 69 to be painted is No. 69002, which has been given a BR large logo version of the popular livery.

The work was carried out by Arlington Fleet Services at Eastleigh ahead of driver training from late May/early June, and in preparation for using the class on a number of different types of freight work in and around the south east. The Class 69 fleet will initially be based at Tonbridge, Kent.

Into the paint shop at Eastleigh has gone classmate No. 69001, which arrived EMD at Longport on May 4. This loco will also receive a special livery before a naming to mark the collaboration between GBRf and EMD on this unusual project.

Meanwhile, No. 69002 has returned to Longport for final commissioning, where work to complete Nos. 69003/004 is underway. The indications are these locos will also have non-standard liveries.

The first freight workings with the class are expected to be in early July.

PICTURE: GB RAILFREIGHT

Vehicle No. 234 from set No. 484004 is being prepared for unloading at Sandown on May 18. PHIL MARSH

Class 484 No. 484002 on test at Botley on May 15. CHRIS WILSON

Isle of Wight takes delivery of its second Vivarail train

THE second of five Vivarail Class 484 electric trains for the 8½-mile long Island Line was delivered to the rail access point at Sandown on May 18.

Set No. 484004 joins set No. 484001, which arrived last November. Before transfer to the island, each set is being tested at night between Eastleigh and Fareham.

When the last of the old 1938 Class 483 trains was withdrawn and the line closed on January 4, the intention was to reopen after platform modifications and infrastructure, signalling and power upgrades at the end of March, but was put back to May 17.

Then, at the end of April, Vivarail confirmed there were 'complex software issues' with the new trains. Vivarail's CEO, Adrian Shooter, said that while the software was basically the same as for other trains, it needed modification for third rail power supply and it was only during the live testing overnight that problems had arisen. The software will be reviewed rather than trying to patch it.

Mr Shooter added: "As a company we take full responsibility and offer our apologies to the passengers and staff of the Island Line.

"It would be easy to hide behind Covid-19 and point the finger at the pandemic, but we had, in fact, managed to claw back a lot of the lost time and brought the build back on schedule, and all trains have now left our factory."

SWR has said the £26 million project for the Island Line will be completed later in the summer. No dates were being published, however, one local source hinted the trains could be running by the start of the school holidays at the end of July/early August.

Gatwick Express units sent on secondment

WITH the downturn in passengers flying due to the pandemic and the suspension of the Gatwick Express service, Govia Thameslink Railway has transferred a number of Class 387/2 EMUs to work Great Northern routes out of King's Cross. Prior to this, units had been working Southern services in their distinctive red livery, adding capacity, and sets had been used on East Coastway services to Eastbourne and Hastings. Now the debranded units are working on the East Coast Main Line as far north as King's Lynn. They are replacing the Class 365s, which have been stood down. Three sets have transferred, Nos. 387201-3, and the latter is seen partnered with white set 387126 at King's Cross, about to work the 14.12 to Ely on May 15. ALISDAIR ANDERSON

Another HST and Mk 3 trailers sent for store at Ely sidings

WITH the end of HSTs on the Midland Main Line, off-lease ex-EMR and debranded HST power cars in LNER livery, Nos. 43309 with 43295 rear, take trailer vehicles Nos. 44061, 40750, 42146 and 42238 from Neville Hill to Ely Papworth sidings for storage on May 17, and are passing Furlong Drove public crossing, near Pymoor, Cambridgeshire. AUBREY EVANS

Stored for 20 years: What does the future hold for two Class 92s?

WITH the closure of Wabtec Brush announced recently, two Class 92s visible from nearby Loughborough Meadows face an uncertain future. Nos. 92040 *Goethe* and 92045 *Chaucer* have been stored since April 2001 and will have yielded parts to the Caledonian Sleeper 92s, but as both lack bogies they may be scrapped on site or craned onto a low loader and removed from site. The pair are seen on May 13. JACK BOSKETT

Third train is fitted with diesel engines

A THIRD Class 319, No. 319009, has left Eastleigh works after significant internal modification and conversion to a high speed logistics unit.

Now at Wabtec Brush, the unit will be fitted with two 523hp diesel engines to provide its bi-mode capability. After this work, the unit will be renumbered 769502.

The first bi-mode set, 769501, is understood to be reading for testing, while the demonstration set, 319373, is being used to interest logistics companies in what rail has to offer.

Spares pool is created from scrapped units

WITH Greater Anglia sending a number of Class 317s for disposal, staff at Ilford Depot have been using the opportunity to reclaim components of high value and which have long refurbishment lead times.

A total of 36 GEC traction motors were recovered, some having been fitted to other class members.

Last day for Class 365s with Great Northern

THE end of the line has come for the Class 365 EMUs on the books of the Great Northern arm of Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR). The sets have been in service for just over 25 years.

The dual voltage 'Networker' trains were the last to be built by ABB at Holgate carriage works, York, and when new, 16 sets – Nos. 365001-016 – worked initially for Network South East and a short time later went to work West Anglia Great Northern services, their third rail shoes being removed. Since then, all sets have remained north of the Thames, working to King's Lynn and Peterborough.

Leaving King's Cross for the last time are 'Networker' EMUs Nos. 365520/522, working empty back to Peterborough sidings on May 15. ALISDAIR ANDERSON

ScotRail loan

In April 2018, 10 sets were lent to ScotRail due to a problem with the Class 385 windscreen curvature, but with the order for Class 387 and 700s on GN services, the 365s' role was one of 'peak busters', supplementing peak services. Following the downturn in air traffic, GTR has transferred some Gatwick 387s north, which has allowed the 365s' service to end on May 15.

A clause in the original procurement contract saw ownership of the sets pass to the Department for Transport in August 2019, and now the Government has 40 four-car trains to find a use for. One set, No. 365526, was written off after the Potter's Bar crash in 2002, while four others have been damaged in collisions with vehicles at level crossings in the Fens.

To mark their farewell, on May 14 a 12-car formation was used on the 18.12 King's Cross to Peterborough. However, the next day, two sets, Nos. 365520/522, worked the 09.10 Peterborough-King's Cross before returning to Peterborough Sidings ecs for the final time.

Saying goodbye

GTR chief operating officer Steve White said: "We marked another milestone in the progressive renewal of our fleet as we said goodbye to our Class 365s.

"With the introduction of our summer 2021 timetable, newer air-conditioned Class 387 trains will temporarily support the GN network. This will help passenger recovery from Covid-19 and also reduce costs, ensuring better value for taxpayers."

WAGON REPORT

by S F Lappage

VTG RAIL (UK) is the largest domestically-based wagon hiring and leasing company. Based in Birmingham, it operates a fleet of about 3000 wagons.

Its origins began in 2002 after parent company Hamburg-based VTG-Lehnkering AG acquired the rail division of Australian firm Brambles, which had previously traded as Caib (UK).

Recent acquisitions have largely been JNA-T box wagons for aggregates traffic, the latest batch to arrive from Astra Rail, Romania, being Nos. 81 70 5500 704-8 to 803-8, while WH Davis has started production of 84 FWA 'Ecofret2' sets at Langwith Junction.

Completed to date are FWA-A outers Nos. 83 70 4520 198-0 to 247-1 and FWA-B inners Nos. 83 70 4521 035-3 to 059-3.

More redundant former Freightliner Heavy Haul HHA coal hoppers rebuilt for the transportation of aggregates have been Nos. 370255/257/ 359/367/368/ 372/380/381/ 392/393/406.

Round Oak Steel Terminal located at a former steelworks site in Brierley Hill, Staffordshire, was opened in the 1980s by Innovate Logistics. It was the first terminal in the region to have facilities to transfer and store cold reduced coil or 'bright' steel undercover.

Today the site is run by Tata Steel Logistics and receives train-loads of coil from Margam. Most wagons are IHA hooded flats, Nos. 37 84 4667 001-0 to 200-8, built in 2008/09 to design code IHE 941 by International Railway Systems, Romania. Originally ordered by GE Rail Services, they are now part of the Touax fleet and are unusually registered in the Netherlands.

However, there has been a significant fall in the demand for steel coil during the pandemic. This has especially impacted the motor industry.

French wagon leaser Ermewa has reacted by sending most of its relatively modern fleet of IHA hooded coil wagons to Sims Metals scrapyard at Newport in South Wales. Deleted from rolling stock records are Nos. 33 87 4767 000-2/ 002-8/003-6/ 005-1/006-9/ 008-5/010-1/ 011-9/014-3/ 015-0/017-6/ 018-4/021-8/ 030-9/031-7/ 033-3/035-8/ 036-6/037-4/ 039-0/040-8/ 041-6/043-2/ 047-3.

Built in 1998 by Arbel Fauvet Rail, in Douai, to design code IHE 857, they were firstly owned by Captrain, a division of SNCF, before transfer to Ermewa.

DB Cargo workshops at Stoke have rebuilt BYA 'Nissen Hut' hooded coil carrier No. 966050 into open for the transport of steel rod coil. It was seen in Bescot yard on April 7. Also part of the same consist was newly overhauled IHA hooded flat No. 33 87 4667 006-0.

In 2002 EWS modified a batch of redundant FYA 'binliner' flats into general materials carriers, Nos. 621900-917. Recoded as FJA to design code FJ 002A, they were originally built for Freightliner between 1967 and 1970 at Ashford.

Previous identities were Nos. 621457/467/ 479/480/ 484/491/ 493/503/507/ 509/522/524/ 526/533-536/541.

Disposals have been JGA hoppers Nos. ERG 17309/317/318/324, OBA 'Bass' open No. 110082, OCA open No. 112138, HTA hoppers Nos. 310038/112/ 179/533/592/ 593/618/708, HHA bogie coal hopper No.370293, MEA box opens Nos. 391314/315/ 350/ 355/438/ 440/461/471/ 507/584/601/ 671, BBA bogie steel flats Nos. 910031/083, BDA bolster flats Nos. 950082/333/ 516/590/598, No. 951076, YWA 'Salmon' railflat No. DB 996604, and IMA ferryvan No. 31 83 2795 047-9.

New VTG Box wagon JNA No.8170 5500 739-4 for aggregate traffic. Pictures: S F LAPPAGE

Internal user flat No. 024717 used by Bombardier, Derby.

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Former Caledonian Sleeper No. 10544 has arrived at the Waverley Route Heritage Association site at Whitrope, south of Hawick, where it was seen on May 18. IONA BUTLIN

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GBRf: 66798

Sold
Ed Murray & Sons: 08401/45/72, 08571/96, 08615/69, 08724, 08823/53/73

Modifications
Modified to run on Vegetable Fuel: 66077/85

Stored/stopped locations
Assenta Rail, Hamilton: 43012
Crewe Basford Hall: 66956
Ely: 43238/95, 43309/10/20
Leeds Midland Road: 66955/57
Nemesis Rail, Burton: 43102, 43272

Operational
57006, 67028, 90020/24

Disposal
Sims Metals, Newport: Arrival date: May 10: 91102/13/26/29

MULTIPLE UNITS

Allocations
153311/76/85 SBXH-QTRV
170534 TS/EJHQ-NM/EMHQ
172101-04 AL/HOHQ-TS/EJHQ
197002 newly delivered HQ/HLHQ
317346 off registration – scrapped
317652 off registration – scrapped
319451/53/55 off registration – scrapped
321355/59/61/62/65 IL/EBHQ - HQ/SAXU
321439/43 IL/EBHQ-HQ/SAXU
387201-03 SL/HWHQ-HE/ETHQ
387301/02/06 EM/HTHQ-RG/EFHQ
701022/28/29/31 newly delivered HQ/HYHQ
701509 newly delivered HQ/HYHQ
720569 newly delivered HQ/EBHQ
777002 newly delivered HQ/HEHQ

Liveries
Avanti West Coast: 221106/07/08/17, 390137/53/55
EMR: 170532/34, 360102/12/18
SWR: 444020/43, 450024/41/81
Transport for Wales: 150253/54/57/78, 175108

Named
390155 *Railway Benefit Fund*
800310 *Wing Commander Ken Rees*

Renumbered
319425-769925

Formations
377442: 73442+78842+78642+73842
170618: 50518+56630+ 79518
170619: 50519+56631+ 79519

Formations renumbered and revised
150005: 150117+52223
150006: 150147+57223

Now in passenger traffic
710376

Sold
The House of Chilli, Branstone, IoW: 483004

Preserved
Embsay & Bolton Abbey Railway: 142094
Isle of Wight Steam Railway: 483007
Platform 1 Huddersfield Station: 55801 (144001)

Stored/stopped locations
Brush, Loughborough: 769426
Derby RTC: 153311/76/85
Gascoigne Wood: 321408/39/43/44
Heaton: 153301/04/15/16/17/51/52/78
Hertford North cs: 365502/04
Hornsey: 365510/34
Landore: 143608/10/23/24
Nemesis Rail, Burton-upon-Trent: 769925/32
Harwich Parkeston: 317338/40, 317883
Peterborough: 365506/08/14/16/18/20/22/24/32/36/40
Ryde: 484004
Worksop: 701509, 720532

Disposals
C.F.Booth, Rotherham: Arrival dates: April 26: 122, 225; April 27: 129. Cut dates: April 26: 55745; May 4: 55791; May 11: 78144
Raxstar, Eastleigh Works: Arrival dates: April 29: 317669; May 6: 317663; May 13: 317662; May 21: 317722. Cut dates: April 27: 77286; April 28: 71764; April 29: 62888; May 4: 77282 (all 317671); May 10: 77210; May 11: 62856; May 12: 71744; May 17: 77230 (all 317659)
Sims Metals, Beeston: Arrival dates: April: 77439, 71870, 77438 (319451), 62969 (319455)
Sims Metals, Hull Docks: Arrival date: May: 321365
Sims Metals, Newport: Arrival dates: April 26: 317649; April 28: 317660/68; April 30: 321361/62

HAULED COACHING STOCK

Allocations
10300/06/09/11/13/24/33 BN-NL
11229/79/84/85/86/88/95 BN-NL
11306/08/12/13/15/17/26 BN-NL
11406/08/12/13/15/17/26 BN-NL
12205/08/12/14/20/23/26/28 BN-NL
12303/09/11/13/25/28/30 BN-NL
12404/06/07/09/20/22/24/26/27/29/30/31/32/42/44/65/69/74/81/85 BN-NL
12515 BN-NL
40727/39 off registration – scrapped
41113 off registration – scrapped
42362 off registration – scrapped
82205/08/11/12/13/14/23/25 BN-NL

Liveries
GWR: 48146-48, 49116
ScotRail InterCity: 42054/77, 42144/85

Renumbered
42074-48146
42071-48148
42081-48147
44002-49116

Sold
Locomotive Services Ltd: 41063

Formations
GW16: 49116+48146+48147+48148

Preserved
Battlefield Railway: 12116
Cambrian Heritage Railways, Oswestry: 40751
South Devon Railway: 10680
WRHA, Whitrope: 10544

Stored/stopped locations
Assenta Rail, Hamilton: 42029
Castle Donington: 11092/99, 11101, 12176/82
Crewe LNWR: 9804
Derby RTC: 10406, 12125/54/80
Doncaster Roberts Road: 11093
Ely: 40711/50, 41100, 42146/98/99, 42238/39, 44061/63
Great Yarmouth: 96374
Long Marston: 82124/29
MoD Bicester: 12177-79/81
Nemesis Rail, Burton: 10242, 40701/02, 41095, 41165, 42109/10

Disposals
C.F. Booth, Rotherham: Cut dates: April 26: 12439; April 28: 46010
EMR Attercliffe: Arrival date: March 22: 42503
Sims Metals, Hull: Arrival dates: April 26: 11287; April 27: 11289; April 28: 12207
Sims Metals, Newport: Arrival dates: April 27: 42554; May 10: 9501; May 11: 10595; May 12: 10611; May 20: 42159, 42237, 42326, 44057/75

■ STOCK CHANGES CORRECT AS OF MAY 22, 2021

Colas Rail No. 67023 transports Network Rail DVTs Nos. 82129 and 82124 through Norton Junction with a move from Derby RTC to Long Marston on May 11. JACK BOSKETT

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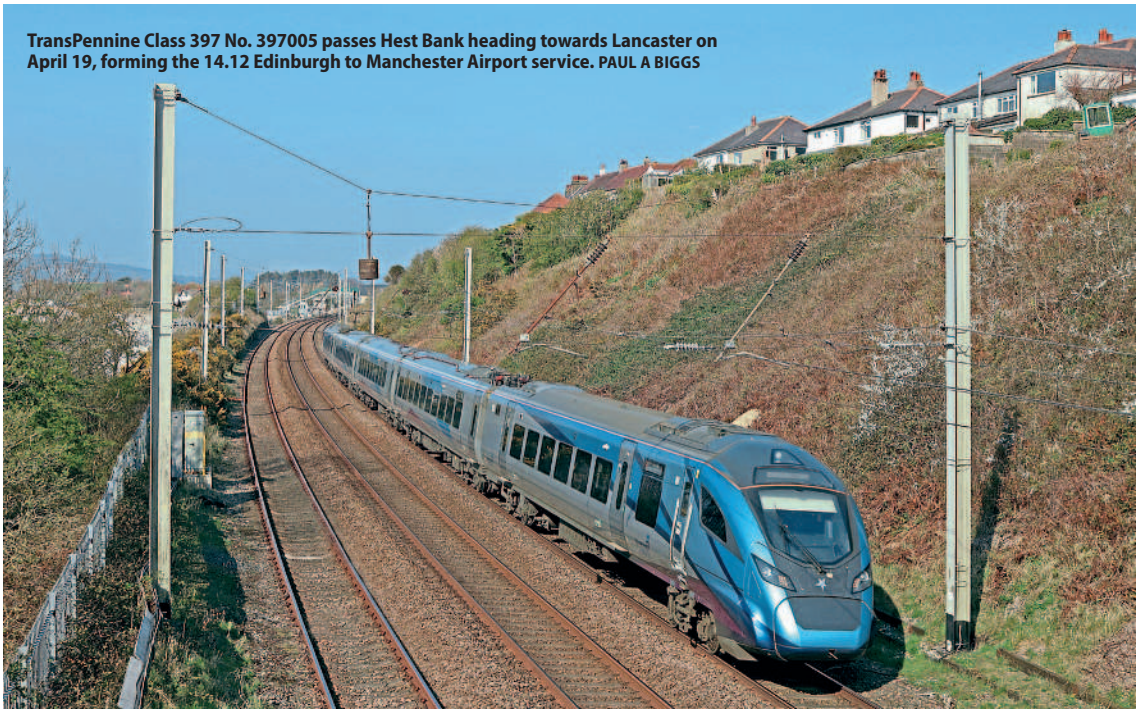


TransPennine Class 397 No. 397005 passes Hest Bank heading towards Lancaster on April 19, forming the 14.12 Edinburgh to Manchester Airport service. PAUL A BIGGS

AVANTI WEST COAST

CONSIDERABLE engineering works have been taking place on the WCML in Scotland.

After the closure of service on Saturday, April 17, work took place between Symington and Thankerton on the down line. Throughout Sunday trains were being stopped, apparently cautioned, and were observed passing Thankerton at a very low speed. Delays averaging 30 minutes were observed to all down services.

Pendolino No. 390136 which was working the 1S52/09.46 London Euston to Glasgow Central was observed 52 minutes late as it crawled through Thankerton. However, during the work, serious damage to the sleepers on the down line was believed to have been caused by tamping operations and saw a 5mph Emergency Restriction of Speed (EROS) imposed for a two-and-a-half-mile section between Symington and Thankerton. By the Tuesday morning the speed reduction had been increased to 20mph

The West Coast Main Line was closed from Gretna Junction to Carstairs at about 11.00 on Saturday, April 24 and re-opened for the start of service on Monday 26.

The damaged section of track between Symington and Thankerton received attention with Class 56 No. 56087 and Class 70 No. 70814 top-and-tailing the 6K40/10.49 Millerhill to Symington Ground Frame. Several road rail machines were in use loading spent ballast into the spoil wagons. The Class 56 and 70 made several trips to Millerhill during the blockade.

Further south, engineering work was underway near Beattock Summit with Class 66 Nos. 66515+66572 working the 6Y09/09.43 Carlisle yard to Beattock Summit and Nos. 66561+66598 working the 6X08/08.52 Tyne Yard to Beattock Summit, and near Kilpatrick with No. 66206 on a 6K10/08.24 Millerhill to Kilpatrick and No. 66305 on a 6K11/09.04 Millerhill to Kilpatrick.

From the close of service on Friday, April 30 the West Coast Main Line between Symington and Thankerton was closed. The engineers took possession to replace nearly 4,000 yards of damaged sleepers. There were 19 trains, 10 road-rail machines and on-track machines involved in the operation.

On Saturday, May 1 locos observed were: Nos. 56087, 66302, 66515/44, 66723/65/82, 70807/13/16. The following day Nos. 66168, 66511/62/96, 66722/69/82 were recorded. Credit is due to the vast numbers of the orange army that were working on this site for the care and consideration shown to local residents, working in such a way as to minimise the overnight noise.

AVANTI West Coast Class 221 No.221105 ran ecs (5Z84) on May 4 from Mossend (dep 13.57) to Central Rivers' Barton-under-Needwood depot.

LNER

ECML traffic was seriously delayed on Monday, April 12 when a northbound train struck a person on the down line just north of Darlington.

The 10.55 King's Cross-Edinburgh LNER Azuma was halted just south of Holgate, York at 12.50, moving slowly into a train-crowded York station. Alongside was the 10.00 King's Cross-Aberdeen LNER Azuma.

Staff on the Edinburgh-bound service kept passengers informed throughout, and finally this train moved forward 42 minutes late, being sent ahead of the Aberdeen service. For the 10.55, Darlington was reached 40 minutes late. Reportedly, some services were being rerouted by Sunderland.

The 10.55 finally reached Edinburgh Waverley at 16.08, 49 minutes late. Meanwhile, the 10.00 hours King's Cross-Aberdeen train arrived in Waverley at 16.14, departing at 16.19 109 minutes late, finally reaching Aberdeen 113 minutes late.

IT WAS the end of the line for Class 91 Nos. 91129+91113+91126+91102 on May 10 when they were towed from Belmont Yard, Doncaster to Sims Metals, Newport by Class 57 No. 57305.

Both Nos. 91126+91102 still retained their name plates on arrival at Sims but these were removed prior to scrapping.

greateranglia

A JOURNEY from Romford to Liverpool Street was made on the 13.35 Colchester Town to London Liverpool Street on April 13 formed of Class 321 Nos. 321406 and 321432.

On arrival at Liverpool Street the two Class 321 units formed the 15.18 to Clacton-on-Sea. Also seen at Liverpool Street were Nos. 321332 and 321342 forming the 15.02 to Ipswich.

However, the older units did not have things all their own way. The 14.55 to Southend Victoria was formed of Class 720 No. 720517. Returning to the Great Eastern mainline on Wednesday, April 21 a journey from Romford to Stratford on the 11.10 Southend Victoria to London Liverpool Street found it formed of No. 321335. Later in the day a 'short hop' from Liverpool Street to Stratford on the 14.48 from London Liverpool Street to Braintree was on Nos. 321901 and 321316. On the same day Nos. 322484 and 321302 were seen at Stratford forming the 10.52 from Ipswich to London Liverpool Street.

However, a journey from Liverpool Street to Romford on the 11.38 from London Liverpool Street to Colchester Town found it formed of Class 720 Nos. 720547 and 720553.

NEW Class 720 units continue to be delivered. On April 16 No. 720568 was top-and-tailed by Class 56 No. 56081 and Class 47 No. 47739 from Litchurch Lane to Wolverton.

The same locos took No. 720560 from Derby to Wembley on April 30, followed by moving No. 720532 from Derby to Worksop on May 4, returning No. 720531 to Derby from Worksop later on the same day.

A VISIT to the re-commissioned line at Dovercourt on April 21 revealed some changes to the Class 321s in 'warm storage'. Closest to Harwich International station was No. 321410, followed by Nos. 321408, 321439, 321431 and 321444. Also visible in Harwich Parkeston Quay yard were Nos. 321402 and 720517.

THE gradual demise of the Class 317 units prompted a correspondent to send the following report from Wednesday, April 21.

Three pairs of Class 317 were working on the Bishops Stortford and Meridian Water diagrams out of Stratford. A journey from Stratford to Meridian Water was made on the 12.16 Stratford to Meridian Water, which was formed of Nos. 317883 and 317510. These two units then formed the 12.38 from Meridian Water to Stratford, and then the 13.00 from Stratford to Bishops Stortford. A journey from Enfield Lock to Lea Bridge on the 13.15 from Bishops Stortford to Stratford found it formed of Nos. 317708 and 317502, then on to Tottenham Hale on the 14.00 from Stratford to Bishops Stortford, which was Nos. 317507 and 317501. The 13.39 from Hertford East to Liverpool Street,

Transport for Wales Class 67 No. 67017 passed Stanwardine, Shropshire, on May 7, with the 16.05 East Usk Junction to Crewe driver training trip, in preparation for the start of the new service. ED WEAVER

which was used for a journey from Tottenham Hale to Liverpool Street was formed of Nos. 317339 and 317513. Finally, Nos. 317515 and 317511 were seen stabled at platform 10, Liverpool Street.

MOVEMENTS of stock away for scrapping, saw Class 321 Nos. 321359+321355 being moved from Clacton to Sims Metals, Newport by Class 57 No. 57312 on April 23. This was followed on April 26 when Class 37 No. 37884 took Class 317 No. 317649 from Ely to Sims Metals, Newport.

Two days later Class 57 No. 57305 took Nos. 317668+317660 from Ely to Newport. The move away from Ely of redundant Class 317 units continued on April 29 when No. 317669 was taken to Eastleigh Works by No. 57312 for disposal by Raxstar.

Two more Class 321 units Nos. 321361+321362 made their final journey on April 30 being towed to Newport by Class 37 No. 37884. A further Class 317 No. 317663 was taken from Ely to Eastleigh Works on May 6 by Class 57 No. 57305.

SCOTRAIL Class 170 No. 170429 was sighted passing through Stockport on March 28 while working 5Q42 Haymarket Depot-Crewe C.S. while heading down for refreshment including sockets being installed. This was followed by No. 170430 which moved south on Thursday, April 29.

A 06.02 Brodies (Kilmarnock) to Corkerhill move operated on April 13 and conveyed three Class 153 units Nos. 153377+153370+153305 converted for conveying bicycles on the WHL for delivery to ScotRail.

CLASS 43 No. 43164 was reported as travelling on a low loader southbound on the M77 on April 29 en-route from Haymarket to Brodies, Kilmarnock where it joined No. 43033 which had been delivered earlier. Both power cars had had a coming together at Haymarket.

A FURTHER four converted HST coaches, Nos. 42185+42144+42054+42077, were taken north from Doncaster Wabtec to Slateford on May 1 by Class 57 No. 57312 to be added to 4-coach sets, bringing them up to their five-coach planned formations.

A NUMBER of light engine moves have been observed. Class 92 No. 92006 ran light from Polmadie (dep 07.05) to Preston and back on April 7. On Wednesday, April 14 Class 92 No. 92038 passed Thankerton while working the 0M19/06.08 Polmadie to Preston. This working was almost two hours late. Caledonian Sleeper liveried Class 92 No. 92014 ran light from Crewe HS to Polmadie on April 27.

FROM Thursday, April 29, the Caledonian Sleeper was restored to its full timetable after a lengthy period of running a single daily train between London and Inverness via Edinburgh.

Both the Lowlander and Highlander services have re-started, but with slightly shorter formations for a few weeks. A visit to Euston station during the evening of Thursday, April 29 found Class 92 No. 92038 in platform 1 at the head of train 1S25, the 21.17 London Euston to Inverness and Fort William. The train was formed of Mk5 carriages Nos. 15336+15311+15334+15331+15207+15107+15002+15205+15325+15333+15307+15214+15103+15011. At the rear was No. 92014 which had worked in the empty stock.

OBSERVATIONS on the early afternoon of April 13, Class 68 operated trains from Scarborough to York were Nos. 68021 (12.34), 68031 (13.34), and 68030 (15.34). No. 68031 hauled its train, the others propelled.

THE 20.34 Scarborough to Manchester Airport service was hauled by Class 68 No. 68020 on April 16. This is the only loco-hauled passenger train each day to traverse the Ordsall Chord, linking Manchester Victoria and Piccadilly.

AFTER a pause of some months the latest new Class 777 unit to arrive at Dollands Moor, No. 777002, was hauled north to Crewe on May 5 by Class 66 No. 66731. Here No. 66710 was added as they top-and-tailed the unit to Kirkdale.

ADELANTE set No. 180104 was seen leaving platform 3B at Doncaster on April 12 at 12.42, not bound for King's Cross but just back to Bradford International. The same set was seen at 16.30 later the same day, parked at platform 6 with engines running, normally the preserve of the Class 331 emu to Leeds.

CLASS 170 No. 170107 operated the 5Q87/08.04 Brodies (Kilmarnock) to Tyseley TMD, running via Shotts, Millerhill, the ECML to Doncaster, and Derby on Monday April 19.

NEW Class 730 No. 730003 was top-and-tailed from Litchurch Lane to Old Dalby by Class 37 Nos. 37601+37611 on April 19.

NEW Class 730 Aventra No. 730101 was taken from Dollands Moor to Wembley by Class 67 No. 67024. From here it was worked north by DCR Class 60 Nos. 60028 and 60046 *William Wilberforce* on April 9 as the 5Q30/09.31 Wembley Fan-Derby Litchurch Lane. Seen at Market Harborough, this is the first Class 730 our correspondent had seen at this location.

NEW Class 197 No. 197002 was delivered by road to Donnington RFT on May 7 and then taken to Crewe the following day by Class 66 No. 66513.

THERE was a movement on April 13 of eight former Chiltern Railway Mk3 coaches from Eastleigh to Long Marston for storage. Most unusually these were headed by a pair of Class 20 Nos. 20118+20132.

CLASS 43 No. 43274 was repainted into full EMR purple livery for the final month of HST operation on the Midland Main Line, making its debut in the new colours on April 14 working a Leeds-St Pancras-Nottingham-St Pancras-Leeds diagram.

Along with No. 43102 *The Journey Shrinker* in Intercity Swallow livery, it is pleasing that EMR have created a celebrity duo for the class's last weeks of service on the route. On Sunday, April 18, the 1C43/10.17 from Leeds to St Pancras International, was seen passing through West Hampstead with No. 43238 in the lead and No. 43320 at the rear. The same set was seen later at platform 2, St Pancras where it formed the 1D46/15.11 from St Pancras International to Nottingham. Both power cars were in LNER red livery and the train was formed with set NL58.

Later the 1C61/14.31 from Leeds to St Pancras International, was seen arriving at platform 3 at St Pancras with No. 43274, in EMR Purple, at the front and No. 43102 *The Journey Shrinker* in Intercity livery at the rear. A little later, the same set was seen passing through West Hampstead on the 1F63/18.30 from St Pancras International to Sheffield.

NEWLY renumbered Class 710 No. 710378 was top-and-tailed from Old Dalby to Willesden by Class 37 Nos. 37510+37611 on April 29.

CLASS 700 No. 700041, which had suffered a graffiti attack, was seen at Farringdon on April 13 working the 14.19 from Sutton to St Albans.

SWR and Network Rail ran a special working on May 7 from Southampton to Fawley and return, reportedly in connection with plans to reopen the line. No. 159005 is seen on the disused line as it approaches Frost Lane level crossing at Hythe. ALISDAIR ANDERSON

The lightly loaded 4M25 Mossend-Daventry intermodal on May 5 utilised Class 90 Nos. 90024 and 90026, and the colourful ensemble is passing Hincaster, between Oxenholme and Carnforth. No. 90024 still carries the colours of Grand Central for which it was to have worked Blackpool North-London Euston services, but the plan was cancelled due to the pandemic. JAMIE THORNTON

Southern EMU No. 313215 crosses Glynde Reach as it works the 14.41 Brighton to Seaford, having just passed Southerham Junction on April 27. JAMIE SQUIBBS

The DATS test train is approaching Wellingborough on April 23 while undertaking some final overhead line testing ahead of the start of Corby-London electric services from May 16. Leading the formation is HST power car No. 43066, followed by 91128, DVT 82115 and, on the rear of the train, 90035, 91122 and 43054. RICHARD GENNIS

LSL Class 37 Nos. 37521 and 37667 cross Jamestown Viaduct between Inverkeithing and North Queensferry on May 11 with the leg of a private charter from Dingwall to Corbridge. The train had visited Thurso the previous day. BOB AVERY

THE use of Class 365 units is coming to an end and the units are going into store. On April 14 Class 37 No. 37800 moved No. 365528 from Hornsey to Ely. This was followed on April 19 when No. 365538 made the same journey, this time hauled by No. 37884. Two days later Class 57 No. 57312 took No. 365530 to Ely.

THE 07.54 ex-Peterborough to Horsham was spotted on Saturday, April 17 at Littlehaven level crossing formed of eight-car unit No. 700048 in place of the almost universal 12-car set usually provided for these services.

ONGOING engineering works have impacted Thameslink services. On Sunday, April 18, Thameslink services on the Great Northern, which would normally be routed through Farringdon instead terminated at King's Cross, which was already constrained as a result of engineering works.

On the same day Thameslink services on the Midland Mainline worked from platform 1 at St Pancras International rather than running through platforms A and B.

TRESPASSERS on the railway between St Pancras International and Blackfriars impacted Thameslink services on the late morning of Tuesday April 20.

GATWICK Express Class 387 units Nos. 387201-06 are moving to Great Northern as the use of Class 365 units on that route comes to a close. No. 387201 was in traffic on May 5 followed by No. 387203 the next day.

southeastern.

WEEKEND engineering works between Grove Park and Chislehurst Tunnel saw London to Hastings services routed through Catford Bridge and Bromley South, which involves using the Beckenham Spur from New Beckenham to Beckenham Junction which does not have a regular passenger service.

On Saturday, April 10 an attempt was made to travel from Charing Cross to Orpington on the 13.00 from Charing Cross to Hastings. The train, which was formed of Class 375 Nos. 375608+375704, was joined in good time at platform 6, Charing Cross, only for departure time to pass without any action. An announcement was then made that the train was being delayed as a result of a points failure at Beckenham Junction.

The train eventually left more than an hour late with an announcement that it would terminate at Tonbridge. At Waterloo East the train was held to await time, when it became apparent it was now the 14.10 from Charing Cross to Tonbridge, and had actually left six minutes early!

South Western Railway

AS A result of re-signalling work over the Easter long weekend and the following Tuesday, services from Reading and Windsor & Eton Riverside to London Waterloo ran via the Hounslow Loop rather than through Richmond.

On Tuesday, April 6, a journey from Feltham to Clapham Junction was made on the 11.35 formed Class 707 Nos. 707030+707015 from Windsor & Eton Riverside to London Waterloo, which made additional stops at Hounslow and Barnes.

DELIVERIES of new Class 701 Arterio units included No. 701509 being top-and-tailed from Derby to Worksop by Class 47 No. 47739 and Class 56 No. 56081 on April 27. Next, No. 701028 was moved from Derby to Eastleigh on April 28 by Class 47 No. 47727.

The following day No. 701019 was moved from Worksop to Derby top-and-tailed by Class 47 No. 47739 and Class 56 No. 56081. On May 1 No. 701029 was being moved south by No. 47749 when it failed at Desborough between Market Harborough and Kettering. The train was rescued by No. 47739 and taken back to Leicester, and then to Old Dalby on May 6. A further delivery followed on May 7 when No. 701031 was moved from Derby to Eastleigh by Class 47 No. 47749.

DB Cargo

OBSERVATIONS on the southern section of the West Coast Main Line provided an opportunity to see the Royal Mail electric multiple units running to Willesden Princess Royal Distribution Centre early in the afternoon.

On Tuesday, April 6 Class 325 No. 325005 was seen passing Watford Junction working empty stock from Crewe ETD. Traction Maintenance Depot (Electric). Two weeks later on April 20, No. 325011 passed Carpenders Park station working empty stock from Warrington Royal Mail. Two days later No. 325012 worked empty stock from Warrington Royal Mail and unusually was on the Fast Line when seen passing through Harrow & Wealdstone.

THE 6Y08 Tolworth Sidings to Cliffe Brett Marine empties was noted passing through platform 9 at Wimbledon station behind Class 66 No. 66087 on Saturday, April 17. The following Tuesday, April 20, the train was seen again approaching Haydons Road hauled by No. 66069. The same service was observed passing Hither Green on Saturday April 24 with No. 66176 in charge.

OBSERVATIONS of the Boston steel trains produced Class 60 No. 60100 work from Bescot to Boston and back to Swindon on April 19. The following week on April 26 produced No. 60062 on the same diagram.

A slight change on April 28 had No. 60039 work Bescot-Boston-Wolverhampton. The same diagram on May 3 was worked by No. 60074 as far as Toton where Class 66 No. 66150 was added to the consist through to Boston. It was a further Bescot to Boston and back to Swindon diagram on May 4 with No. 60074 in charge.

THE regular Lindsey-Jarrow-Lindsey oil train was noted on April 19 hauled by Class 60 No. 60044, with No. 60011 in charge on May 3.

CLASS 60 No. 60024 was seen at the head of the 08.35 Lindsey Oil Terminal-Neville Hill loaded oil tanks through Woodlesford on April 21.

CLASS 66 No. 66187, in EWS livery, was seen passing through Harrow & Wealdstone at the head of a Dollands Moor Sidings to Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal Reception train on Thursday April 22.

THE 6N33 from Hoo Junction Up Yard to Wokingham was seen passing through South Croydon on Saturday April 24 top-and-tailed by Class 66 Nos. 66175 *Rail Riders Express*, in DB red livery, and 66003, still in EWS livery.

SCRAP trains reported included Class 66 No. 66006 on a regular Liverpool-Saltley-Liverpool diagram on April 24. The same diagram was powered by No. 66089 on May 3.

Two further moves on May 3 had No. 66160 on a Liverpool-Attercliffe-Liverpool diagram, and No. 66206 on a Cardiff Tidal-Beeston-Cardiff Tidal circuit, with Class 60 No. 60019 being added to the consist on the return. No. 66160 was in use again on May 5 on a Liverpool-Kingsbury-Liverpool diagram. The following day No. 66009 was used on a Liverpool-Swindon-Liverpool diagram, while No. 66152 worked a Cardiff Tidal-Sunderland-Cardiff Tidal – a rare move. Also, on May 6, No. 66206 worked a Burton-Immingham turn, reportedly the first for DB Cargo.

CLASS 60 No. 60020 was noted from a passing train running light engine through Tilehurst station on Thursday April 29 to Theale Murco having visited Didcot Fuelling Point.

A MOVE of segments for the new London super sewer took place on May 6 when No. 66001 worked a train from Tallington to the Isle of Grain.

OBSERVATIONS of the Tytherington to Calvert saw it approaching West Ruislip station on Monday April 26 hauled by Class 66 No. 66097. On the same day No. 66069 was seen approaching Castle Bar Park on the 6V64 from Calvert to Tytherington.

Freightliner
a Genesee & Wyoming Company

CLASS 59 No. 59102 *Village of Chantry* was noted on Tuesday, April 6 from a passing train on the Willesden SW Goods Lines at the head of train 7O69 from Acton Terminal Complex to Crawley Foster Yeoman.

TWO light engine movements were noted through Woodlesford on the morning of April 14: Class 66 No. 66516 on the 11.15 Leeds Midland Road-Crewe, and No. 66533 on the 11.20 Hunslet Yard-York Holgate Sidings. The following week on April 21 No. 66515 was on the 11.15 Leeds Midland Road-Crewe. This

Operations Track Record

DRS Class 88 and 68 Nos. 88009 *Diana* and 68003 *Astute* pass Tupton, Derbyshire, with a diverted Mossend to Daventry Tesco on May 2, a working diverted from the West to the East Coast Main Line because of engineering work. ROBERT FALCONER

An interesting working in connection with the Dounreay nuclear power station decommissioning project operated on May 13 from Georgemas Jn to Carlisle Kingmoor with two flask wagons in between three BSO escort carriages. Top and tailing the train are Class 66 Nos. 66304 and 66305. DEREK THOMPSON

Network Rail Class 37 Nos. 97304 *John Tiley* and 97303 pass Steel Heath, Whitchurch, working an evening Crewe Basford Hall yard to Talerddig ballast train on May 1 in connection with track repairs to the Cambrian route. ED WEAVER

service was at first cancelled and then reinstated.CLASS 66 Nos. 66532+66509 top-and-tailed the 09.30 Abington to Tyne Yard through Carlisle on April 18.

CLASS 66 Nos. 66561+66598 top-and-tailed the 08.52 Tyne Yard to Beattock engineering train through Carlisle on Saturday April 24.

CLASS 66 No. 66414 was noted roaming around the Southern network on April 22 reportedly on a driver's learning/route refresher trip. The Class 66 started from Eastleigh routed via Havant, Hove and the Brighton Main Line to London Victoria. Then return to East Croydon via Crystal Palace and back to Victoria before returning to Eastleigh Yard via the Brighton Main Line and the West Coastway route.

THREE Freightliner container trains, all hauled by Class 66s, were seen while at Harrow & Wealdstone on Thursday, April 22. First was No. 66553 heading a train from Felixstowe North Freightliner Terminal to Lawley Street Freightliner Terminal. Then came No. 66420 on a train from Southampton Maritime Container Terminal to Garston Freightliner Terminal. Finally, No. 66572 was in charge of a Trafford Park Freightliner Terminal to Felixstowe North Freightliner Terminal.

THE 7V06 from Crawley Foster Yeoman to Merehead Quarry was seen passing through South Croydon station on Saturday April 24 behind Class 59 No. 59201, still in DB red, but without logos.

CLASS 90 Nos. 90011+90012 were seen leading the 4S50/03.51 Crewe Basford Hall to Coatbridge Intermodal train as it passed Thankerton on Tuesday April 27. Nos. 90013+90041 were observed on the same working on Thursday April 29.

CLASS 66 No. 66542 was seen pulling away from platform 12 at Reading station on April 29 at the head of train 6A27 from East Usk Yard to Hayes & Harlington Tarmac Sidings. Briefly the Class 66 appeared to race GWR Class 800 No. 800023, which was forming the 1L72/10.59 Cheltenham Spa to London Paddington.

Later the same day Class 66 No. 66613 was seen passing Reading West station on an Oxford Banbury Road to Whatley Quarry empties.

A CONVOY of three Class 66 locos Nos. 66951+66554+ 66536 headed north from Crewe to Carlisle on Saturday afternoon May 8.

DRS

CLASS 66 No. 66302 working the 0S68/07.44 Kingmoor depot to Motherwell TMD was observed passing Thankerton on Wednesday, April 14. The 0M69/11.20 Motherwell to Carlisle New Yard was observed passing Thankerton on the same day hauled by Class 37 No. 37419.

IT HAS been some time since a service has been reported at Sizewell with Class 68 Nos. 68001+68016 running from Crewe to Sizewell and back to Willesden on April 20.

DRS Class 57 No.57309 ran light from Crewe (dep 10.44) to Carlisle on April 16.

FOR the first time in many years, a container train travelled up the Far North Line when Class 66 No. 66302 was observed passing Scotscalder at 18.53 on Wednesday April 21 with container TESU 500424 to Georgemas Junction. The loco was observed passing Scotscalder the next day at 14.00 on its return to Inverness.

CLASS 66 Nos. 66301+66305 were observed passing Thankerton top-and-tailing the 6S99/05.26 Kingmoor to Georgemas Junction flask train on Tuesday, April 27.

SERIOUS disruption occurred on the Highland Main Line on Saturday May 1 when Class 68 No. 68017 working the 4H47/04.00 Mossend Up Yard to Inverness Freight Sidings (Tesco train) expired between Blair Atholl and Pitlochy. Class 37 No. 37716 was scrambled from Inverness to assist, and the train was on the move some 243 minutes late.

DRS Class 88 No. 88008 *Ariadne* worked an additional May Bank Holiday Monday (May 3) fully loaded Mossend to Daventry (via Dumfries) container service, seen passing through Lancaster at 12.24.

GB Railfreight

CLASS 60 No. 60076 and newly repainted 66793 were sighted passing through Stockport on March 28 while working 6M51 Doncaster Down Decoy to Liverpool with empty biomass wagons.

AS A result of the re-signalling work on the usual route through Richmond, on Tuesday April 6, the 6Y48 from Eastleigh East Yard to Hoo Junction Up Yard ran via the Hounslow Loop. The train was seen approaching Brentford behind Class 66 No. 66791 in Beacon blue livery.

BELMOND Royal Scotsman-liveried Class 66 No. 66746 and the white Underground-mapped No. 66721 *Harry Beck* were noted in Harwich Parkeston Quay yard on April 10-11, the former on a Doncaster iPort intermodal and the latter from Hams Hall. The following week, it was the turn of No. 66736 *Wolverhampton Wanderers* and the now uniquely numbered No. 66737 (the latter two significantly enlarged) *Lesia,* the former this time from Hams Hall and the latter making the short trip over from Felixstowe as 4E43.

THE Hoo Junction Up Yard to Eastleigh East Yard was seen approaching Brentford station on Monday April 12 double-headed by Class 66 Nos 66778 and 66726 *Sheffield Wednesday*. The same service was seen on Monday, April 19 approaching Hounslow station. The train, which was formed of a long rake of JJA Bogie Autoballaster Hoppers, was hauled by Class 66 No. 66768.

CLASS 66 No. 66703 *Doncaster PSB 1981-2002* was seen passing light engine through Romford station on Tuesday, April 13 as train 0Y07 from Willesden to Ipswich.

CELEBRITY Class 66 No. 66779 *Evening Star* was observed on April 16 passing Woodlesford on the 11.25 Arcow Quarry-Pendleton.

MOD traffic reported included Class 66 No. 66719 working from Kineton to Longtown on April 19. Two days later it returned south from Longtown to MoD Donnington, Telford and then on to Kineton. A move on May 5 saw No. 66729 on a Kineton-Marchwood-Bicester diagram.

CLASS 66 No. 66738 moved a rake of new flat wagons from W H Davies, Shirebrook to Doncaster on April 19.

CLASS 67 No. 66705 hauled Mk3 Nos. 12041+12115+12019+12027+12012+12026+12151+11094+12159+12046+12035+12056 from Long Marston to Mossend on Tuesday, April 20 en-route to Assenta Rail Hamilton where the coaches will donate their bogies for the Belmond Hibernian coaching rake so allowing it to travel on UK and/or European routes.

CLASS 66 No. 66776 *Jeanette* was seen passing through Harrow & Wealdstone station at the head of train 4M23 from Felixstowe North to Hams Hall on Thursday, April 22.

CLASS 66 Nos. 66740+66792 top-and-tailed two bogie hopper wagons as the 4H74 Wellingborough-Peterborough on April 24.

THE 4Y19 from Mountfield Sidings to Southampton Western Docks was seen passing through Hither Green station on Saturday, April 24 headed by Class 66 No. 66774.

THE Burton-Immingham scrap train ran on April 29 hauled by Class 66 No. 66729.

UNUSUALLY an engineering train double headed by Class 66 Nos. 66778 and 66767 heading south passed Euxton on Monday, May 3, unusual in that engineering trains are more often top-and-tailed.

COLAS RAIL

ON GOOD Friday, April 2, Class 70 No. 70802 was seen on the up line to the west of Twickenham station at the head of an engineers' train. It is reported the Class 70 ran to the worksite on Thursday evening as train 6C07 from Eastleigh East Yard to Twickenham Junction.

CLASS 66 No. 66847 *Terry Baker* was seen on an engineers' train on the up line at Teddington station on Saturday, April 3. It is reported the Class 66 ran to the work site as train 6C06 from Hoo Junction Up Yard to Strawberry Hill on Thursday evening April 1.

COLAS Rail Class 70 No. 70813 ran light from Carlisle to Landore on April 13.

RAIL tamper No. DR73924 was collected from Tywyn on April 22 by Network Rail Class 97 No. 97304 *John Tiley* which arrived light engine at 16.26 and departed at 20.05 with the tamper in tow.

CLASS 70 No. 70817 pulled a train of empty log carrying wagons from Chirk to Carlisle on April 29 seen passing through Lancaster at 12.47. The following day the log train from Carlisle to Chirk was hauled by Class 70 No. 70815 with Class 56 No. 56049 dead in the consist.

COLAS Rail Class 56 No. 56094 pulled 12 aviation fuel tankers from Long Marston to Carlisle via Shrewsbury on May 4, seen passing through Lancaster at 19.38.

WEST COAST RAILWAYS

CLASS 37 No. 37518 was observed passing Thankerton on April 14 working the 5Z61/04.28 Carnforth to Fort William Junction yard. The train comprised of seven passenger vehicles. The train was almost two hours early.

FORMER LNER Class K1 No. 62005 was due to be moved on the 5Z20/07.10 Carlisle High Wapping Sidings to Fort William Junction Yard along with support coach No. 80220 on April 20. Class 37 No. 37685 had been allocated to this working, but was declared a failure, so No. 37669 worked an additional light engine move from Carnforth to join 5Z20 at Carlisle, and eventually departed at 09.50. The train was seen passing Thankerton shortly after noon and 220 minutes later than planned.

CLASS 47 Nos. 47772 and 47802 plus Class 33 No. 33029 pulled a rake of Mk 1 maroon and Pullman liveried coaches from Carnforth to Southall on May 5.

DC Rail

CLASS 60 No. 60055 moved a rake of 27 box wagons from Willesden to Chaddesden Derby on April 16 but failed near Biggleswade and had to be rescued by No. 60028 which came from Toton to take the consist through to Chaddesden.

Locomotive Services Ltd

CLASS 90 No. 90002 on route training duties working as 0Z88 Manchester Piccadilly to Stoke-on-Trent on April 23 in readiness for an upcoming LSL Charter later in the year was seen held at Heaton Chapel station because of a suspected hot axle box on the Tunstead to Northampton loaded stone train ahead of the Class 90.

LSL Class 43 Nos. 43058 and 43059 top-and-tailed a set of five blue and white liveried, but unbranded, Mk3 coaches from Crewe HS (dep 10.39) to Carlisle and back on April 30. Seen passing through Lancaster at 12.21 and again at 15.05.

Derby RTC & Network Rail

COLAS Rail's Class 37 Nos. 37099+37175 were sighted passing through Hazel Grove while working a returning Network Rail Test Train as 1Z97 from Longsight to Derby Rail Technical Centre on March 28.

STONEBLOWERS Nos. DR80303+DR80301 *Stephen Cornish* formed a 10.00 Lichfield Trent Valley-Bedford movement on April 9.

A NETWORK Rail inspection train 1Q51 from Derby R.T.C. to Eastleigh Arlington on April 12 was seen approaching Brentford top-and-tailed by GBRf Class 73 Nos. 73965 and 73961 *Alison*. The train was formed of Staff coach No. 977969, Track Recording coach No. 999550, Special vehicle No. 1256 and Generator No. 6261.

CLASS 37 Nos. 37116+37421 top-and-tailed a rake of Network Rail coaching stock from Derby to Carlisle via Whitehaven on April 13.

CLASS 56 No. 56302 was seen passing Kensington Olympia station on Friday, April 16 hauling Plasser & Theurer 09-3X tamper/liner No. DR73110 and Plasser & Theurer USP5000RT Ballast Regulator DR77908. Both track machines carried Swietelsky logos. The Class 56 and track machines were running as train 6Z58 from Guide Bridge Brookside Sidings to Dollands Moor Sidings.

CLASS 97 No. 97304 *John Tiley* was noted light engine at platform 1 at Llandudno station on April 20, waiting to depart for Blaenau Ffestiniog on a service from Shrewsbury Coleham depot, to which it returned later in the day.

THE 1Q69 from South Croydon to Derby R.T.C. was seen standing at platform 4 at South Croydon on Saturday, April 24 formed Nos. 73965+Staff coach 977969+Track Recording Coach 999550+Special Vehicle 1256+Generator 6261 and 73964. A little later the train was seen arriving at platform 8 at Victoria and about an hour after that the train was seen yet again at South Acton.

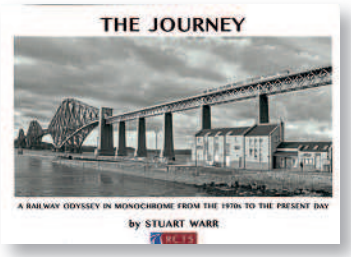
With the locomotives now using their diesel engines the train reversed at South Acton before heading north with No. 73965 in the lead. The reversal at South Acton was necessary as a result of engineering works on the Hounslow Loop.

CLASS 43 Nos 43062 and 43299 worked a Network Rail infrastructure assessment train the 1Q26/06.13 Derby RTC to Edinburgh on April 27, being observed through Lancaster at 08.56.

Our thanks

THE Railway Magazine's thanks for information go to: Paul Atkinson, Gordon Casely, Gene Collins, Mike Cooper, Alan Deans, Kevin Driscoll, David Kay, Barry Knock, Sean Morris, Richard Moxon, Chris Parrott, Richard Prentice, Mark Reynolds, Paul Rotherham, John Roxburgh, Terry Smart, Martin Swain, Roy Thurley, Craig Wellum and Chris West.

The failure of Class 68 No. 68017 *Horney* on Mossend-Inverness Tesco train on May 1 saw Class 37 No. 37716 sent out to rescue the train, and it is seen approaching Dalwhinnie. DEREK THOMPSON



The Journey – A Railway Odyssey In Monochrome From The 1970s To The Present Day

By Stuart Warr

THIS is a superbly varied collection of monochrome photographs reflecting Stuart Warr's personal view of our rail system and the huge changes that have taken place in the post-Beeching era of our railways.

The book is arranged thematically and covers an enormous range of subjects relating to activities on both the national scene and preservation.

The numerous varied themes include day-to-day operations, scrapyard portraits, diversions, steam operations and servicing, railwaymen, signals, coal, aggregates and china clay traffic – just to mention a very few!

The excellent high-quality photographs are well reproduced and include detailed informative captions. All in all, this quality RCTS publication is highly recommended. **RSS**

Published The Railway Correspondence and Travel Society, 16 Welby Close, Maidenhead, SL6 3PY. Flexiback; 298x210mm; £15. ISBN: 978-0-9934908-2-8

Rhapsody in Blue – Western Repaints

By Adrian Curtis

THANKS to the efforts of Adrian Curtis, the story of the 'Western' diesel-hydraulics is probably the most carefully and comprehensively recorded of any BR diesel class.

This latest volume expands that knowledge base further still, with a loco-by-loco record of the 56 'Wizzos' repainted by Plymouth's Laira depot between 1972 and 1976.

By this time, the class was on borrowed time, and from 1974 Laira's enthusiastic painters set about adding a range of unofficial local embellishments during maintenance exams. Using photographs and information gathered from staff and other 'Western' experts, the author has compiled a definitive guide to the appearance of the repainted locomotives in their final years.

What might appear at first glance to be standard BR blue 'Westerns' were anything but, with a wide range of detail variations that allow individual machines to be identified at a glance.

Identifying features are backed up with authenticated dates for changes in appearance, making this an indispensable reference work for 'Western' fans and modellers alike.

Many of the entries show locos both before and after their repaints, with captions picking out identifying features and embellishments.

Very few BR classes benefit from this kind of highly detailed background information, so it's all the more remarkable that new reference material continues to emerge for a class withdrawn more than 45 years ago! **BJ**

Published by Track Record Press. £19.99; 160pp; hardback; colour/B&W; ISBN 978 1 83853 765 4.

Liverpool & Manchester Railway Atlas

By Joe Brown

THIS is a magnificent publication. Joe Brown has produced another excellent railway atlas to follow his innovative 2006 London Railway Atlas and 2016 Birmingham and West Midlands Railway Atlas.

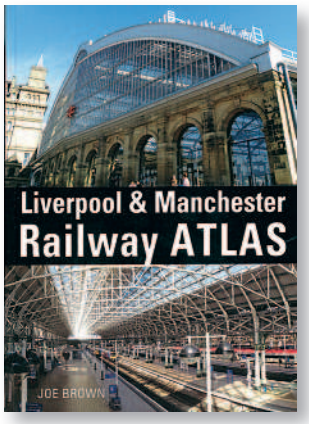
The Liverpool & Manchester Railway Atlas covers one of the oldest and most complex parts of our railway network outside the London area.

The geographical scope of this atlas is very wide, covering the area from Blackpool, Preston and Colne to Warrington, Northwich, Chester and Buxton. Tramways are also included.

Such is the detail that specific areas receive separate maps relating to a particular date in their development – for example, Manchester & Salford in 1922 and Liverpool in 1927.

The amount of research required for this atlas must have been considerable and the huge quantity of valuable information included is very impressive.

The 185 pages of superb, meticulous, detailed mapping are supplemented by a substantial and valuable index to locations, including key informative historical details.



Joe Brown has produced yet another first-class railway atlas of value to anyone interested in the complicated history of our railway system. **RSS**

Published by Crecy Publishing Limited, 1a Ringway Trading Estate, Shadowmoss Road, Manchester, M22 5LH. 256pp; hardback; 306x220mm; £30.

How Railwaymen and Dockers Defied an Empire: The Irish Munitions Embargo of 1920

By Peter Rigney

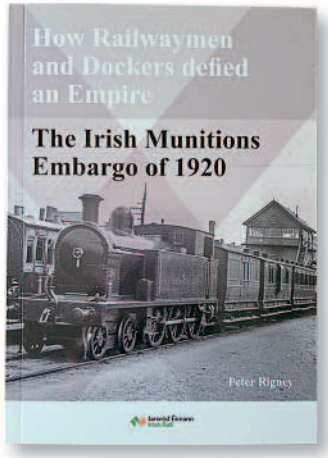
THE year 1920 saw one biggest campaigns of civil resistance in the Irish War of Independence. For around seven months, railwaymen, dock workers and trade unionists stood shoulder to shoulder, refusing to transport armed troops or police, or war materials – which effectively brought the British war effort in Ireland to a standstill.

The story of the Irish Munitions Embargo and the role of the railways has not told in any great depth until now. Author Peter Rigney explores this chapter of Irish railway history, setting the scene of a nation on the brink of partition (and division) before explaining how a Dublin & South Eastern Railway porter, together with a deep sea docker, stood firm and refused to handle or transport munitions. Word of their respective actions soon spread, and the strike escalated across the nation as Irish workers stood by their beliefs that what was happening in Ireland at the time was wrong; a fact acknowledged by Iarnród Éireann-Irish Rail chief executive Jim Meade in his foreword. Even the Londonderry & Lough Swilly and Tralee & Dingle railways were affected.

Not only does the book look at the actions of the strikers, but also the reactions of the railway companies, unions and governments on both sides of the Irish Sea. This is enhanced by the printing of firsthand witness statements and official letters highlighting the dilemma faced by many of the workers.

This book is a must for all students of Irish railway history, and Irish history in general. **GBH**

Published by Iarnród Éireann-Irish Rail/ Umiskin Press, 55 Winter Garden, The Birch, Pearse Street, Dublin 2, D02 DK12, Republic of Ireland. Softback; 57pp; 148x210mm; ISBN: 978-1-8381112-2-9; £5. Available from the RPSI website at www.steamtrainsireland.com/shop



BRUSH DIESEL & ELECTRIC LOCOMOTIVES 1980-2020

By George Toms

BETWEEN the arrival of this new RCTS book and the publication of this issue, the tragic news of the closure of Brush's Falcon Works in Loughborough emerged, making this review both timely and poignant.

Compiled by George Toms, who worked at Brush for 48 years, this is the second part of a complete history of the company – the previous edition being published in 2008.

It provides a comprehensive overview of the Falcon Works output over the last 40 years, including locomotives for export, the Class 60s, 92s and Channel Tunnel Tri-Bo electrics and the various re-engineering programmes of the last 25 years.

As well as detailed and informed text tracing recent history, working practices, ownership and management, the book features more than 70 photographs and numerous appendices supporting the main chapters in parts one and two.

Chapter One covers locomotive exports to Sri Lanka, Turkey, Morocco, Ghana and Gabon between 1980 and 1992 – the last vestiges of an export industry where Britain was once a world leader. This is followed by an overview of Brush-built electric locomotives in the 1980s, including the unique Class 89 prototype and shunters for MTR in Hong Kong.

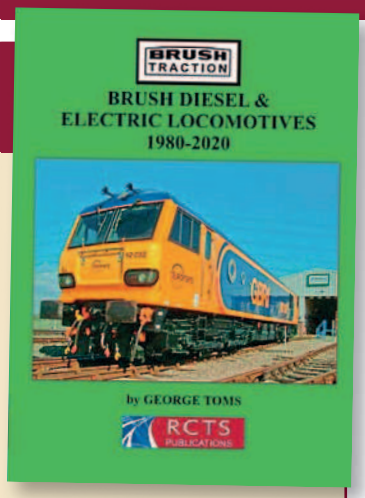
Chapter Three is devoted to the Class 60 project, which eventually delivered 100 heavy haul Type 5s to BR's Railfreight sector.

The development of the Class 92s and Channel Tunnel shuttle locomotives is described in Chapter Four, along with other projects such as the Class 20 re-engineering programme for DRS.

The rebuilding of Class 47s into GM-powered Class 57s for Porterbrook, Freightliner and Virgin in the late 1990s and early 2000s also gets its own chapter, before the final section covering developments in the 21st century, such as the GB Railfreight Class 73/9, HST power car refurbishments and Eurotunnel Tri-Bo mid-life overhauls.

Detailed record

Unfortunately, as the book's remit only covers locomotives, there's no insight into the various multiple unit overhauls undertaken for leasing companies over the last 25 years or the ongoing Class 769 'FLEX' project, developed in conjunction with Porterbrook.



The book provides a detailed record of the works' output over the last four decades and the comings and goings of other locomotives for rectification or more minor work, as well as thorough operational histories of the Class 60s, 92s and 57s.

With plenty to interest fans of those classes and British locomotive enthusiasts in general, it's a useful history of an iconic British locomotive building factory that will close its doors for the final time later this year. **BJ**

Published by RCTS Publications. £24.50+P&P; 184pp; hardback; colour/B&W; ISBN 978 09934908 3 5

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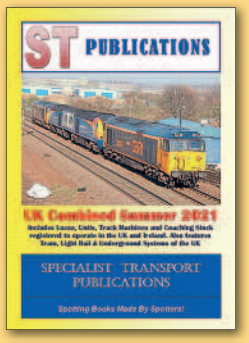

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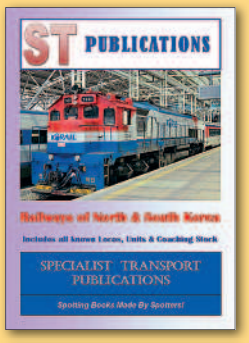

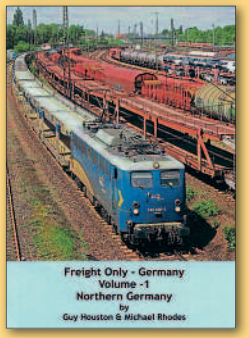

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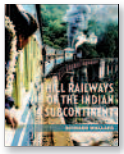


Described here are seven hill railways in the Indian subcontinent - two, the Zhob Valley Railway and the Khyber Pass Railway in Pakistan, and five, the Kangra Valley, the Kalka - Shimla, the Darjeeling-Himalayan, the Matheran Light and the Nilgiri Mountain Railway in India. All of these were 2", 2'6" or metre gauge, other than the 5'6" gauge Khyber Pass Railway . The history of each line is told, including summaries of their operations and descriptions of their routes, plus a map and gradient chart of each. There are also locomotive listings, and over 270 historical and modern photographs, many in colour. 208 pages. Larger format Paperback, and definitely a book to enjoy.

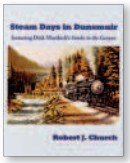
DVD: only in India • app. 70 minutes • £20.77

Very well made and shot film which makes an ideal introduction to four of India's narrow gauge mountain lines - the Darjeeling, Matheran, Nilgiri (or Ooty) and Shimla railways. All are shown with steam-powered trains, although the Matheran line is shown using a Darjeeling Class 'B' as motive power, its own O&K loco being out of service. This is a film which really give you a feel for the countryside the railways operate through, and life going on around them. Amongst highlights are the Darjeeling trains negotiating the streets of Kurseong and its bazaar, but there is a huge amount more to enjoy here; even the domestic authorities liked this!

Pakistan Steam - Historic steam action in 1982 • 53 mins DVD • £20.77

Highly recommended, this archive film shot in 1982 by G. Watkins, shows steam, and some diesel, operations over Pakistan Railways at a time when the classic BESA 4-4-0s and 0-6-0s were still in everyday service, including the latter here in charge of the weekly train over the Khyber Pass. This sequence, and one over the Bolan Pass in deep snow are the highlights of this film, but there is much more to enjoy.

Steam Days in Dunsmuir • Church • £56.90



The memoirs of a number of young footplatemen working out of Dunsmuir, on Southern Pacific's Shasta Division, during the 1950's, before the end of steam. Given that the Shasta Division was 488 miles of up-and-down single track through deep canyons and rugged mountain territory, it was notoriously hard work, even with big Cab-Forwards and the larger non-articulateds. I read this cover to cover, with considerable pleasure, both for the tales of mountain railroading in the 1950s, and the well captioned photographs, largely in B&W. There must be over 450 of these! 264 page very well produced hardback.

One of the young men enjoying themselves on footplates out of Dunsmuir, whose memoirs are in the book above, was Dan Olsen, the founder of Catenary Video, two of whose films are devoted to the Shasta Route:

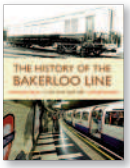
Southern Pacifics's Shasta Route circa 1950 - Vol. 1 • 62 mins • mostly colour • DVD • £20.77

Largely covers the Californian section of SP's north-south West Coast Route, from the Bay Area to Portland, Oregon. With its steep gradients this required heavy power and multiple helpers; cab-forwards are prominent, and have a special section devoted to them. Also featured is the Siskiyou Line to Grants Pass, and the McLeod River RR. Very largely steam power, but PAs and other first-generation diesels do creep.

Southern Pacifics's Shasta Route circa 1950 - Vol. 2 • 62 mins • colour • DVD • £20.77

This second volume covers the Shasta Route in Oregon, with side trips to view logging trains powered by up to six 'hogs' on the Tillamook Branch, and the last passenger train on the Coos Bay Branch. Portland's facilities at Brooklyn are shown with locomotives being serviced, and the very last run of a three-cylinder 4-10-2. Plus the 'Shasta Daylight's' run from Portland to Klamath Falls in part from the cab. All in glorious scenery!

The History of the Bakerloo Line
Feather • £23.45



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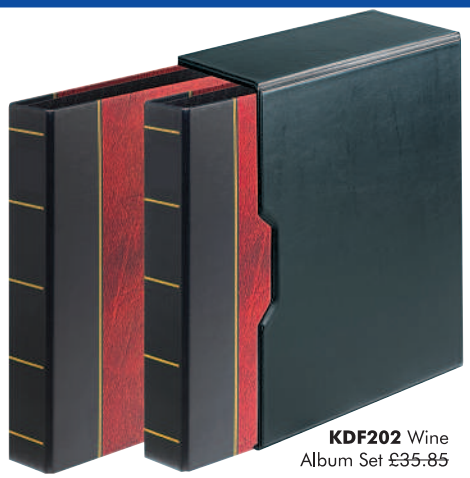

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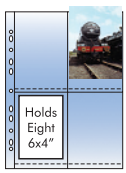

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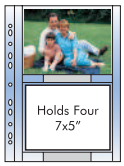

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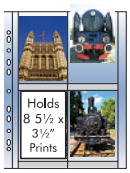

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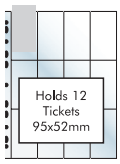

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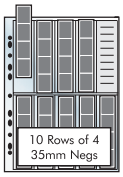

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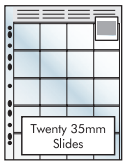

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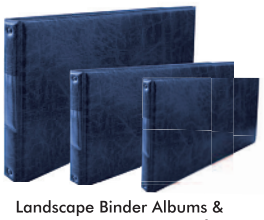

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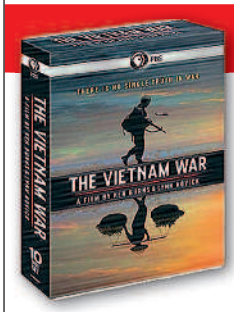

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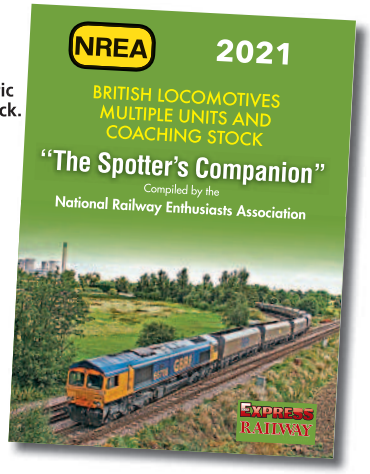

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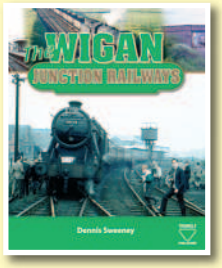

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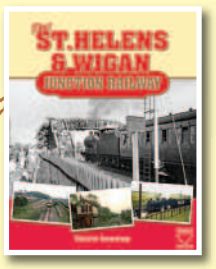

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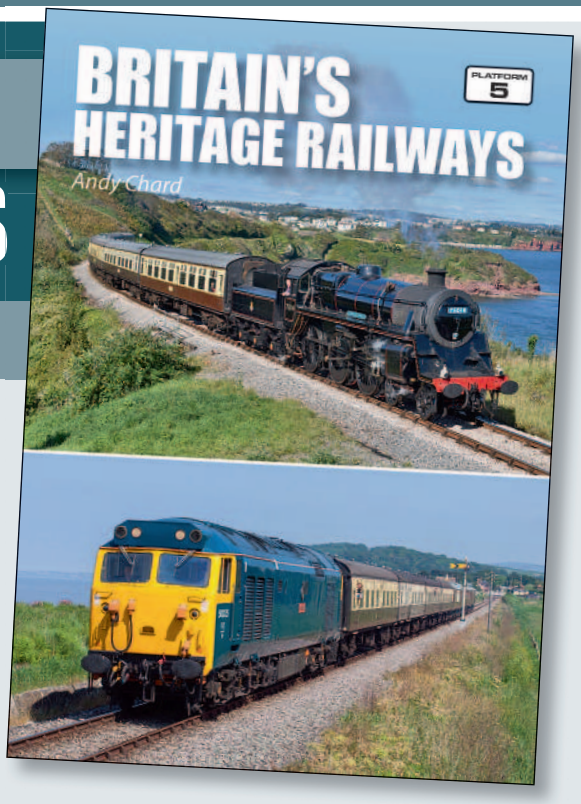

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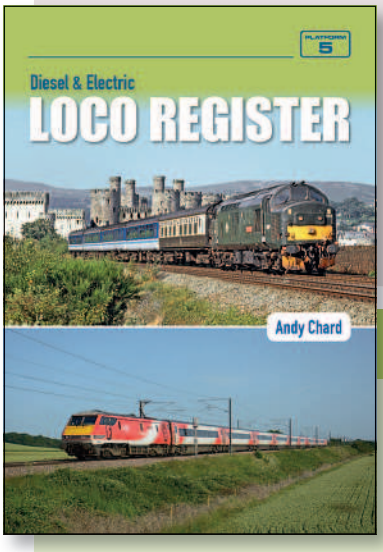

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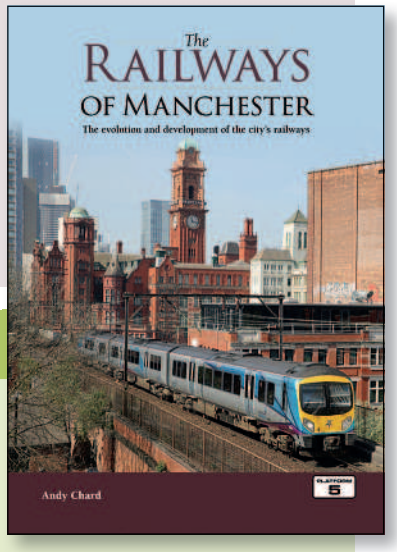

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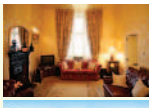

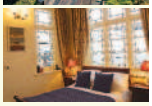

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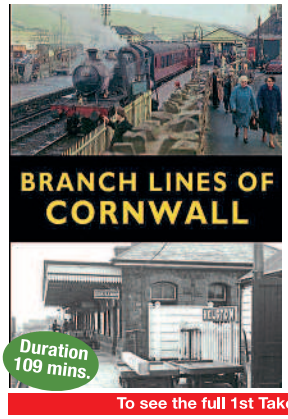

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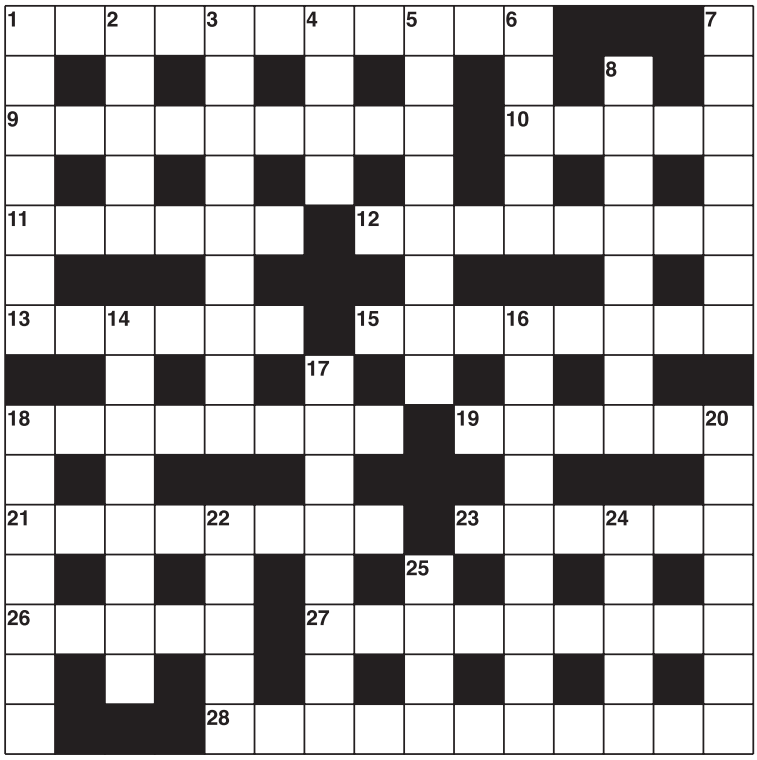
■ **Puzzle compiled by WILL ADAMS**

Across

1 1890 railway structure voted Scotland's greatest man-made wonder in 2016 (5,6)
9 GWR No 5914 – from Yorkshire? (5,4)
10 and 4 down Edinburgh steam shed coded 64C (5,4)
11 Town that had Mumps and Clegg Street stations (6)
12 ___ *Castle*, GWR No 7015 (4,4)
13 *The Lovat* ___, 'Royal Scot' No 46128 (6)
15 *Irish* ___, 'A2' No 60534 (8)
18 ___ Railways, company based at Oswestry (8)
19 Small station on the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway (6)
21 Terminus of a branch from Hurst Green via Eridge (8)
23 Sir John ___, one of the designers of the 1 across (6)
26 ___ Great Western, train operating company (5)
27 Last station before Carmarthen on the LNWR's line west from Llandilo (9)
28 See 8 down



Down

1 'Jubilee' No 45729, and Class 50 No 50034 (7)
2 'Warship' No D838 (5)
3 LNWR/Furness junction south of Oxenholme (9)
4 See 10 across
5 Oban line station west of Tyndrum Lower (8)
6 *Earl of* ___, GWR 'Castle' No 5055 (5)
7 Penultimate station on the Wirral's West Kirby branch (7)
8 and 28 across Class 60 No 60035 (8,11)
14 Interchange station between Merseyrail services from Liverpool and Northern Trains from Preston (8)
16 *County of* ___, GWR No 1014 (9)
17 'Britannia' No 70044 (4,4)
18 Really pleased with the sound a steam loco made? (7)
20 *Royal Army* ___ *Corps*, 'Royal Scot' No 46126 (7)
22 ___ 4 down, Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway station (5)
24 Plymouth steam shed, and diesel depot from 1962 (5)
25 ___ Bank, junction and former station north of Lancaster (4)

June crossword entry form

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Send completed form (photocopies are accepted) to: June Crossword Quiz, The Railway Magazine, Mortons Media Group Ltd, Media Centre, Morton Way, Horncastle LN9 6JR. Open to UK entrants only. Winners will be announced in the August 2021 issue. The winners will be the senders of the first all-correct solutions opened in our office.
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Solution to the April issue

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Down: 1 Corwen 2 Rail tour 3 Holyhead 4 Skye 5 Rake 6 Samson 7 Colorado 12 Vale 13 Ida 14 Envoy 17 Lambourn 18 St Fagan's 19 The Great 20 NUR 21 Bere 23 Exmoor 25 Exeter 27 Ties 28 Rita
April winner: Mr. T Smith, Swiss Valley, Llanelli
Runners-up: Mr. G Jinks, Rednal, Birmingham, and Mr. T F Hill, Bewdley, Worcs
The closing date for this month's crossword is Friday, July 9, 2021.

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Where is it? Our pictorial quiz, for fun only

IN last month's issue, our mystery picture showed Aintree loco shed, Liverpool (code 27B from 1950-1963, then 8L), which closed in June 1967. The first depot on the site was built by the L&Y in 1866. The eight-road shed pictured was constructed in 1937, located on land between a junction of the Ford-Aintree and Ford-Kirkby lines. Even after closure, the derelict shell survived until demolition in February 1996. On the site of the shed now is a modern housing estate.

For this month's teaser, can you identify at which station this passageway can be found? Answer in the July issue.

Next month The July issue will be on sale on July 7, 2021. Thank you for choosing *The Railway Magazine*.

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O Gauge (1:43 Scale)

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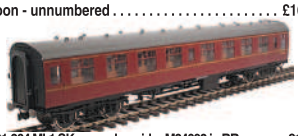
7P-001-007 Mk1 BSK brake second corridor M34001 in BR maroon . £169.15

7P-001-007U Mk1 BSK brake second corridor in BR maroon - unnumbered £169.15



7P-001-204 Mk1 SK second corridor M24092 in BR maroon £169.15
7P-004-006 GWR Diagram 'N' 59' Autocoach 40 GWR chocolate and cream £170

Wagons

7F-030-010 16 ton steel mineral wagon Dia. 1/108 B74562 BR light grey NEW.. £41.31

7F-030-053 16 ton steel mineral wagon Dia. 1/109 B102351 in BR light grey NEW £41.31
7F-030-054 16 ton steel mineral wagon Dia. 1/109 B153458 BR grey NEW £41.31

Hattons Originals - Coaches

H7-TC115-004-GA Gresley Teak coach Diagram 115 Corridor Third E12675E in BR carmine & cream £179
H7-TC175-004-GA Gresley Teak coach Diagram 175 Brake Corridor Composite E10103 in BR carmine & cream £179

Heljan - Steam locos

H7-A3-002 Class A3 4-6-2 4472 "Flying Scotsman" in LNER Grass green unstreamlined corridor tender - "Record Breaker" (RRP £750)..... BARGAIN.... £579

H7-A3-004 Class A3 4-6-2 60072 "Sunstar" in BR Express blue unstreamlined non-corridor tender (RRP £750) BARGAIN .. £579

H7-A3-007 Class A3 4-6-2 60103 "Flying Scotsman" in BR green late crest and unstreamlined corridor tender (RRP £750)..... BARGAIN.... £579

H7-A4-001 Class A4 4-6-2 2509 "Silver Link" in LNER silver streamlined corridor tender (RRP £750) BARGAIN £579

H7-A4-009 Class A4 4-6-2 60008 "Dwight D Eisenhower" in BR green late crest and streamlined non-corridor tender (RRP £750)..... BARGAIN.... £579

Diesel locos

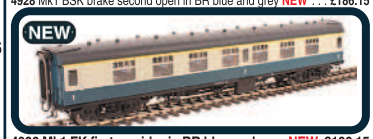
1753 Class 17 'Clayton' D8607 in BR green small yellow panels - weathered £466.65

DMUs

1902 GWR AEC diesel railcar W20W in BR crimson and cream dark grey roof £466.65
1905 GWR AEC diesel railcar W26W BR green speed whiskers grey roofs.... £466.65

Coaches

4903 Mk1 SK second corridor in Network SouthEast NEW £186.15
4904 Mk1 SK second corridor in BR blue and grey NEW £186.15
4918 Mk1 TSO second open in BR blue and grey NEW £186.15
4928 Mk1 BSK brake second open in BR blue and grey NEW £186.15



4936 Mk1 FK first corridor in BR blue and grey NEW £186.15
4944 Mk1 RMB mini buffet in BR blue and grey NEW £186.15

4958 Mk1 BG full brake in BR blue and grey NEW £186.15

4991 Mk1 57' GUV general utility van in BR maroon - unnumbered NEW £169.15
4992 Mk1 57' GUV general utility van in BR blue - unnumbered .. £169.15

4992A Mk1 57' GUV general utility van in BR blue - weathered NEW £182.75

4995 Mk1 57' GUV general utility van in BR blue and grey Motorail branding NEW £169.15

Any or Multiple Scales

Hattons Originals - Digital decoders

DCR-6PIN-Direct 6-pin 2-function 1.1Amp direct plug decoder back EMF .. £17
DCR-8PIN-Direct 8-pin compact direct 4-function 1.1Amp decoder back EMF £17
DCR-8PIN-Direct Box of 5 ..... £77
DCR-8PIN-Direct Box of 10 ..... £136

Hornby - Digital decoders

R8103 TTS DCC Sound Decoder 8 pin plug - Class 47 diesel £38
R8115 TTS DCC Sound Decoder 8 pin plug - 'Merchant Navy' 4-6-2 steam loco £38
R8249 Box of 6 8-pin 4-function 2-sided 0.5A (1A peak) decoder £92
R8249 Single £16

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NEW RELEASE

SIGNAL BOX ARCHIVE

NEW RELEASE

Post Free UK

A unique look inside over 70 signal boxes taken from Video 125's archive filmed over a period of 30 years. With our privileged access you'll see 'boxes of all shapes and sizes, all kinds of operating methods from 19th century mechanical lever frames to 20th century panels to 21st century state-of-the-art Rail Operating Centres.

Highlights include:

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- New Street Birmingham panel 'box in 1995
- The remotest signal box in the UK
- One of the oldest signal boxes still working in 2021
- Underground boxes in operation that are now museum pieces
- Wooden level crossing gates opened and shut by hand (including one on an InterCity 100 mph 25KV main line)
- Electric key tokens, tablets and train staffs
- Tyers and Webb & Thompson token machines in use
- Reedham swing-bridge operation

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Much footage is new, some seen before, but in most cases, further extended from the original rushes.

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