Railtalk Magazine

Issue 234
March 2026
ISSN 1756 - 5030

Contact Us

Editor: Andy Patten
editor@railtalkmagazine.co.uk

Charter Scene
charter.scene@railtalkmagazine.co.uk

The Nosh Report
nosh.report@railtalkmagazine.co.uk

Content Submissions
entries@railtalk.net

Technical & Subscription Support
admin@railtalk.net

Content

Pg 2 - Welcome

Pg 4 - Charter Scene

Pg 36 - Pictures

Pg 145 - News and Features

Pg 163 - Did you Know

Pg 164 - Different View

Pg 166 - Preserved/Industrial

Pg 179 - From the Archives

Submissions & Contributions

Railtalk Magazine, a magazine written by the Enthusiast for the Enthusiast. So why not join the team. We are always looking for talented photographers and writers to join us at Railtalk. Be it though pictorial submissions or via a written article featuring an event or railtour, we greatly appreciate any contributions to the magazine however big or small.

Photographic Contributions

All Photographic contributions should to be sent to us via email, post or via the members section page on our website. Contact addresses are provided above.

All images should be provided at a resolution of at least 2400px x 1700px at 240dpi.

Welcome to Issue 234

Some controversial news from the ORR this month, I say controversial because if more stations were manned then there wouldn't be an issue with help points, would there?

However the ORR says progress has been made improving help points at stations, but more work is required....

Upgraded help point units, more frequent inspections, and improvements to connectivity at unstaffed and remote stations, are among the changes being delivered following the Office of Rail and Road's (ORR) 2024 report, which identified weaknesses in reliability and inconsistent monitoring of service quality across the network.

For passengers, help points are often the only way to speak to a human for assistance when station staff are unavailable, and it is the responsibility of station operators to ensure they are working and that calls are answered.

After assessing various data, including from station operators responsible for help points at more than 2,500 stations in Britain, ORR highlighted that not all station operators have systems and processes in place to reliably operate their help points, or reliably answer calls from them. ORR also raised concerns about help points at remote stations which might be affected by poor mobile coverage.

In response to ORR's recommendations, 21 station operators reviewed their monitoring and maintenance arrangements. Nearly half have introduced, or are introducing, newer models of help point, with better functionality. These upgrades enable quicker identification of faults, faster repairs, and more transparent performance reporting.

Northern Trains and Transport for Wales, which ORR said faced the greatest challenges, are making improvements that ORR is continuing to monitor, including upgrading or renewing help point units at rural stations prioritised because of poor connectivity.

ORR recognises the progress made but expects operators to maintain this momentum. There is still some way to go. ORR will continue to collaborate with governments to monitor performance data and engage with industry to ensure improvements are sustained.

Stephanie Tobyn, ORR's director of strategy, policy and reform, said: "Help points are a vital back-up for passengers, particularly where stations are unstaffed or connectivity is limited. They must be reliable and ready to use whenever they are needed.

"We have seen positive steps from operators following our review, but sustained focus is essential to ensure these improvements translate into consistent, dependable support for passengers across the network."

Additionally Northern are getting over £500k to improve things....

Passengers who rely on assistance when travelling with Northern Trains should see improvements to the service over time, after the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) secured commitments from the operator to ensure staff receive disability awareness training and to provide a £550,000 additional package of measures.

Northern Trains is currently working on resolving the concerns about their failure to provide disability awareness training for front-line staff, highlighted by the regulator's investigation, with most of these improvements expected to be completed by the end of March 2026.

ORR also accepted the operator's package of additional measures, which are predominantly targeted at further improving disability awareness training. The rail regulator said it would work with Northern Trains on the detail of the measures, worth an estimated £550,000.

Once again, thanks for all the photos sent in this month, we really appreciate the time taken to send them to us. Until next month, stay safe.
Andy

This Page

Chiltern Railways' Class 68 015 departs Bicester North on February 21st at the head of 1J59, the 19:32 London Marylebone - Stourbridge Jct. service. *Andy Pratt*

Front Cover

The Orient Express set overnighted in Arpley Yard on February 28th/March 1st. Seen here shortly before departure, Class 67 005 is at the head of the train with 67 007 at the rear. The train made its way ECS to Manchester Piccadilly prior to returning to London. Several DB 66s are also scattered around the yard.
Jeff Nicholls

Hanson and Hall liveried Class 50 008 ‘Thunderer’ was used to take failed Robel Mobile Maintenance Train Nos. DR98702, DR97602 and DR97502 from Didcot Fuelling Point to Eastleigh Yard on February 14th. It is seen passing Shawford on the down slow line in the winter afternoon sun. *John Goodrich*

Terms & Conditions

Railtalk Magazine is a free monthly online digital magazine (e-mag), provided in PDF format.

Railtalk Magazine takes no responsibility for any information provided or printed in this magazine. Best efforts are made at the point of going to publish, to effect all information is correct, however no guarantees are given or implied.

All content is © copyright either Railtalk Magazine or it’s respective owners. All items are credited to their respective owners and no parts of the magazine should be reproduced without first obtaining permission. In cases where ownership is unclear, please contact the editorial team and we will be happy to provide details of respective owners once permission has been granted to pass on such information.

Railtalk Magazine is published by HAD-PRINT a trading name of HAD-IT LIMITED.

HAD-PRINT
Unit 2-4, France Ind. Complex,
Vivars Way, Canal Road, Selby
North Yorkshire YO8 8BE

info@had-print.co.uk | 01757 600211

With Thanks

Once again many thanks to the many people who have contributed, it really makes our task of putting these magazines together a joy when we see so many great photos.

These issues wouldn’t be possible without contributions from:
Michael J Alderdice, John Alsop, Steve Andrews, Ray Anslow, Mark Armstrong, John Balaam, Brian Battersby, Steven Beesley, Barry Beeston, Mark Bennett, Michael Bennett, Ben Bucki, Ian Callander, Keith Chapman, Steve Chapman, Julian Churchill, Russell Clarke, Nick Clemson, Keith Davies, Brian Dobbs, Derek Elston, Eddie Emmott, Mark Enderby, Colin Gildersleve, Paul Godding, Vernon Goodey, John Goodrich, Greig Gibson, Carl Grocott,Richard Hargreaves, Dave Harris, James Haywood, Brian Hewertson, Paul Hewertson, Stuart Hillis, Pete Holloway, David Hollowood, Colin Irwin, John Johnson, Richard Jones, Anton Kendall, Colin Kennington, Ken Livermore, Mathijs Kok, David Lindsell, Barry Longson, Michael Lynam, Kevin McCormick, Phil Martin, David Mead, Chris Morrison, Ken Mumford, Alan Naylor, Gerald Nicholl, Jeff Nicholls, Chris Perkins, Mark Pichowicz, Colin Pidgeon, Neil Pugh, Andy Pratt, Andre Pronk, Alan Rigby, Charlie Robbins, Bryan Roberts, Barry Robinson, Dennis Rowland, Tim Saunders, Neil Scarlett, Paul Senior, Alan Sinclair, John Sloane, Laurence Sly, Lee Stanford, Steve Stepney, Steven Thompson, Mark Torkington, Brian Turner, Allison Twycross, Gerard van Vliet, David Wood, Leuan Wood, Shep Woolley, Erik de Zeeuw and the guys at RailUK.

Charter Scene Railway Touring Company

The Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express

Class 86 259 hauling the 1Z86 London Euston - Carlisle speeds through Stafford on February 28th. *Richard Hargreaves*

Charter Scene Railway Touring Company

The Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express

In what could almost be a scene from half a century ago, Class 86 259 hurries a 'Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express' north past Lake Winwick on February 28th. *Jeff Nicholls*

Charter Scene Railway Touring Company

The Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express

SR Battle of Britain Class No. 34067 'Tangmere' works 'The Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express' 1Z86 passed what was once Shap station heading to Penrith and onwards to Carlisle on February 7th. *Shep Woolley*

Charter Scene Railway Touring Company

The Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express

Under threatening skies on February 7th, SR Battle of Britain Class No. 34067 ‘Tangmere’ approaches Aisgill summit with the return working of ‘The Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express’ 1Z87 towards Garsdale and Hellifield.
Shep Woolley

Charter Scene Railway Touring Company

The Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express

Ian Rileys Black 5 No. 45407 'The Lancashire Fusilier' heads through Greenholme with 'The Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express' 1Z86 on the climb to Shap heading to Carlisle on February 28th. *Shep Woolley*

Charter Scene Railway Touring Company

The Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express

Black 5 No. 45407 ‘The Lancashire Fusilier’ works the return ‘Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express’ 1Z87 towards Aisgill summit heading towards Garsdale and back to Preston on February 28th. *Shep Woolley*

Class 86 259 hauling the 1Z86 London Euston - Carlisle speeds through Stafford on February 7th. *Richard Hargreaves*

Charter Scene Railway Touring Company

The Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express

Sporting a new paint job, Ian Riley's Stanier Black Five No. 45407 'The Lancashire Fusilier' blasts through Oxenholme station with the northbound 'Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express' on February 28th. *Gerald Nicholl*

Charter Scene Railway Touring Company

The Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express

Former LMS Black 5 No. 45407 crosses Whalley Viaduct just before sunset on February 28th with a returning 'Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express' from Carlisle to Preston. *Brian Dobbs*

LNER A3 No. 60103 'Flying Scotsman' is seen near Danzey with 'The Valentines Shakespeare Express,' 11:58 from Stratford-upon-Avon to Birmingham Snow Hill on February 14th.
Chris Morrison

Charter Scene Vintage Trains

The Shakespeare Express

LNER A3 No. 60103 ‘Flying Scotsman’ passes Hall Green with the 19:24 Whitlock’s End - Birmingham Moor St. Vintage Trains trip on February 20th. *Chris Morrison*

Charter Scene Railway Touring Company

The Valentine's White Rose

SR BoB Pacific No. 34067 'Tangmere' storms through Doncaster in its usual volcanic style with 1Z45 London King's Cross - York on February 14th. Class 47 812 was on the rear.
Steve Thompson

Charter Scene Belmond British Pullman

Belmond British Pullman

Class 67 021 and 67 007 top'n'tail the 1Z80 Castle Cary to London Victoria, seen passing through Swindon on February 17th.
Colin Pidgeon

Charter Scene Belmond British Pullman

Brit Awards Special

Following the previous days 'Brit Awards Ceremony' in Manchester, Class 67 007 is seen passing Heaton Chapel with the return Belmond Pullman service to London Euston.
Lee Stanford

Charter Scene Belmond British Pullman

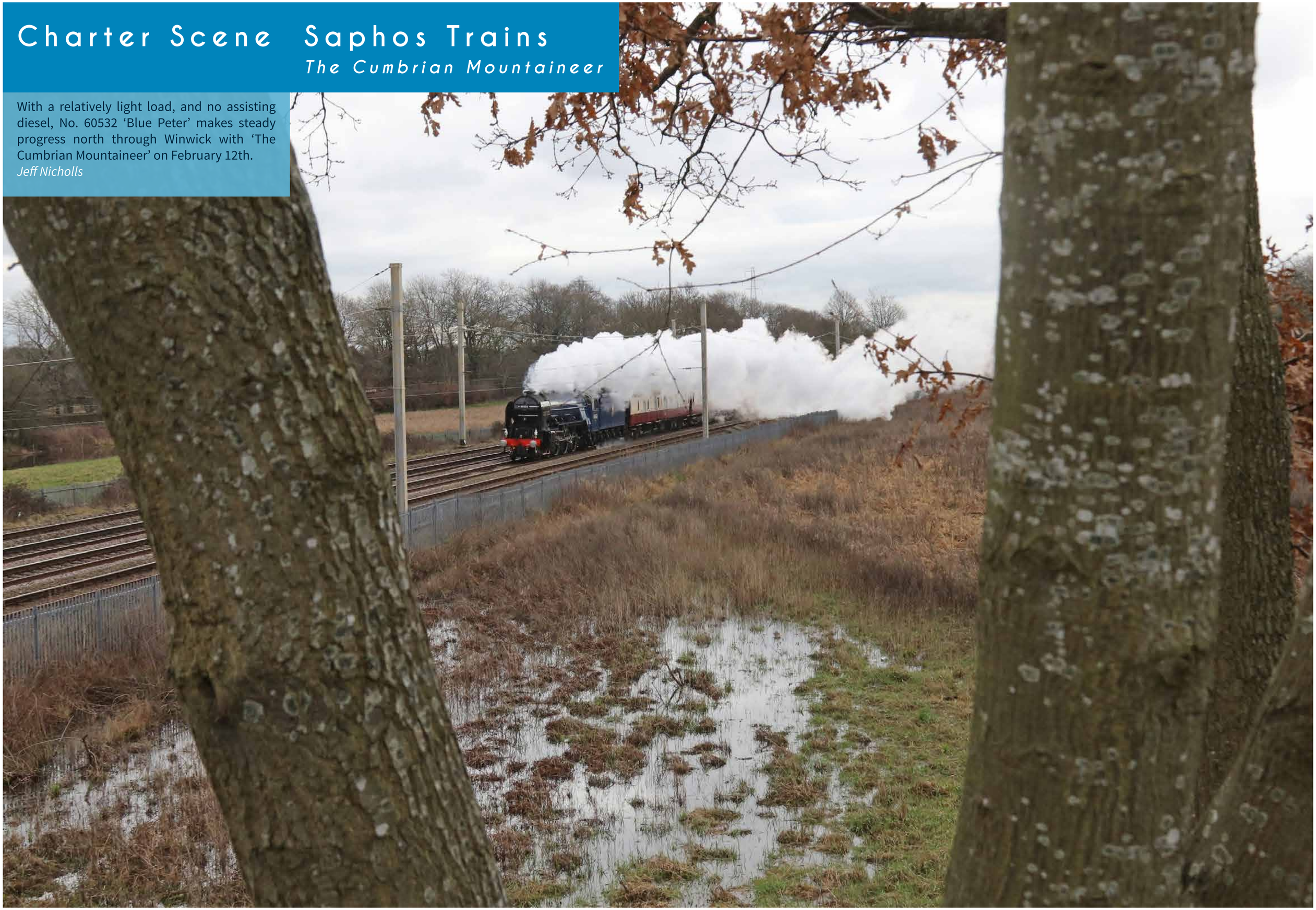
Brit Awards Special

Manchester Piccadilly on February 28th and the arrival of 1Z67 from London Euston ‘Brit Awards’ special Pullman service hauled by Class 67 007 leading and tailed by 67 006.
Russell Clarke

Charter Scene Saphos Trains

The Cumbrian Mountaineer

With a relatively light load, and no assisting diesel, No. 60532 ‘Blue Peter’ makes steady progress north through Winwick with ‘The Cumbrian Mountaineer’ on February 12th.
Jeff Nicholls



Peppercorn A2 Pacific No. 60532 'Blue Peter' climbs unassisted towards Grayrigg, Shap and Carlisle with 'The Cumbrian Mountaineer' on February 12th. *Gerald Nicholl*

Saphos Trains

The Cumbrian Mountaineer

A2 No. 60532 ‘Blue Peter’ makes a spirited departure from Crewe on February 12th with ‘The Cumbrian Mountaineer’ which it hauled to Carlisle. *Lee Stanford*

A2 No. 60532 ‘Blue Peter’ storms through Leyland station on February 12th with the return of a Crewe to Carlisle charter. *John Sloane*

‘Blue Peter’ makes light work of the climb past Standish as it works a Crewe to Carlisle charter on February 12th. *John Sloane*

Charter Scene Statesman Rail

The Settle & Carlisle Circular

Class 47 No. D1935 works a Carlisle to Worcester return charter past a wet Charnock Richard on February 21st, with D1924 bringing up the rear. *John Sloane*

Charter Scene Intercity/Saphos Trains

The Fearless Express

Freshly overhauled Class 50 No. D400 (50 050) ‘Fearless’ eases ‘The Fearless Express’ 1Z32 07:00 London Euston to Carlisle through Northampton on February 12th. *Derek Elston*

Charter Scene Intercity/Saphos Trains

The Fearless Express

After a prolonged absence from the mainline Class 50 No. D400/50 050 operated 'The Fearless Express' from London Euston to Crewe on February 12th and is seen arriving on time at its destination. *Lee Stanford*

Charter Scene Branch Line Society

Farewell to Chiltern Mk3s

Chiltern Railway' Class 68 013 heads away from Birmingham Snow Hill with the Branch Line Society 'Farewell to the Chiltern Mk3s' tour from Banbury to Stourbridge Junction and London Marylebone on February 22nd.
Chris Morrison

Charter Scene ECS and Light Engine Moves

On March 1st, Class 67 005 and 67 007 have just joined the main line at Moore from Arpley Yard where the British Pullman set has stabled overnight. They are on their way ECS to Manchester Piccadilly to take attendees from the Brit Awards back to London. *Jeff Nicholls*

Charter Scene ECS and Light Engine Moves

Class 57 012 leads 33 207 and 33 024 plus 17 coaches past Winwick on February 4th with a Southall to Carnforth working. *Mark Enderby*

Charter Scene ECS and Light Engine Moves

Inter-City 125 groups' power car No. 43025 'Exeter' departs Castleton on February 19th working 5Q04 Bury to Joppa Straights with No. 43060 'Heaton 150' on the rear. *Russell Clarke*

Charter Scene ECS and Light Engine Moves

Class 50 050 ‘Fearless’ heads southbound at Winwick with 5Z72 Carnforth to Crewe test run on February 18th. *Brian Dobbs*

Charter Scene

ECS and Light Engine Moves

The ECS of the Belmond Pullman from Arpley sidings to Manchester Piccadilly approaches Northenden Junction on March 1st headed by Class 67 006. *Lee Stanford*

Class 37 409 and 37 521 are seen stabled at Crewe on February 8th. *Richard Hargreaves*

Class 47 805 and 50 050 pass Moore on February 18tth with a loaded test run from Crewe to Carnforth. *Mark Enderby*

Charter Scene

ECS and Light Engine Moves

Class 40 No. D213 working the 5Z50 St. Phillips Marsh - Crewe LSL ECS passes Nantwich on February 28th. *Richard Hargreaves*

Power cars Nos. 43060 and 43025 pass through Warrington Bank Quay on February 23rd heading from King's Norton to Bury.
Mark Enderby

Nearing the end of their journey, power cars Nos. 43025 'Exeter' and 43060 'Heaton 150' working 5J36 Toton to Bury E.L.R. pass Mills Hill on February 13th. *Russell Clarke*

Charter Scene

ECS and Light Engine Moves

On a filthy and cold February 13th, SR BoB Class No. 34067 ‘Tangmere’ passes Northampton with it’s support coach running 277 minutes late as 5Z40, the 05:00 Carnforth Steamtown to Southall WCR. *Derek Elston*

Class 67 006 and 67 007 top’n’tail an Arpley - Manchester Piccadilly ‘Brit Awards’ ECS past Plumley on March 1st. *Mark Enderby*

Class 37 409 working 0Z43 Landore - Crewe HS via the Central Wales line heads through Shrewsbury on February 26th.
Richard Hargreaves

Charter Scene

ECS and Light Engine Moves

On February 4th, some 17 coaches were brought from Southall to Carnforth by Class 57 012, 33 207 and 33 025 and are seen approaching Charnock Richard. *John Sloane*

Class 50 No. D400 (50 050) roars past Coppull Moor on February 18th whilst returning to Crewe with a test working from Carnforth. *John Sloane*

Class 47 No. D1935 runs through Charnock Richard cutting on February 18th with a Crewe to Carnforth test working which had 50 050 at the rear. *John Sloane*

Charter Scene ECS and Light Engine Moves

Class 47 No. D1924 (47 810) storms past Coppull on February 5th with a train of former ScotRail sleepers and a couple of HST trailers heading from Kidderminster to Carlisle. *John Sloane*

Charter Scene ECS and Light Engine Moves

Class 50 050 departs Kemps Eye on February 26th with 5Z40 Crewe HS to Bristol SPM. Class 40 No. D213/40013 was on the rear.
Carl Grocott

Avanti West Coast

Colourful Class 807 010 is seen at Liverpool Lime St. on February 20th working a service to London Euston. *Mark Enderby*

Stockport art project wins at Cheshire Best Kept Stations Awards

Stockport station has been recognised at the Cheshire Best Kept Stations Awards for its largescale art installation that celebrates people and places local to the railway. Titled 'A view from a train window' the installation, which is formed of 50 individual artworks, won the Art Project Award at the annual prestigious awards ceremony. Representing views from train windows on rail journeys to and from Stockport, each art piece was created by local artists and the community, as part of a project by South East Manchester, Crewe to Manchester and Mid Cheshire Community Rail Partnerships (CRPs).

Judges praised the "colossal project", which resulted in a "striking" series of art that is displayed on a large dominating wall along the pavement on Edgeley approach – a thoroughfare to the station.

At either end of the arrangement is an illustration of the driver's cab of a Pendolino – transforming the wall into the iconic train, which serves Stockport. Funded through Avanti West Coast's Community Rail Project Fund, the initiative aimed to provide a welcoming gateway with a bright feature that captures the landscapes and heritage along the lines covered by each of the CRPs.

The support received from Avanti West Coast, who manage Stockport station, enabled the CRPs to fund workshops by the ARC (Arts for Recovery in the Community) Centre – an arts and mental health charity who work across Greater Manchester to provide arts programmes and services to improve people's mental wellbeing.

Macclesfield station, which is also managed by Avanti West Coast, was commended in the Chris Dale TravelWatch Award for Large Stations. It is judged by members of TravelWatch North West – an independent organisation representing all users of public transport in the North West of England - using their expertise on what railway stations should be providing.

Lisa Musgrave, Avanti West Coast Station Manager at Stockport, said: "We want our stations to be welcoming gateways to the people and places they serve, so we're delighted this unique artwork has been recognised at these prestigious awards. By bringing together organisations and charities, this creative project by our local Community Rail Partnerships has helped people of all ages connect with the railway, resulting in a series of art that reflects the local area.

"The artwork has transformed part of the station showcasing the talent of local people, as well as the nearby destinations and landmarks easily reached by train. This award is a testament to everyone who contributed to this fantastic project, and we hope encourages more people to travel by trail to enjoy Cheshire's beautiful landscapes."

John Hulme BEM, founder and president of Cheshire Best Kept Stations, said: "Cheshire Best Kept Stations is now 23 years old, so you can imagine I have spent a great deal of time judging stations across the county. The art project at Stockport is among the finest I have seen in all those years, not only for its visual content but for the strength of the creative partnership between Avanti West Coast and the organisations it works alongside. It succeeds in celebrating places while also capturing the true spirit of community rail."

Avanti West Coast

On February 24th, Class 807 006 speeds through Rugeley TV, working the 12:43 Liverpool to London Euston service.
Barry Longson

Avanti West Coast introduces technology to boost train service reliability in world first

Avanti West Coast has begun trialling a pioneering new tool to boost train service reliability during unplanned disruption in a world first for transport. Working with Centre for Modelling and Simulation (CFMS) – an independent digital engineering research organisation - the intercity operator has adopted a timetable optimisation program to support its response to unplanned disruption at the click of a button. This first of a kind technology created by CFMS uses data simulation to formulate prompt recommendations for train services impacted by scenarios such as speed restrictions and line closures.

Avanti West Coast's operational staff enter factors that can affect planned services to receive fully optimised timetable suggestions, which can be implemented instantly to keep trains running where possible and reduce the impact on customers. The technology is designed to support decision making, which should reduce delays and cancellations, as well as enable more reliable information to be shared sooner with customers whose journeys are impacted. Each scenario entered is saved on the system and can be used again for similar situations in the future. This enables the intercity operator to be better prepared for unplanned disruption with access to off the shelf plans. For one year the technology will be used to support Avanti West Coast's operations on its Anglo-Scot and North Wales routes, which are often affected by severe weather. As part of the trial, Avanti will also explore how the tool could support its wider operations, including train crew availability and fleet when it is unable to operate its scheduled timetable due to weather, infrastructure issues or an incident on the line.

The train operator partnered with CFMS who specialise in creating model-based design methods to help businesses use digital technologies to improve performance and efficiencies. The software trial is part of Avanti's commitment to adopt innovations aimed at improving the railway. CFMS received funding through the Small Business Research Initiative (SBRI)'s First of a Kind (FOAK) competition, which is funded by the Department for Transport and delivered by Innovate UK, to develop its technology.

This pioneering tool has been shortlisted at The Engineer magazine's Collaborate to Innovate (C2I) Awards.

Andy Mellors, Managing Director at Avanti West Coast said: "Whilst timetable optimisation isn't a new concept, I'm proud Avanti West Coast is leading the transport industry with this innovative technology that can help us to deliver a better service for customers when things don't go as planned. Innovation can play a key role in shaping the future of the West Coast, as well as the wider rail industry. By working with the Centre for Modelling and Simulation on this ground-breaking tool, we have the means to make a massive difference in how the rail industry responds to unplanned disruption and keeps customers moving."

Sam Paice, CEO at CFMS, said: "Bringing our significant expertise in modelling and simulation and closely collaborating with Avanti West Coast, we've developed a first of a kind tool that has the potential to transform how disruption is managed and minimised. This is a major step forward for technology adoption across industries, helping to keep the railways and the UK moving."

Avanti West Coast

In perfect lighting on February 24th, Class 390 124 heads past Rugeley Trent Valley working the 13:55 Manchester Piccadilly to London Euston service. *Barry Longson*

Class 390 121 working the 9S45 speeds past Winwick on February 14th. *Mark Enderby*

On a sunny February 24th, Class 390 040 working the 14:34 Manchester to London Euston service slows for its station call at Nuneaton. *Lee Stanford*

Avanti West Coast

Class 805 004 has charge of the 12:02 London Euston to Chester service on February 24th, seen passing Rugeley Trent Valley. *Barry Longson*

Avanti IETs Class 805 004 and 805 008 pass Nuneaton on February 24th at full line speed with the 12:48 Holyhead to London Euston service. *Lee Stanford*

Class 390 130 is seen leaning into the curve through Rugeley Trent Valley on February 24th, working the 12:53 London Euston to Manchester service. *Barry Longson*

Avanti West Coast

Class 390 010 is seen at Stockport on March 4th with a service to London Euston. *Lee Stanford*

Class 390 148 hurries the 1S69 13:30 London Euston to Glasgow Central service through Rugby on February 10th. *Derek Elston*

Class 390 047 passes Rugby with 1A41 12:55 Manchester Piccadilly to London Euston service on February 10th. *Derek Elston*

Balfour Beatty

On February 24th, Class 20 901 and 20 905 top'n'tail the Balfour Beatty drain train passing Harrowden Junction as 6J09, the 12:35 Woking Up Yard Sidings to Stapleford & Sandiacre BB.
Derek Elston

Caledonian Sleeper

Class 92 018 passes Northampton light engine as 0Z73, the 11:34 Wembley InterCity Depot to Crewe T.M.D. (E) on February 24th. *Derek Elston*

Chiltern Railways

The new order for Chiltern railways sees Class 68 022 pass Leamington Spa on with an ECS move from Banbury to Stourbridge Junction on February 24th. *Lee Stanford*

Railway veteran of 64 years returns to Flying Scotsman footplate

A railway veteran of 64 years who drove Flying Scotsman in the 1980s is back on the footplate, showing the public the historic locomotive in Birmingham.

Alan Newman, 79, who works as a Duty Control Manager at Chiltern Railways, supported customers at Birmingham Moor Street on Friday February 20th, as the station exhibited the train to the public who flocked to Platform 4 in their droves. Alan was given the opportunity to ride the locomotive to Birmingham Moor Street, before he spent Friday afternoon assisting the public on platforms as families gathered to visit and board the train.

Turning 80 in November, Alan has been in the rail industry since he was 15-years-old - starting in 1962 – and he has since worked in a variety of roles. These include as a railroad fireman, train driver, driver instructor, train traction inspector, a manager at London Victoria Station and operational roles both nationally and at Chiltern Railways.

In addition, Alan drove Flying Scotsman on the Sunday Luncheon specials from London Marylebone to Stratford-upon-Avon between 1986 and 1987.

Alan Newman, from King's Sutton, Northamptonshire, said: "I was proud to return to Flying Scotsman 40 years after driving it in the eighties. Seeing so many families excited to see the train brought it all back and really shines the railway in a positive light.

"The enthusiasm from the general public to see historic locomotives such as Flying Scotsman makes me proud to have worked in this industry since 1962."

Tony Baxter, Operations Director at Chiltern Railways, said: "Alan has had a long and distinguished career in rail and he is a credit to Chiltern Railways.

"It was wonderful to see Alan supporting the public visiting Flying Scotsman at nearly 80 years of age. The popularity of Flying Scotsman was evident last week as so many families were out to visit the locomotive at Birmingham Moor Street."

Flying Scotsman visited Birmingham Moor Street for three days between Wednesday February 18th and Friday 20th. The experience was managed by charitably-controlled train operating company Vintage Trains, which run steam trips from Birmingham throughout the year.

Chiltern Railways

Chiltern operated Class 168 002 pauses at Leamington Spa on with the 11:45 Birmingham Moor Street to London Marylebone service. *Lee Stanford*

Farewell tour for 50-year-old trains raises £20,000 for charity

A farewell tour for trains built in the 1970s raised £20,000 for charity.

Chiltern Railways and Branch Line Society arranged the tour to celebrate the iconic Mark III fleet, which has carried customers for fifty years and is set to leave Chiltern by the end of March.

The special trip - which took place on Sunday February 22nd along the line between London Marylebone and the West Midlands - sold out in 24 hours, with 250 rail enthusiasts on board the journey.

Enthusiasts flocked to stations along the route to see the Mark III, and some were even given the opportunity to enter the driver's cab before the train set off from Banbury in the morning.

Money raised went to the Railway Children charity, which supports thousands of vulnerable children alone and at risk on the streets and on the rail network in the UK, Tanzania and India.

The Mark III coaches, which have served Chiltern Railways' customers since 2010, are being replaced by the operator's newest Mark 5A trains – recently named the 'Chiltern Explorer' fleet.

Richard Allan, Managing Director of Chiltern Railways, said: "I am delighted that £20,000 was raised for Railway Children, which is a charity close to my heart. It is the perfect way to celebrate these iconic coaches which have served our customers well for many years.

"I am looking forward to the future, as we are replacing these coaches with the modern, Chiltern Explorer trains, which will significantly improve journeys for our customers."

Jack Miller, Group Director of Fundraising and Marketing, at Railway Children, said: "We are overwhelmed once again by the generosity of the railway family.

"Chiltern Railways are such dedicated supporters of our cause and these funds, from such a special occasion, will ensure some of the world's most vulnerable children will wake up to brighter futures."

Chiltern Railways

Class 68 031 propells a new Chiltern set away from St. Cross after an outing from Eastleigh to Banbury and return on March 6th. *John Sloane*

Class 68 026 speeds past Winchester St. Cross with a Long Marston to Eastleigh working on March 6th during a heavy shower.
John Sloane

The front of a Chiltern driving trailer rests at Eastleigh traction depot on March 6th.
John Sloane

Colas Rail

Class 70 809 has run round its train at Stafford and awaits a clear road to proceed with 6K88 the 10:07 Bradwell Sidings to Basford Hall Yard on February 24th. *Barry Longson*

SRSA Power Up Poplars With Electrification Programme

Colas are delighted to share that the South Rail Systems Alliance (SRSA) have successfully completed the major commissioning of the Poplar Rail Lines electrification project, strengthening the resilience of the Western and Anglia networks. The SRSA and Colas Rail UK's Infrastructure division have delivered electrification from Acton West Junction along both the Up and Down Poplar lines, a demonstration of our ability to energise a newly electrified route for the first time, bringing benefits to all railway users.

This includes diversionary routes for passengers for future track possessions for the Old Oak Common (OOC) High Speed 2 (HS2) station and mitigates any impact on the local Elizabeth Line depot completing maintenance on their fleet.

Poplars Project Scope

The main duties performed by the team were the installations of:
Incorporating our in-house expertise, we also completed other infrastructure upgrades including Overhead Line (OLE) and Signalling & Telecoms (S&T) on the Up and Down Main Lines.
Overhead line equipment (OLE), including new structures and foundations
New and modified wire runs
New electrical sections controlled by a blend of motorised and manual switches
A neutral section
Signalling alterations and updates
Upgrade to existing bonding arrangements and cable routes
Installation of new safety and operational signage
Upgrade to platform fencing at Acton Mainline Station

Other upgrades include software and interface changes at the Rugby and Didcot control centres. The upgrades will also improve depot access for maintenance of the Elizabeth Line fleet and contribute to Network Rail's decarbonisation strategy to allow for sustainable electric trains to run on this section of the network and between the North London Line and Great Western Main Line (GWML). The Anglia side of the network was energised in early November 2025, while the Western side received their power upgrades on December 27th delivered in conjunction with the SRSA's OOC Christmas blockade. Full operational capability expected by Easter 2026, where these upgrades will link to the existing electrified sections at Acton Wells junction, connecting with the Acton Willesden Line and the Barking to Gospel Oak Line.

Old Oak Common Team Renew Rail Systems

In conjunction to the Poplar electrification programme, the SRSA also delivered further rail systems upgrades to the GWML at OOC as part of the new HS2 interchange station. During the two-day blockade, the team installed a new four-line Under Track Crossing (UTX) to a depth of 2.5 m, one of 24 UTXs being delivered as part of the cable management strategy for the upgraded power and signalling systems. These works will provide a new temporary route for the GWML while OOC station enters the next phase of its construction programme. OLE construction was also undertaken, including the conversion of an existing balance weight system to a state-of-the-art Tensorex C+ system and the installation of new OLE structures and Small Parts Steelwork, enabling wires to be easily transferred to the new equipment and OLE headspan structures to be removed. These changes increase the reliability, resilience and efficiency of the overhead line system and significantly reducing the impact of failures caused by legacy equipment.

Speaking about the success of the schemes, Network Rail Sponsor, Gavin Cambridge said "SRSA have been critical to the success of the Poplars Electrification project, helping to progress the scheme from project inception through to energisation in less than three years. Throughout this time SRSA have worked diligently alongside Network Rail to develop a solution and the programme to deliver it, overcoming engineering and delivery challenges along the way. The final energisation works at Christmas were the culmination of this hard work, delivering a Network Rail national milestone with minimal disruption to the travelling public."

All works were completed successfully and with support from our trusted supply chain. The SRSA's On Network Works is a partnership between Colas Rail, AECOM and Network Rail, an alliance delivering the rail systems for the new OOC station.

Colas Rail

Class 70 811 working the 6M40 Westbury to Stud Farm passes through Swindon on February 17th. *Colin Pidgeon*

Colas Rail UK & Coventry City Council Commence Phase Two of CVLR Programme

Following Coventry City Council's Full Council Approval in January 2026, Colas Rail UK's Urban division has begun work on Phase 2 of Coventry's Very Light Rail (CVLR) programme, delivering an 800-metre twin-track connection between Coventry Station and Coventry University Technology Park.

Commissioned by Coventry City Council, Colas Rail will be driving a streamlined, construction-led approach that accelerates delivery, reduces risk and keeps disruption to a minimum for local stakeholders. Extensive surveys are complete, procurement off the innovative track slabs is underway, and the scheme is now moving towards construction. Speaking about the commencement of the scheme, Iain Anderson, Managing Director for Urban & Industries said "We are thrilled to be starting work on the second phase of the Coventry Very Light Rail, this next phase represents a major step forward in bringing an innovative, sustainable light rail transport solution to Coventry.

"Colas Rail is proud to be part of a project that is not only transforming the city's infrastructure but also setting new standards for innovation in light rail systems across the UK."

Councillor Jim O'Boyle cabinet member for jobs, regeneration and climate change said, "We worked with Colas Rail to deliver our first demonstrator route so I'm glad to welcome them back to the team for the next phase which see our innovative track and vehicle operating in live traffic.

We know it goes down fast, we know its really good value and we know it has the potential to transform how people move around small to medium sized cities.

"The route to Coventry University's Technology Park will allow us to showcase the benefits of CVLR in a live environment, proving how this innovative system can be delivered quickly, affordably and with minimal disruption. It's an exciting moment for Coventry, and brings us significantly closer to a transport network that reflects the ambition and ingenuity of our city."

We look forward to sharing further updates as we take the next step towards delivering this transformational transport scheme for Coventry.

Colas Rail

Class 70 803 and 70 809 arrive at Stafford on January 29th with a working from Bradwell Up Sidings to Crewe Basford Hall. *Bryan Roberts*

Colas Rail

In dire need of a visit to the wash is Class 66 850 ‘David Maidment OBE’ running light engine through Northampton as 0Z64, the 05:38 Carlisle N.Y. to Wolverton Centre Sidings on February 11th. *Derek Elston*

A sight very rarely seen at Northampton as Class 66 850 ‘David Maidment OBE’ passes with snowplough ADB965219 in tow as 7Z62 12:46 Wolverton Centre Sidings to Rugby C.S. on February 11th. *Derek Elston*

Class 70 812 passes Stafford on January 29th en route to Crewe from Rugby DED.
Bryan Roberts

CrossCountry

It's rare to get consecutive numbered trains in the same photograph, but it happened at Stafford on February 24th. On the right Class 221 113 was working the 10:00 Bristol to Manchester, while Class 221 114 was on the 11:03 Manchester to Bristol. *Barry Longson*

Class 170 636 speeds through Longbridge heading south on February 28th.
Colin Kennington

A CrossCountry Voyager overtakes a West Midlands Railway Class 730 at Longbridge on February 28th. Both trains are heading towards Birmingham New Street. *Colin Kennington*

CrossCountry

Class 170 103 arrives at Leicester station with 1N53 the 11:25 Stansted Airport to Birmingham New Street service on February 25th. *Derek Elston*

Class 170 636 working 1L40, the 12:20 Birmingham New Street to Stansted Airport service is seen departing Leicester on February 25th. *Derek Elston*

Class 170 103 working 1L50, the 17:22 Birmingham New Street to Stansted Airport service calls at Leicester on February 25th. *Derek Elston*

Colas Rail

Class 221 107 passes St. Cross on March 6th with a Manchester Piccadilly - Bournemouth working. *John Sloane*

CrossCountry

During the Manchester Piccadilly blockade CrossCountry services terminated at Stockport and during their layover time the Voyagers were stabled in the down goods loop. Access to this is usually from the south of the station so after reversal the units accessed the loop from the north. Here Class 221 127 is seen making this rare movement as it slowly enters the goods loop to await its next diagram. *Lee Stanford*

Class 221 132 arrives into Stafford on February 24th working the 10:25 from Manchester to Bournemouth. *Barry Longson*

Class 170 619 approaches its Nuneaton stop on February 24th with the 14:18 Leicester to Birmingham New Street service. *Lee Stanford*

DB Cargo

Class 66 128 working the 4V21 Trafford Park - Didcot approaches Stafford on February 7th. *Richard Hargreaves*

Class 66 078 and 66 084 top'n'tail the Trafford Park to Felixstowe intermodal through a rainy Moore on February 16th. *Mark Enderby*

Class 66 162 and 66 182 with a Trafford Park - Didcot working pass Winwick on February 14th. *Mark Enderby*

DB Cargo

Diverted from its usual mid-Cheshire line route by the Manchester Piccadilly closure, Class 66 084 tops and tails 66 078 past Astley Signal Box on the Chat Moss route with 4F66, Trafford Park Euro Terminal - Arpley Yard on February 14th. *Jeff Nicholls*

DB Cargo

Class 66 117 passes Castleton on February 5th with 6E26 Knowsley to Wilton service. *Russell Clarke*

Class 66 108 ‘Seaforth Highlander’ powers through Wigan North Western, with 4S37 14:30 Liverpool Seaforth Docks to Mossend Euroterminal, on a overcast February 19th. This loco seems to be dedicated to this working. *Paul Senior*

A clean looking Class 66 078 was in charge of a late running Trafford Park - Felixstowe North seen at Stafford on January 29th. *Bryan Roberts*

DB Cargo

Class 66 094 sweeps past St. Cross with a Trafford Park to Southampton Western Docks working on March 6th. *John Sloane*

Peel Ports branded Class 66 108 ‘Seaforth Highlander’ runs through Charnock Richard cutting on February 4th with the Seaforth to Mossend intermodal. *John Sloane*

Class 66 066 ‘Geoff Spencer’ stands at Eastleigh after arrival on a working from Dollands Moor on March 6th. *John Sloane*

DB Cargo

Class 66 004 in 'Climate Hero' livery works 4Z51 Arpley Yard to Milford Sidings past Castleton with six DB hoppers in tow on February 7th.*Russell Clarke*

DB Cargo UK trials Class 93 tri-mode locomotive

DB Cargo UK has successfully trialled a Class 93 tri-mode locomotive on an intermodal service in the North West as it explores future options for its locomotive fleet. Working in collaboration with Rail Operations Group and Network Rail, DB Cargo UK used 93006 to successfully haul a Peel Ports service from Seaforth in Merseyside to Mossend in Glasgow and back on Tuesday, March 10th.

The Class 93 is the latest and most advanced development of Stadler's successful UK locomotive family - a new and improved mixed-traffic locomotive built on the success and track record of the Class 68 and Class 88 fleets but with the enhanced performance, versatility and efficiency with higher diesel and battery performance. Manufactured in Valencia, Spain, these tri-mode locomotive have four different modes of traction. In electric mode, they can run on 25kV AC overhead lines with a power up to 4,000 kW (4MW), with an extra 600 kW (0.6MW) of boost power from the battery.

They feature a Stage V 900 kW-engine and two Lithium Titanate Oxide (LTO) traction battery packs, allowing them to operate on non-electrified lines. The battery packs provide 400 kW of extra power to supplement the engine when the locomotives are running in diesel/battery or hybrid mode. The batteries can also work alone, enabling carbon-free operations without losing any tractive effort.

Mark Sargant, DB Cargo UK's Head of Operations, said: "The trial of the Class 93 was conducted as part of an ongoing review of our future fleet investment strategy, and we were impressed with its performance.

"We also took the opportunity to take along representatives from the train driver union ASLEF, to ascertain their views on its' performance out on the network," he added.

Brian Ferguson, General Manager at Rail Operations Group, said: "We're delighted with the continued performance of the Class 93 during these trials.

Handling loads of up to 1,500 tonnes, the locomotive delivered a strong performance throughout, including successful standing starts on challenging gradients.

"Each successful run builds further confidence in what is a truly versatile and capable locomotive for the modern railway. The results we're seeing are a testament not only to the technology itself, but also to the expertise, planning and commitment of the teams delivering these operations."

"Further trials and demonstrations are planned over the coming months as we continue to strengthen and develop our working relationship with DB Cargo UK," he added

DB Cargo

Class pioneer 66 001 brings up the rear of DB's 02:35 London Gateway - Trafford Park service as it undertakes 66 508 held on the fast line with the 02:23 Freightliner service between the same points. Very confusing! There must have been quite a logjam at Trafford Park during the essential works at Piccadilly on February 17th. *Jeff Nicholls*

On February 24th, Class 67 015 worked 0G20 the 10:37 Crewe TMD to Stafford light engine movement. *Barry Longson*

Class 66 077 'Bejamin Gimbert G.C.' leads 4D34, the 09:13 Radlett Private Sidings to Mountsorrel Sidings as it hammers through Leicester on February 25th. *Derek Elston*

DB Cargo

On a bright and sunny March 3rd, Class 66 010 storms up the incline to Malden Manor on its return trip to Hoo Junction from Tolworth Day Aggregates, forming the regular 6Y08 service. *Ian Callander*

Seen passing Mills Hill on February 19th is Class 66 091 'Accurascale' with 4Z45 Milford Sidings to Arpley Yard with just one flat. *Russell Clarke*

Weaving out of the headshunt at Tolworth Day Aggregates on January 22nd, Class 66 185 begins its return trip to Hoo Junction Down Yard with the 6Y08 discharged aggregates in tow. *Ian Callander*

DB Cargo

Class 66 121, retaining former EWS livery, is seen at Upholland with the 6E26 Knowsley Freight Terminal to Wilton loaded refuse train on March 4th. *Brian Dobbs*

DB Cargo

Class 66 084 runs through Stafford with a very light load, working 4L32 the 09:20 Trafford Park to Felixstowe North on February 24th.
Barry Longson

Class 66 121 on the Knowsley - Wilton bins passes Moore on February 17th. *Mark Enderby*

Class 66 096 powers through Andover station at 11:50 on February 21st with the 4V54, the 10:52 Southampton Maritime to Didcot Yard Modal working, running about 5 minutes early.
David Lindsell

DB Cargo

Class 66 653 passes Bayston Hill with 6V75 09:30 Dee Marsh Reception Sidings - Margam T.C. on February 25th. *Keith Davies*

Class 66 084 and 66 078 top'n'tail the Trafford Park to Arpley wagon move through Winwick on February 14th. *Mark Enderby*

One of the few remaining 66's still carrying EWS livery is Class 66 096 which is seen passing Leamington Spa on February 24th working the 08:14 Trafford Park to Southampton Western Docks. *Lee Stanford*

DB Cargo

DB trialled Class 93 006 on the 14:18 Seaforth to Mossend intermodal service on February 10th. In drizzly conditions the service is seen approaching Wigan North Western with 66 108 DIT, the performance of the 93 on the northern hills was reported as being very impressive. *Lee Stanford*

Class 66 206 and 66 091 working the London Gateway to Trafford Park intermodal passes through Warrington Bank Quay on February 17th. *Mark Enderby*

Class 66 122 leads the 6X11 07:49 Toton North Yard to Dollands Moor Sidings car train through Kettering on February 20th. *Derek Elston*

DB Cargo

Class 66 139 heads the 6O71 14:59 Daventry International Railfreight Reception Rfd to Dollands Moor Sidings empty water train through Northampton on February 9th.
Derek Elston

DB Cargo UK and Plasmor cement 40-year relationship with loco-naming

DB Cargo UK has named one of its Class 66 locomotives (66 186) in honour of Antony Slater, the founder of the Plasmor Group, one of the UK's largest independent manufacturers of concrete products. Plasmor started using rail to transport products in 1986, when new sidings were built to connect the factory to the adjacent East Coast Main Line at Great Heck, where the naming ceremony took place.

DB Cargo UK has been an important part of Plasmor's supply chain for the past 40 years and was recently awarded a new five-year contract which will see the company continue to provide safe and reliable rail freight services until the end of 2031.

Under the terms of the new contract, DB Cargo UK will operate up to six trains per week between the Great Heck site and Plasmor's distribution terminals at Biggleswade in Bedfordshire and Bow in East London.

DB Cargo UK's Chief Commercial Officer Roger Neary, who performed the unveiling, said: "It has been an honour to work with the Slater family and their colleagues at Plasmor over the past four decades, providing a safe and reliable solution to their everyday transport needs.

"With the recent signing of a new five-year contract, we thought that naming one of our locomotives after one of the company's founders was a very fitting way to demonstrate the depth of our relationship.

"We wish everyone at Plasmor the very best for the future!" added Roger.

The Chairman of Plasmor, Julian Slater, commented:"Our longstanding strategic partnership with DB Cargo UK evidences a 40-year commitment to sustainable distribution into London and the South East.

"A single daily train to our depots at Biggleswade in Bedfordshire and Bow in East London negates the need for 50 HGV movements. My father Antony was always innovating and DB's naming of the Class 66 locomotive in recognition of his foresight is a proud moment for my family and for Plasmor," he added.

DB Cargo

Class 66 657 passes Kempseye on February 14th with 6V75 09:30 Dee Marsh Reception Sidings - Margam T.C. *Keith Davies*

Class 66 066 'Geoff Spencer' passes Northampton with 6M45, the 06:53 Dollands Moor Sidings to Daventry International Railfreight Reception Rfd loaded water train on February 24th. *Derek Elston*

DC Rail Freight

Class 56 103 working 0Z56 Chaddesden to Ravenhead passes through Crewe on February 28th. *Richard Hargreaves*

Class 56 045 and 56 103 bellow their way into Tolworth Station on February 5th, with the 6O15 Willesden - Chessington loaded aggregates making them earn their crust up the gradient from Malden Manor, on one of their last few runs to Chessington before being retired. *Ian Callander*

February 27th sees Class 60 099 ‘Ben Mor Assynt’ approaching Tolworth at the head of the 6Z20 service from Cliffe Brett Marine to Chessington South Sidings. Having left Cliffe 43 minutes down, the driver had been unable to make up any time, arriving at Chessington 56 minutes down. *Ian Callander*

DC Rail Freight

Class 60 095 on 6A60 Machen to Appleford heads through Swindon on February 17th.
Colin Pidgeon

After issues at Willesden, Class 60 099 'Ben More Assynt' with 56 045 and 56 103 in tow, passes Rugby 17mins down with 0Z60, the 11:40 Willesden DC Rail Sidings to Rectory Junction (Colwick Colas) on February 10th.
Derek Elston

GBRF's Class 60 095 'Whernside', on hire to DCR, runs light engine through Northampton as 0Z95, the 13:13 Chaddesden Sidings to Willesden DC Rail Sidings on February 9th.
Derek Elston

DC Rail Freight

Class 56 045 and 56 103 head west at Enborne with the Willesden to Merehead empties on February 9th (It has been reported that that was the last run for the 56s on this service with 60s taken over) We wait to see! *Dennis Rowland*

Having worked light engine from Chaddesden to Ravenhead earlier in the day, Class 56 103 hauls eight returning empties south through Winwick on a sunny February 28th. *Jeff Nicholls*

Class 60 099 and 60 029 on the Willesden to Tytherington are seen at Enborne on February 9th. Class 60 099 was on test and 60 029 DIT for insurance. *Dennis Rowland*

DC Rail Freight

GBRf Class 60 095, on hire with DC Rail, pauses at Crewe in heavy rain with the Middleton Towers - Chaddesden - Ravenhead Sidings sand train on February 7th. *Chris Morrison*

Direct Rail Services

Class 68 001 working the 4S44 Daventry - Coatbridge approaches Stafford on February 7th. *Richard Hargreaves*

Class 88 005 glides through Stafford on February 24th, in charge of 4M27 the 05:33 Coatbridge to Daventry intermodal. *Barry Longson*

On February 24th, Class 68 005 runs through Stafford working 0Z46 the 10:59 Crewe Gresty Bridge to Daventry light engine movement. *Barry Longson*

Direct Rail Services

Class 88 003 with the 4M27 Coatbridge - Daventry heads through Stafford on February 7th. *Richard Hargreaves*

Class 88 003 'Genesis' working 4L48, the 13:37 Daventry DRS (Tesco) to Tilbury2 Container Terminal Fl heads through Northampton on February 9th. *Derek Elston*

Class 88 006 with a Coatbridge to Daventry intermodal passes through Warrington Bank Quay on March 5th. *Mark Enderby*

Direct Rail Services

On February 24th, Class 66 430 rounds the S bend at Rugeley TV, working 4S44 the 12:13 Daventry to Coatbridge intermodal. *Barry Longson*

Class 88 005 'Minerva' eases 4M07, the 10:02 Tilbury2 Container Terminal Fl to Daventry DRS (Tesco) liner through Northampton on February 9th. *Derek Elston*

Class 88 003 and 88 009 lead a Daventry to Mossend working through Warrington Bank Quay on February 17th. *Mark Enderby*

Direct Rail Services

Class 66 424 and 66 423 pass Winwick on February 14th top'n'tailing a Daventry to Trafford Park Tesco working. *Mark Enderby*

Class 88 006 'Juno' eases 4L48, the 13:37 Daventry DRS (Tesco) to Tilbury2 Container Terminal Fl through Northampton on February 24th. *Derek Elston*

The 6E44 Carlisle to Seaton flasks only run one day a week at most and is seen approaching Hexham from a room in the Travelodge. Class 68 001 'Evolution' and 68 008 'Avenger' were more than enough power for the single flask on February 26th. *Colin Kennington*

Direct Rail Services

Class 66 429 ‘Charlie Birse’ working 4M07, the 10:02 Tilbury2 Container Terminal Fl to Daventry DRS (Tesco) service heads through Wolverton on February 27th. *Derek Elston*

Class 66 431 passes Knottingley on February 10th with an engineers train from Shap Summit Quarry - Doncaster Up Decoy. *Michael Lynam*

Class 88 003 passes Stafford on February 5th with an Intermodal from Coatbridge - Daventry. *Michael Lynam*

East Midlands Railway

The East Midlands 'Meridian' units still operate on the Midland main line but their days are numbered pending full introduction of the new Class 810 'Aurora' units; Class 222 006 waits to depart from Leicester on March 3rd and head towards journeys end at Nottingham. *Lee Stanford*

Class 158 565 departs Leicester with 2P57, the 10:31 Leicester to Nottingham service on February 25th. *Derek Elston*

On February 5th, Class 158 852 was the rear unit of a Norwich - Liverpool service seen calling at Stockport. *Mark Enderby*

East Midlands Railway

Class 810 006 runs into Leicester with 1C41, the 11:00 Sheffield to London St. Pancras International on February 25th. *Derek Elston*

Class 810 012 arrives at Leicester with 1C38, the 10:35 Sheffield to London St. Pancras International service on February 25th.
Derek Elston

Class 222 104 stands at Leicester on February 25th whilst working the 1F30, the 11:.02 London St. Pancras International to Sheffield service.
Derek Elston

East Midlands Railway

On February 25th, Class 810 013 departs Leicester with 1F32, the 11:32 London St. Pancras International to Sheffield service. *Derek Elston*

Class 222 103 arrives into Leicester with 1C32, the 09:35 Sheffield to London St. Pancras International on February 25th. *Derek Elston*

Class 222 012 working 1D28, the 10:35 London St. Pancras International to Nottingham and 222 021 working 1B40, the 11:12 Nottingham to London St. Pancras International cross at Leicester on February 25th. *Derek Elston*

Freightliner/ Heavy Haul

Class 66 508 and 66 013 top'n'tail a Basford Hall to Trafford Park working through Moore on February 16th. *Mark Enderby*

Station staff look on as Class 70 006 passes through Sheffield on March 3rd with empty cement tanks from Dewsbury to Earles sidings. *Lee Stanford*

Class 66 515 sweeps through Whitchurch station with a diverted 4O29, the 06:19 Garston to Southampton Maritime liner. *David Lindsell*

Freightliner/ Heavy Haul

Running 10 minutes early, Class 70 002 caught the photographer by surprise as it passes Rugeley Trent Valley in charge of 6B71 the 07:16 Tunstead to Northampton Castle on February 24th. *Barry Longson*

Class 66 603 working 6A18 Tytherington to Oxford Banbury Road heads through Swindon on February 17th. *Colin Pidgeon*

Class 59 204 leads 66 616 with the Whatley to Hanwell Loop stone seen heading east at Enborne. *Dennis Rowland*

Freightliner/ Heavy Haul

Class 90 021 and 90 008 working the 4S49 Daventry - Grangemouth wait time at Stafford on February 7th. *Richard Hargreaves*

Class 66 593 running as 0Z66 East Usk - Crewe Basford Hall passes through Nantwich on February 28th. *Richard Hargreaves*

Class 66 525 has charge of a well loaded 4M63 the 09:13 Felixstowe North to Garston, rounding the S bend at Rugeley TV on February 24th. *Barry Longson*

Freightliner/ Heavy Haul

The driver of Class 66 013 at the head of the diverted 07:05 Basford Hall - Trafford Park liner needs his sunglasses as he drives into the rising sun at Culcheth foot crossing on February 17th. Class 66 951 was at the rear of the train. *Jeff Nicholls*

Class 66 415 with a Tunstead to Hunslet working is seen passing through Stockport on February 5th. *Mark Enderby*

Class 66 572 on 4L33 Wentloog to London Gateway passes through Swindon on February 17th. *Colin Pidgeon*

Freightliner/ Heavy Haul

Running an hour late, Class 66 102 heads the diverted 10:12 Trafford Park - Felixstowe North liner south through Winwick on February 17th. Class 66 528 was at the rear. *Jeff Nicholls*

Class 66 593 and 66 585 top'n'tail a Trafford Park to London Gateway liner through Warrington Bank Quay on February 17th. *Mark Enderby*

Class 66 538 and 66 542 with a Trafford Park - Felixtowe liner pass Moore on February 16th. *Mark Enderby*

Freightliner/ Heavy Haul

Class 66 549 is seen at Bayston Hill with 6Z73 05:55 Carlisle Yard Colas Rail - Cardiff Docks Ryans FW on February 25th. *Keith Davies*

Class 66 508 and 66 598 top'n'tail a London Gateway to Trafford Park liner through Warrington Bank Quay on February 17th. *Mark Enderby*

Class 66 508 'City of Doncaster' crawls to a halt at Winwick on February 17th with the 02:23 London Gateway - Trafford Park liner, diverted this way because of the Manchester Piccadilly closures. Out of sight, 66 598 was on the rear. *Jeff Nicholls*

Freightliner/ Heavy Haul

Class 66 615 passed Stafford on January 29th, working from Tunstead to Northampton Castle Yard. *Bryan Roberts*

Class 66 953 working 4M56, the 12:56 London Gateway to Garston F.L.T. heads through Northampton on February 9th. *Derek Elston*

Class 66 102 (on loan to Freightliner) passes Moore on February 17th with a Trafford Park to Felixstowe liner. Class 66 528 was on the rear. *Mark Enderby*

Freightliner/ Heavy Haul

Class 90010 '275 Railway Squadron (Volunteers)' and 90 045 with 4M94, the 07:50 Felixstowe North F.L.T. to Daventry International Railfreight Reception Fl passes Northampton on February 10th. *Derek Elston*

Class 90 015 and 90 006 'Roger Ford' working 4M94, the 07:50 Felixstowe North F.L.T. to Daventry International Railfreight Reception Fl pass 66 597 'Virdor' working 4O38 at Northampton on February 24th. *Derek Elston*

Class 90 013 and 90 003 working 4L67, the 10:20 Trafford Park F.L.T. to Felixstowe North F.L.T. are seen at Northampton on February 9th. *Derek Elston*

Freightliner/ Heavy Haul

Class 90 045 and 90 004, working in multi, power the 4L67 10:20 Trafford Park F.L.T. to Felixstowe North F.L.T. through Northampton on February 24th. *Derek Elston*

Class 66 597 'Viridor' eases round the avoider at Leicester with 4L93, the 10:10 Lawley Street F.L.T. to Felixstowe North F.L.T. on February 25th. *Derek Elston*

Class 90 039 'Chartered Institute of Logistics & Transport' and 90 043 are seen stabled in Rugby Carriage Sidings on February 10th. *Derek Elston*

Freightliner/ Heavy Haul

Class 66 597 ‘Viridor’ working 4O38, the 09:30 Lawley Street F.L.T. to Southampton M.C.T. is seen at Northampton on February 24th.
Derek Elston

Class 66 558 runs through Northampton light engine as 0K50, the 13:14 Wembley Receptions 1-7 to Basford Hall Yard (Fl) on February 9th.
Derek Elston

Class 66 543 is seen working through Northampton with 4M45, the 02:50 Felixstowe North F.L.T. to Garston F.L.T. on February 12th.
Derek Elston

Freightliner/ Heavy Haul

Class 90 018 and 90 043 pass through a wet Stafford on February 5th working the 4L67 liner from Trafford Park - Felixstowe. *Michael Lynam*

Class 66 601 passes through Stafford on February 5th with an aggregates train from Tunstead - Northampton. *Michael Lynam*

Class 66 617 powering the 6M91 11:09 Theale Lafarge Fhh to Hope (Earles Sidings) Fhh heads through Leicester on February 25th.
Derek Elston

Freightliner/ Heavy Haul

Class 66 606 passes Wellingborough with 6M91, the 11:09 Theale Lafarge Fhh to Hope (Earles Sidings) Fhh cement empties on February 27th. *Derek Elston*

Stored locomotives at Midland Road on February 10th with Class 70 019 nearest the camera. *Michael Lynam*

Class 66 418 is seen with a train of concrete sleepers in Doncaster Yard on February 10th. *Michael Lynam*

Freightliner/ Heavy Haul

In dismal rain sodden conditions on February 21st, Class 90 043 and 90 009 approach Charnock Richard with the 4M83 intermodal from Coatbridge to Crewe. *John Sloane*

Class 59 002 still lingers at Midland Road, slowly being repaired. Seen here on February 10th. *Michael Lynam*

Freightliner/ Heavy Haul

Class 90 040 and 90 014 head the 4M83 service from Coatbridge to Crewe as they pass Euxton on February 7th. *John Sloane*

Class 66 567 runs light through Eastleigh on March 5th. *John Sloane*

Class 66 564 is seen under repair at Leeds Midland Road on February 10th. *Michael Lynam*

Freightliner/ Heavy Haul

Class 66 620 passes Campbell Road, Eastleigh at the head of a Mountfield to Southampton working on March 6th. *John Sloane*

Eyecatching Class 08 785 stands at Southampton Maritime Depot on March 7th. *John Sloane*

Class 66 517 is seen stabled at Southampton Maritime Depot on March 7th. *John Sloane*

Freightliner/ Heavy Haul

There appears to be plenty of container traffic on offer at Southampton Maritime Yard as Class 66 567 waits in the sidings on March 7th. *John Sloane*

GBRf

Passing Saddleworth on February 18th, working from Crewe Basford Hall to Doncaster, Class 66 789 ‘British Rail’ hauls sisters 66 727, 66 304 and 66 769 after working the Manchester Piccadilly engineers trains. *Russell Clarke*

On a dull February 12th, Class 99 001 and 99 003 stand outside their home depot at Leicester awaiting their next duties. *Lee Stanford*

Class 66 316 and 66 544 are seen at Dunbridge with the Westbury to Eastleigh engineers on January 26th. *Dennis Rowland*

GBRf

Class 66 788 'LOCOMOTION 15' passes Castleton on February 7th with 6E09 Liverpool to Drax P.S. Biomass. *Russell Clarke*

A colourful combination in numerical order sees Class 66 712, 66 748 and 66 783 pass Stockport on March 1st with the 11:57 Doncaster Decoy to Liverpool Biomass Terminal. *Lee Stanford*

A filthy Class 66 314 was in charge of the 4S57 Hams Hall to Mossend seen at Stafford on January 29th. *Bryan Roberts*

GBRf

The rain on February 21st is insufficient to clean off the dirt on Class 66 314 which is seen working through Charnock Richard cutting on the Hams Hall to Mossend intermodal.
John Sloane

Class 69 016 ‘British Transport Police’ stands in Eastleigh East Yard on March 7th.
John Sloane

Class 69 014 ‘EMD Longport’ stands outside the new GBRf facility at Eastleigh East Yard on March 6th. *John Sloane*

GBRf

Class 66 671 grinds up to Boars Head with a Tuebrook to Horton working on February 23rd. *John Sloane*

On March 3rd, Class 66 780 'The Cemex Express' hurries through Coppull with the Hams Hall to Mossend intermodal. *John Sloane*

Class 66 763 grinds past St. Cross on March 6th whilst heading a Southampton to Trafford Park intermodal. *John Sloane*

GBRf

Class 66 778 ‘Cambois Depot 25 Years’ stands in Castleton Goods Loop with 6E51 Peak Forest to Selby on February 5th. *Russell Clarke*

A work stained Class 66 314 runs through Stafford on February 24th, working 4S57 the 10:58 Hams Hall to Mossend intermodal. *Barry Longson*

Class 66 760 ‘David Gordon Harris’ is seen at Stafford on January 29th, working from Tunstead to Small Heath Lafarge. *Bryan Roberts*

GBRf

Class 99 004 with 66 727 ‘Maritime One’ in tow pass Wolverton as 0Q30, the 13:30 to Peterborough Maintenance Shed GBRf after an event at Northampton Gateway on February 27th. *Derek Elston*

With Class 66 309 on the rear, 66 740 passes Astley Signal Box on the Chat Moss route with 4M10, the 00:44 Felixstowe - Trafford Park liner on February 14th. Not its normal route because of the Manchester Piccadilly closure, 66 309 had worked the train as far as Wigan South Junction where 66 740 was attached to lead towards Piccadilly where the train would reverse into Trafford Park. *Jeff Nicholls*

A stone sandwich at Castleton on February 5th with Class 66 753 on 4M03 to Peak Forest passing 66 778 on 6E51 to Selby as Northern’s 195 103 works 1E64 Chester to Leeds. *Russell Clarke*

GBRf

With at least 30 photographers lined up on the bridge at Winwick, Class 66 689 ‘Evening Star’ heads south with the occasional Prestwick - Grain tanks on February 28th. *Jeff Nicholls*

Class 57 303 is seen being shunted and repositioned at Leicester L.I.P. on February 25th. *Derek Elston*

Unique liveried Class 69 009 stands at Leicester on March 3rd awaiting permission to head on to Leicester depot. *Lee Stanford*

GBRf

Class 66 727 'Maritime One' and 99 004 running as 0Q30, the 13:30 Northampton Gateway GBRf to Peterborough Maintenance Shed GBRf crawl up to a red signal at Wellingborough on February 27th. *Derek Elston*

Class 66 306 'SCS Logistics' passes Northampton with 4M22, the 10:26 Felixstowe South GBRf to Trafford Park Euro Terminal on February 9th. *Derek Elston*

Class 66 788 with a Liverpool to Drax Biomass working heads through Warrington Bank Quay on February 5th. *Mark Enderby*

GBRf

A filthy Class 66 727 ‘Maritime One’ waits to enter the yard at Leicester as 0M75, the 12:31 Peterborough Maintenance Shed GBRf to Leicester L.I.P. on February 25th. *Derek Elston*

In fading light but running almost an hour early Class 57 305 leads 99 006 and 99 005 as they arrive at Leicester as 0Q33, the 14:10 Portbury Auto Terminal to Leicester L.I.P. on February 25th. *Derek Elston*

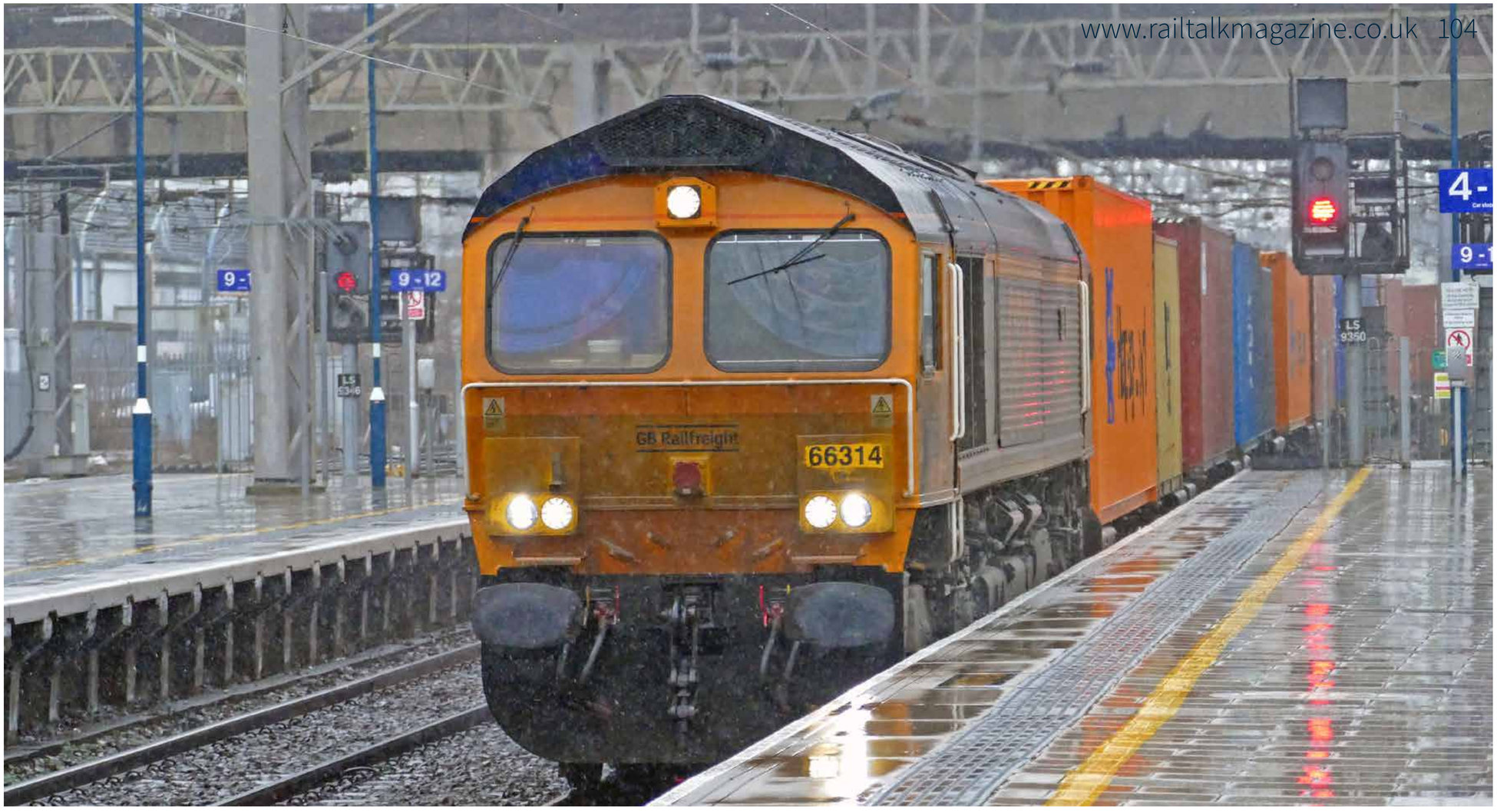
Class 66 773 ‘Pride of GB Railfreight’ passes Leicester with 4M23, the 10:29 Felixstowe North GBRf to Hams Hall GBRf on February 25th. *Derek Elston*

GBRf

Class 66 314 passes through a wet Stafford on February 5th with an intermodal working from Hams Hall - Mossend. *Michael Lynam*

Class 66 762 passes Doncaster Decoy Yard on February 10th running light engine en route to Doncaster Railport. *Michael Lynam*

Britannic Explorer liveried Class 66 748 ‘St. Michael’s Mount’ leads 4M47, the 11:35 London Gateway GBRf to Hams Hall GBRf through Northampton on February 9th. *Derek Elston*



GBRf

Class 66 689 ‘Evening Star works’ 6J84 Horton in Ribblesdale Quarry to Brindle Heath through Pleasington on February 2nd. *David Hollowood*

GB RAILFREIGHT AND HYORC SIGN MOU TO ADVANCE RAIL DECARBONISATION IN THE UK

GB Railfreight (GBRf), one of the UK’s leading rail freight operators, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with US clean technology company HyOrc Corporation (OTCQB: HYOR). The collaboration, known as Project Phoenix, will define a pilot pathway to retrofit part of GBRf’s older diesel locomotive fleet with HyOrc’s zero-emission-ready propulsion technology.

Building on HyOrc’s recently validated 1MW factory system, independently assessed by Bureau Veritas, Project Phoenix proposes scaling the technology to a 3MW UK pilot. The initiative aims to replace the diesel engine of a legacy locomotive and will seek to demonstrate a practical, low-risk pathway for transitioning freight locomotives from diesel to sustainable fuels.

A key benefit of Project Phoenix is its ability to avoid costly railway electrification infrastructure. The phased approach would initially reduce emissions through the use of onboard Natural Gas or LPG before transitioning to 100% onboard Hydrogen. This final step would be enabled by HyOrc’s proprietary Project Phoenix hydrogen-conditioning technology, designed to improve the economic viability of hydrogen utilisation.

Alex Kirk, Commercial Director at GB Railfreight, said:“Project Phoenix aligns with GBRf’s strategic commitment to lead the rail freight sector towards a more sustainable future and could play a key role in delivering our carbon reduction plan. By retrofitting part of our existing fleet with multi-fuel technology, it will offer a practical, low-risk route to decarbonisation. It enables us to extend the value of current asset alongside the introduction of our new fleet of bi-mode Class 99s.”

Lisa Carter, CFO of HyOrc, added: Project-Phoenix is a turning point for the rail industry. By retrofitting existing assets, we allow operators to decarbonise immediately, bypassing billions in new fleet costs. We are exploring obtaining structured funding through the Connected Places Catapult Accelerator.”

GBRf

Stored GBRf Class 60s comprising of 60 021, 60 096, 60 056, 60 085, 60 002, 60 076 and 60 026 are seen lined up at Doncaster Decoy on February 10th. *Michael Lynam*

A bonus ball on the Doncaster to Liverpool Biomass empties on March 1st as Class 66 712 leads 66 748 and 66 783 through Winwick. *Mark Enderby*

Class 66 778, 66 671 and 69 010 are seen stabled in Doncaster Decoy Yard on February 10th. *Michael Lynam*

GBRf

Class 66 689 hauling the 6O74 Prestwick BP Oil - Grain Oil passes through a sunny Stafford on February 28th. *Richard Hargreaves*

Class 66 750 with an Avonmouth to Clitheroe working passes through Warrington Bank Quay on March 5th. *Mark Enderby*

Class 66 309 working the 4M10 Felixstowe to Trafford Park passes Winwick on February 14th. *Mark Enderby*

Class 66 694 with the 6C52 Ashton in Makerfield to Horton in Ribblesdale Quarry heads through Pleasington on February 11th. *David Hollowood*

GBRf

Class 66 786 climbs past Standish on February 12th with the Avonmouth to Clitheroe empty cement working. *John Sloane*

Class 66 689 ‘Evening Star’ approaches Euxton with a Prestwick to Grain empty aviation fuel tank working on February 28th. *John Sloane*

Class 66 710 with a Peterborough to Wigan wagon move is seen at Moore on February 11th. *Mark Enderby*

Grand Central

Class 221 142 passes Knottingley on February 10th working a London King's Cross - Bradford service. *Michael Lynam*

Great Western Railway

Class 150 247 enters St. Austell with 150 239 on the rear with 2C23 12:18 Plymouth - Penzance service on February 25th. *Barry Beeston*

Class 802 018 is seen waiting to depart St. Austell with 2C31 15:57 Plymouth - Penzance on February 24th. *Barry Beeston*

Class 802 016 calls at St. Austell with 2C20 12:44 Plymouth - Penzance on February 25th. *Barry Beeston*

Great Western Railway

On March 3rd, Class 150 239 is seen powering away from Goss Moor Loop with 2N13 13:24 Newquay - Par. *Barry Beeston*

Class 802 010 waits to depart St. Austell on February 25th with 2P15 12:50 Penzance - Plymouth. *Barry Beeston*

Class 802 012 is seen arriving into St. Austell on February 25th with 2P14 12:15 Penzance - Plymouth, whilst 150 239 departs on the rear of 2C23 12:18 Plymouth - Penzance with 150 247 up front. *Barry Beeston*

Great Western Railway

Class 175 001 waits to depart St. Austell whilst leading 5Z13 09:41 Par - Plymouth via Penzance on a crew training run with 175 011 attached on the rear on February 25th. *Barry Beeston*

Class 175 002 passes through St. Austell on February 25th with 5Z22 10:59 Liskeard - Plymouth via Penzance whilst on a crew training run. *Barry Beeston*

L.N.E.R.

Skills For Life: LNER Shines Spotlight on Apprenticeship Achievements

LNER colleagues are sharing how apprenticeships have shaped their careers, in a celebration of their skills and contributions as part of National Apprenticeship Week.

'Skills for Life' is one of the themes for 2026, as businesses come together with current and former apprentices in a week-long celebration of the positive impact of apprenticeships on individuals and businesses alike. Among those sharing their story about the opportunities in the rail industry is engineer, Alexander Stark, who features alongside colleagues in a special short film created to mark Apprenticeship Week. After making a positive impression on his rail engineer degree apprenticeship, Alexander was promoted to Production Support Engineer, working on the LNER InterCity 225 fleet: "Ever since I started my apprenticeship, working on the 225s was one of my goals from an engineering point of view. It has been such a great opportunity to learn from a really experienced team, and it has prepared me for working with different departments in high-pressure environments."

During the 2024-2025 period, more than one hundred of LNER's workforce started an apprenticeship, including 31 train managers, 38 drivers, and 33 other roles.

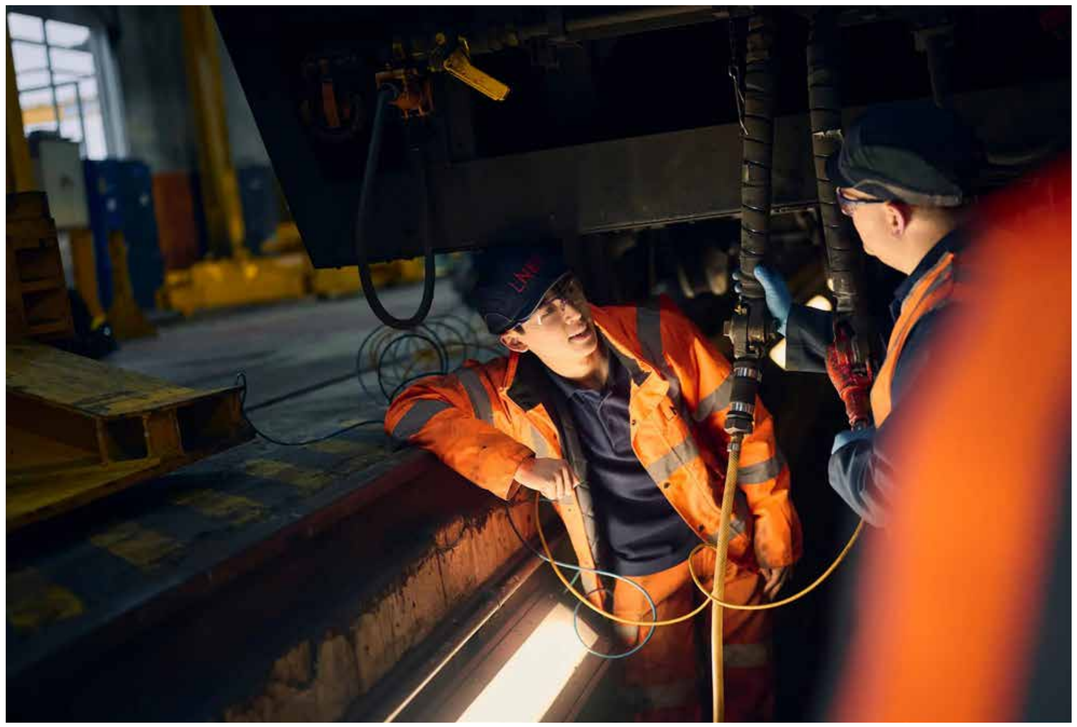
Having started out at LNER working onboard as a Customer Experience Host, Karra Davis took the next step in her career through the Train Manager apprenticeship. Now that she's fully qualified, Karra said: "There's so much responsibility that comes with being a Train Manager, but I was so excited to get started after my training. Everyone was so supportive, and it's nice that I'm now in a position where I can help support newer Train Managers!"

Train Managers like Karra complete a nine-month apprenticeship programme at LNER, building their skills through classroom training, mentoring and assessments.

Laura Copley, who is still training as an Apprentice Train Manager, says the strong support network around her has helped her. Laura added: "My line manager, trainer, and so many other Train Managers have all been there for me every step of the way, making it easy to grow and learn with them. My daily routine has changed so much, but I've proved to myself that I can do it."

Olivia Richardson joined LNER onboard as a Customer Experience Host, before starting an office-based Safety and Operations Apprenticeship. Five years on, as Track and Station Partnership Manager, Olivia said: "My apprenticeship with LNER gave me loads of skills, which really helped my career progression and changed who I am as a person. All the support and opportunities to meet different professionals in the safety and operations team built my confidence and gave me the technical skills I still use in my everyday professional role."

LNER also offers development opportunities for colleagues in leadership roles. Kemar Gilbert is undertaking a Level 7 Senior Leader Apprenticeship alongside his role as Head of Resourcing. Kemar said: "An apprenticeship is an amazing opportunity to be able to work and learn at the same time, so you can apply that knowledge in the workplace every day as you pick up new skills. If you're interested in doing any



apprenticeship in rail, I'd say go for it – we're never the finished article!"

Speaking of the opportunities available, Adam Smallwood, Apprentice Programme Manager at LNER said: "The apprenticeships on offer at LNER provide unique opportunities across all areas of the business for people to develop 'Skills for Life'. Supporting our apprentices take the next steps in their careers is a great source of pride, and we would encourage anyone to consider a career in rail."

Millions of LNER Customers Reap Benefit of More Choice, More Comfort, and More Great Value Fares

LNER has revealed that more than 3.7 million journeys were made in the first two months following the introduction of the biggest timetable changes on the East Coast Main Line in more than a decade. Launched on December14th 2025, the transformational new timetable delivers more frequent services, increased capacity on the most popular parts of the route, and more options for many customers.

With nearly 10,000 additional services per year and more than 60,000 extra seats every week across LNER, customers are feeling the benefits of greater choice and more of the cheapest Advance fares on offer, with prices starting from:

London - Edinburgh - £41.40 (each way)
London - Newcastle - £34.90 (each way)
London - Leeds - £28.60 (each way)
London - York - £28.80 (each way)
The timetable also delivers faster journey times between London and Edinburgh, cutting travel between the two capital cities to around 4 hours and 10 minutes.

A major enhancement includes the introduction of an extra hourly service between Newcastle and London, providing quicker journeys and more flexibility for customers. This improvement has helped drive a 28.8 per cent increase in journeys between the two cities compared with the same period last year.

Colette Casey, Customer Experience Director at LNER, said: "Seeing millions of people choosing to travel with LNER and take advantage of more frequent trains, more seats, faster journeys, and even better value fares is incredibly encouraging. Our new timetable is the result of extensive work across the industry, and it's exciting to see the positive impact it is already having just a little over two months on.

"We're committed to continuing to make rail the best option for journeys along the East Coast. As we head towards the Easter and summer periods, we have some really great prices on offer, and our teams look forward to welcoming even more customers onboard our services."

L.N.E.R.

Golden opportunity for fans to travel to see Harry ‘in Styles’ as LNER announces ‘Together, Together Train’

LNER has unveiled plans for a one-off Harry Styles-themed train service to mark the superstar’s first UK concert at Wembley Stadium on Friday June 12th.

The special service, named the ‘Together, Together Train’, will run in One Direction -departing Edinburgh Waverley at 08:30, carrying fans south for a journey that promises to be golden from start to finish.

Using the eye-catching LNER Pride train, aptly named ‘Together’, the service will be transformed for the day, proving that it’s not just the destination, it’s the journey. From the moment fans step onboard, they can expect surprises - and more along the way, exclusive limited-edition merchandise, and moments designed to bring everyone together - because we’re all in this together, together. The special service is the latest exciting LNER experience for music fans and follows the success of the Oasis-themed service ‘She’s Electric’ which celebrated the Britpop band’s reunion last summer.

Stuart Thomas, Communications Director at LNER, said: “Bringing our ‘Together’ Pride train to celebrate Harry Styles’ ‘Together, Together’ tour feels like the perfect match. Both are rooted in inclusivity, joy and bringing people closer, and we’re proud to help fans travel in the spirit of what Harry’s shows are all about.

“It’s a great reminder that rail, and music, have the power to connect people - not just to places, but to each other. From Edinburgh to London, and all the stops between, we want fans to feel the excitement build because when you’re heading to Wembley, ‘as it was’ just isn’t good enough.”

Harry Styles’ Wembley residency is set to be one of the biggest music events of 2026. The ‘Together Together Train’ will also stop at Berwick-upon-Tweed, Newcastle, Darlington, York, Doncaster, Newark Northgate and Peterborough before arriving at London King’s Cross, meaning fans from across the East Coast route can enjoy the Harry Styles special.

Tickets for the ‘Together, Together Train’ are on sale now, with demand expected to be high. Further details will be announced closer to the day.

Creating Community Connections: LNER Train Driver Leads Local Wellbeing Initiative

A caring LNER train driver is making a difference in his County Durham community after setting up drop-in sessions championing men’s wellbeing and mental health.

Recognising the importance of keeping connected, Adrian Bayne, who has worked for LNER for 35 years, has worked to create a welcoming space where local people and colleagues can come and have open conversations about mental health and support one another.

Those joining the weekly sessions at the Handcrafted Community Hub in Chester-le-Street can also enjoy a warm meal, as well as entertainment such as board game nights or quizzes.

Reflecting on the importance of the group, Adrian said: I”t’s been amazing to see how the sessions have taken off over the last few months. I kept it simple when I started out – it was important to me to create an environment where men can be supported and look out for each other. We’ve already got a great group together – I hope it will continue to grow in the future!”

LNER Train Driver Adrian Bayne at the Drop-In Sessions David Hudson, who attends and helps at the sessions, said: “I’ve seen first-hand the difference that these sessions are making in the community. Groups like this are so important for reminding others that they are not alone in their struggles, so it’s a great thing to be a part of.”

Adrian is Co-Chair of the LNER ManKind network, founded to champion men’s mental health and wellbeing.

David Flesher, Commercial Director and Executive Sponsor of the ManKind network at LNER said: :We’re really proud of the work Adrian is doing, and everything our colleagues do to support one another. Building communities that provide a supportive space are the key to breaking the stigma around men’s mental health. The incredible team behind the ManKind network at LNER is driving change in the workplace and beyond.”

Lumo

Class 222 002 sweeps round the curves at Golborne with a Barton Under Needwood - Polmadie working on February 3rd. *Jeff Nicholls*

Having arrived at Crewe ahead of schedule the 07:25 Barton under Needwood to Preston training run operated with 222 005 was recessed in platform 4 at Crewe and is seen departing southbound before reversing and resuming its journey to Preston. *Lee Stanford*

Class 222 005 passes Northampton with Lumo route learner 5Q31, the 10:37 Preston to London Euston on February 10th. *Derek Elston*

Lumo

Class 222 005 speeds through Standish on February 12th on a familiarity/test working from Preston to Crewe prior to the introduction of the forthcoming Lumo services from Stirling to London Euston.
John Sloane

Network Rail

On February 25th, power cars Nos. 43062 and 43013 pass Bradley whilst working from Slateford to Crewe.
John Sloane

Network Rail

Looking down on Leicester depot on March 3rd sees Network Rail liveried HST power car No. 43062 alongside new arrival Class 99 005. *Lee Stanford*

Network Rail

VIU4, Class 153 383 passes Northampton on February 24th working 2Q34, the 11:52 Rugby to Bletchley after being terminated short of its destination of London Euston due to brake issues. *Derek Elston*

Rail Adventure

Class 20 007 and 20 205 whistle their way through Northampton homeward bound as 0G87, the 10:30 Wembley Loco Sidings P,Q,R to Kings Norton OT Plant Depot on February 24th. *Derek Elston*

Rail Operations Group/Europhoenix

Class 37 423 is seen on the rear of 5Z39, the 15:15 Leicester L.I.P. to Rectory Jct. (Colwick Colas) exiting Leicester L.I.P. on February 25th. *Derek Elston*

Class 37 501 ‘Teesside Steelmaster’ delivering 350 377 after attention at Litchurch Lane as 5Q91, the 08:57 Derby Litchurch Lane to Northampton EMD on February 9th. *Derek Elston*

Class 37 501 ‘Teesside Steelmaster’ drags Class 730 220 through Northampton as 5Q77, the 06:28 Gascoigne Wood Sidings to Bletchley T.M.D. on February 24th. *Derek Elston*

Rail Operations Group/Europhoenix

A trial run with ROG Class 93 006 on 4Q38, Seaforth to Mossend piloting DB' Class 66 108 passes through St. Helens Central in drizzle rain on February 10th. *Brian Dobbs*

Class 37 501 'Teesside Steelmaster' eases into Northampton station as 0A65, the 13:16 Northampton EMD to Tyseley L.M.D. light engine move having delivered 350 377 to Northampton EMD on February 9th.
Derek Elston

Class 37 218 runs light engine as 0A37, the 11:19 Leicester L.I.P. to Wembley Loco Sidings P,Q,R, through Northampton on February 9th.
Derek Elston

Rail Operations Group/Europhoenix

Class 37 423, resplendent in EPR colours is seen at Stafford on January 29th, conveying ex GWR Class 769 549 from Leicester to Long Marston. The EPR liveried barrier coaches were from former Merseyside electric units.
Bryan Roberts

Class 37 611 eases 5Z39, the 15:15 Leicester L.I.P. to Rectory Jct. (Colwick Colas) out of Leicester L.I.P. with a single coach No. 94515 and 37 423 on the tail on February 25th.
Derek Elston

Class 37 884 pauses at Leicester on February 12th whist taking SouthEastern EMU No. 466 041 from Gillingham depot to Kingsbury for scrapping. *Lee Stanford*

Rail Operations Group/Europhoenix

EPR's Class 37 611, with GBRf's Class 57 303 and 99 002 are seen on Leicester L.I.P. on February 25th. *Derek Elston*

Class 37 510 'Orion' was seen at Stafford on January 29th, with LNWR unit Class 350 409 on its way to Long Marston.
Bryan Roberts

Light engine move 0H72, the 10:24 Derby R.T.C. (Network Rail) to Wembley Loco Sidings P,Q,R sees Class 37 884 'Cepheus' passing Northampton on February 11th. *Derek Elston*

Rail Operations Group/Europhoenix

Class 37 884 runs past Coppull on February 5th towing 769 442 which it is taking from Allerton to Kilmarnock. *John Sloane*

Class 37 501 ‘Tesside Steelmaster’ runs light past Bradley on February 18th during a move from Carlisle to Derby. *John Sloane*

TransPennine Express

Class 397 004 streaks past Coppull on February 18th with a Glasgow to Liverpool Lime St. working.
John Sloane

Transport for Wales

Class 67 015 departs Manchester Piccadilly on February 28th with 1V46 to Cardiff. *Russell Clarke*

Class 197 121 and 197 011 depart Shrewsbury with 1V38 09:30 Manchester Piccadilly - Fishguard Harbour service on February 28th. *John Balaam*

Class 67 015 passes light engine through Crewe on February 5th heading from Crewe IETD - Crewe CS. *Michael Lynam*

Transport for Wales

Class 197 042 and 197 108 are seen at Nantwich on February 28th working 1W16 Milford Haven - Manchester Piccadilly service. *Richard Hargreaves*

Class 150 278 passes Kempseye with 2V28 11:31 Shrewsbury - Swansea service on February 16th. *Keith Davies*

Class 67 013 with the 1W57 Cardiff - Manchester Piccadilly service arrives at Shrewsbury on February 26th. *Richard Hargreaves*

Transport for Wales

Class 153 572 and 153 XXX passes Bayston Hill with 2V28 11:31 Shrewsbury - Swansea on February 25th. *Keith Davies*

Class 153 528 and 153 353 are seen stabled at Shrewsbury on February 28th. *John Balaam*

Class 67 017 is seen at Crewe with 1W59 12:53 Cardiff Central - Manchester Piccadilly on February 28th. *John Balaam*

Transport for Wales

Class 67 012 arrives at Stockport on a sunny March 4th with the 14:30 Manchester Piccadilly to Cardiff. *Lee Stanford*

Class 197 120 and 197 070 are seen at Kempseye with 1V38 10:08 Crewe - Fishguard Harbour on February 14th. *Keith Davies*

Class 67 015 departs Crewe with 1V46 14:30 Manchester Piccadilly - Cardiff Central on February 28th. *John Balaam*

Transport for Wales

Class 67 017 and DVT No. 82220 are seen at Bayston Hill with 1W55 08:53 Cardiff Central - Manchester Piccadilly on February 25th. *Keith Davies*

Class 153 531 and 153 XXX are seen at Bayston Hill with 2M08 07:29 Swansea - Shrewsbury on February 25th. *Keith Davies*

DVT No. 82230 and Class 67 013 passes Bayston Hill with 1V39 10:30 Manchester Piccadilly - Cardiff Central. *Keith Davies*

Units: DMUs and EMUs

Gatwick Express liveried 387220 passes St. Denys with 10:13 Brighton - Southampton in the early meteorological spring sunshine on March 2nd. *John Goodrich*

Units: DMUs and EMUs

South Western Railway's Class 450 064 restarts 11:28 Southampton - Portsmouth & Southsea from St. Denys on a sunny March 2nd. *John Goodrich*

One of only two trains a day that operate to Hazel Grove using EMU's is the 17:58 from Manchester Piccadilly which on February 10th was recorded at its booked stop at Heaton Chapel and was operated by Class 323 239 which carries the Bee Line advertising livery. *Lee Stanford*

A carefully chosen room at Hexham Travelodge has a good view of the Newcastle - Carlisle line, enabling this photo of Northern's Class 156 423 on a Carlisle to Newcastle working to be taken on February 26th. *Colin Kennington*

Units: DMUs and EMUs

Northern'sClass156460isseencrossingWhalley Viaduct with 2N61 Rochdale to Ribblehead on February 28th. *Brian Dobbs*

South Western Railway's Class 458 418 heads out of Clapham Jct. on February 14th. *Paul Godding*

Northern's Class 331 110 heads to Manchester Piccadilly on February 5th as 331 109 works an Alderley Edge service at Stockport. *Mark Enderby*

Units: DMUs and EMUs

South Western Railway's Class 450 105 runs past St. Cross on March 6th with a Winchester to Southampton service. *John Sloane*

South Western Railway's Class 450 074 brings up the rear of a service from Portsmouth to London Waterloo as it heads out of Eastleigh on March 6th. *John Sloane*

Northern's Class 331 110 hurries past Bradley on a southbound empty stock movement on February 25th. *John Sloane*

Units: DMUs and EMUs

SWR's Class 444 029 passes Southampton Maritime Yard as it works a service from Weymouth to London Waterloo service on March 7th. *John Sloane*

Units: DMUs and EMUs

Northern's Class 195 101 makes its scheduled stop at Hyde North on February 21st with the 12:54 Guide Bridge to Sheffield service. *Lee Stanford*

Merseyrail's Class 777 034 arrives at Ormskirk with 2O32 the 13:31 service from Hunts Cross on a damp on February 7th. *Paul Senior*

Southern's Class 387 174 departs Clapham Jct. on February 14th with a service to London Victoria. *Paul Godding*

Units: DMUs and EMUs

West Midlands' Class 172 342 departs Birmingham Moor Street on February 24th bound for Whitlocks End. *Lee Stanford*

Northern's Class 195 016 and 195 125 stand at a sunny Sheffield on March 3rd with services for Leeds and Manchester Piccadilly. *Lee Stanford*

Now in regular use on this service, London Northwestern's Class 730 233 and 730 218 approach Rugeley Trent Valley working the 12:46 London Euston to Crewe stopping service on February 24th. Although a 10 car formation, only the front 4 carriages fit in the station platforms here. *Barry Longson*

Units: DMUs and EMUs

Southern's Class 377 404 is seen at Battersea Park on February 14th. *Paul Godding*

Having received attention at Wolverton Works, Northern's Class 156 484 bimbles its way homeward as 5E12, the 12:30 Wolverton Centre Sidings to Heaton T.&R.S.M.D. on February 9th. *Derek Elston*

During the closure of Manchester Piccadilly in mid February for track work, Class 195 DMU's were used on the Hadfield service which operated to/from Guide Bridge. On February 20th and making a rare appearance for the Class, 195 132 arrives at Newton for Hyde with a service for Hadfield. *Lee Stanford*

Units: DMUs and EMUs

London Overground's Class 378 233 is seen at Clapham Jct. on February 14th. *Paul Godding*

London Northwestern's Class 730 225 and 730 221 are seen at Rugby with 1U35, the 12:46 London Euston to Crewe on February 10th. *Derek Elston*

LNW Class 350 121 and 350 102 stand at Northampton with the 12:48 departure of 1Y36, the 11:36 Birmingham New Street to London Euston service on February 9th. *Derek Elston*

Units: DMUs and EMUs

Southern's Class 377 434 departs Clapham Jct. on February 14th on the rear of a service to London Victoria. *Paul Godding*

London Northwestern's Class 350 109 stands at Northampton where it will be joined by 350 371 on 1Y20, the 07:36 Birmingham New Street to London Euston service on February 12th. *Derek Elston*

LNW Class 350 402 and 350 369 run into Wolverton with 1Y38, the 12:06 Birmingham New Street to London Euston service on February 27th. *Derek Elston*

Units: DMUs and EMUs

A pair of West Midlands Railway Class 730 EMUs form a Cross City service to Four Oaks on February 28th. The photographer was surprised how busy these trains were, despite service running every 12 minutes, the 15:12 departure from Longbridge had lots of standing passengers from University into Birmingham. *Colin Kennington*

The West Midlands have an almost new fleet of trains working local services. Here Class 730 035 arrives at Rugeley Trent Valley with the 11:52 Birmingham International terminating service on February 24th. *Barry Longson*

In dismal rainy conditions, Northern's Class 195 109 stands at Glossop on February 20th with a Guide Bridge to Hadfield service. *Lee Stanford*

Units: DMUs and EMUs

South Western Railway's Class 450 089 races through Shawford on a rare afternoon of sunshine on February 14th with the 13:09 London Waterloo - Portsmouth Harbour via Eastleigh. *John Goodrich*

Gatwick Express liveried Class 387 215 is seen at Battersea Park on February 14th. *Paul Godding*

In a window of sunshine on February 7th, Northern's Class 156 402 arrives at Ormskirk with 2F48 the 14:10 service from Preston. *Paul Senior*

Scotrail

In better weather on February 13th, Class 156 476 is at Cardross heading for Oban as 1Y23 the 12:25 from Glasgow Queen Street. The rear unit (156 500) will be split at Crianlarich and will carry on to Mallaig.
Kevin McCormick

London Underground

Piccadilly line stock No. 111 heads through Turnham Green on February 14th with a service to Heathrow.
Paul Godding

London Underground

Piccadilly line stock No. 105 heads through Turnham Green on February 14th. *Paul Godding*

London Underground

Piccadilly line stock No. 160 is seen at Stamford Brook on February 14th.
Paul Godding

Tyne and Wear Metro

On February 5th, units Nos. 4050 and 4027 are seen in Howden heading to St. James.
Kevin McCormick

Unit No. 4079 is seen at Gateshead Stadium, as the weather gets worse on February 5th, paired with No. 4068 heading for South Shields.
Kevin McCormick

On February 5th, Nos. 4085 and 4081 are seen at Whitley Bay heading back towards St. James.
Kevin McCormick

Tyne and Wear Metro

New unit No. 555 011 is seen approaching Heworth station, heading for South Shields on February 5th. *Kevin McCormick*

At Howden on February 5th, new unit No. 555 009 is seen going east heading to the coast. *Kevin McCormick*

At St. James on February 5th, old unit No. 4026 arrives (with 4087) ready for it's next turn to the coast, back through the city centre and finally to South Shields. *Kevin McCormick*

Tyne and Wear Metro

On February 5th, through a rainy front window, No. 4027 (graffiti covered), with 4050, approaches the Byker area. *Kevin McCormick*

On February 5th, old unit No. 4071 paired with 4015, heads towards the city centre, South Gosforth and then to the coast. *Kevin McCormick*

National Rail

Class 37 401 is seen stabled at Crewe on February 28th. *Richard Hargreaves*

Greater Anglia invites Ipswich-based Scouts to training academy to experience high-tech train simulators

Greater Anglia has welcomed a group of Cub Scouts to its training academy in Stratford, London, giving them the opportunity to experience the company's high-tech train driving simulators.

The visit, facilitated by Greater Anglia and arranged by the East Suffolk Lines Community Rail Partnership (CRP), saw nine Cubs from the 31st/9th Ipswich Scout Group travel to the training academy for a day. The group learned about the role of a train driver and took turns in the simulators, which are normally used to train Greater Anglia drivers. The visit began with a session led by Mark Robson, Greater Anglia's Driver Trainer and Simulator Manager, who introduced the group to key facts about train driving and railway operations before guiding them onto the simulators. The full-size simulator cabs replicate real train driving conditions, with large screens displaying routes across the Greater Anglia network, including different weather conditions, hazards and obstacles. Under the supervision of Greater Anglia staff, each Scout was taught basic driving skills and guided through a range of scenarios.

Mark Robson, Driver Trainer & Simulator Manager at Greater Anglia, said: "It was really rewarding to take the group through the day and see their enthusiasm. Introducing the railway to people of all ages is important, and this was a fun way for the Scouts to learn more about what happens behind the scenes on the network."

Thalia Woodgate, East Suffolk Lines Community Rail Partnership Officer, said: "We were delighted to be able to give the Scouts access to the simulators. We hope the experience was both enjoyable and inspiring, and that it sparked their curiosity about the railway."

James, Cub Scout Leader at the 31st/9th Ipswich Scout Group, said: "The day exceeded all our expectations. The enthusiasm and care shown by the Greater Anglia team was outstanding, and the activities were delivered perfectly for the Cubs. They loved every minute and were buzzing long after the visit ended."

The Scouts is a youth organisation that helps young people develop practical skills, leadership and a sense of community through a range of activities and projects. More information can be found at https://www.scouts.org.uk/

Fares Advice with RailUK

This month more questions and answers on the complex ticketing system of Britain's Railways.

A little Avanti rant

Q: I'm only here to let off steam, as I've once again got in to a debate at Euston with revenue protection who insist you can't use a zone 1-4 travelcard with a ticket from boundary zone 4 to travel on Avanti trains. Nothing I could say would change the gentleman's mantra that the ticket isn't valid "because we don't accept Oyster on Avanti" and I'd need to buy a more expensive ticket in future. I've complained about this so many times and Avanti never change. I don't get this when traveling out of other London stations.

A: This one sounds like a classic myth that came from truth. A fair while ago (1990s certainly) Boundary Zone tickets were indeed not valid on IC TOCs - the requirement was that the TOC has two stops within Zone 1-6. That was dropped at some point, but I guess Avanti's, er, competent staff training, has meant some staff don't know it's changed (despite it changing 20-odd years ago) or some are still spreading the incorrect information around.

If I split Hereford-Norwich at Stockport, meeting MCTs, will I be covered?

Q: In a couple of months time I'm travelling to Norwich for a sportive. I've provisionally looked at my ticketing options, as I've got to book the day before the event off from work yet. Otherwise I'd have bitten the bullet and gone for it, the fares offered were actually really good.

Amongst the options, mostly via Birmingham which makes sense, I had Hereford-Stockport-Norwich come up on my ticketing search on the forum. A more expensive option, granted, but one change only and it meant not going via Birmingham. Hard to complain at that :lol: However I'd have to do that on split Advances, for the most part the connections are good (+14 or so on the return leg, +50 or so on the outward) but my faith in the railway actually running as scheduled isn't great. That's an entirely different discussion though!

My query is this: Should things go belly-up, which could happen (like today, fatality in the Abergavenny area) unexpectedly, as long as I'm meeting my Minimum Connection Times in Stockport, will I be OK to travel on the next train?

For that matter, given I'm going to be travelling with my bike, if my connections fail in Stockport am I basically just left to my own devices and hope for the best? Norwich to Stockport and vice versa would be in the hands of EMR, would I have to give them a ring if I miss the lengthy connection in Stockport, and what happens if I get denied travel on my next trains, given I'll be on Advances?

For the record, normally I don't have this sort of issue when taking a bike with me but I have had bad experiences on WMR and XC in the past. Hence being a bit 'ooh err' about using them. Indeed, I've not yet forgot about the miserable Avanti staff member at Rugby who complained I was sat with my bike on a 350 on a Birmingham to London journey on LNWR (so not related to her TOC at all) when there was tons of room for the wheelchair user as well. I really don't like the whole sharing space with pushchairs and wheelchairs when I'm with a bike, reservation or not. It is what it is, I'll do it but it's the attitudes of others that ruin it.

A: Yes if you have the minimum connection times you are fine to get the next in case of delays, provided you go via Stockport and still only use the operators on your ticket for that leg (so only TfW to Stockport, and only EMR to Norwich)

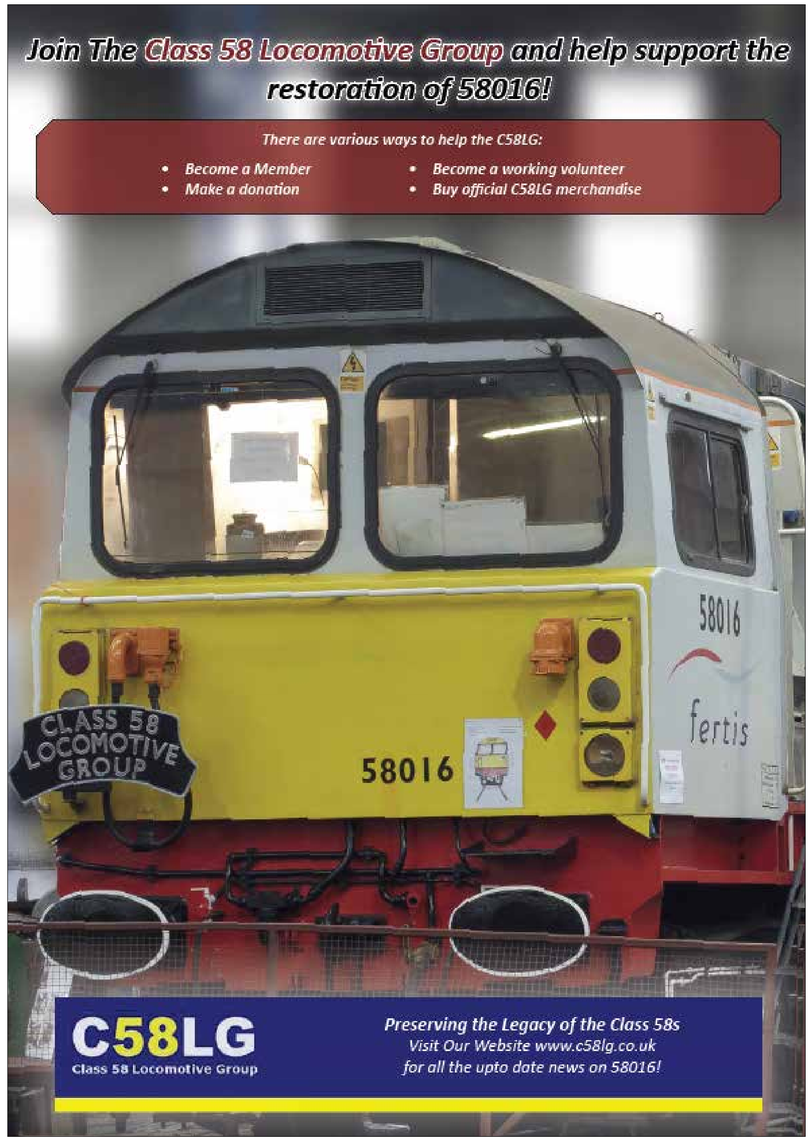
Trainsplit/the forum site should offer those advances if you specify via Stockport (I haven't checked, but I'd be surprised if it didn't).

I'm not sure specifically about the bike occupancy, but those EMR services can be busy at times.

Ticket Advice for All

Advice on rail ticketing is available on railforums.co.uk in the 'Fares, Tickets & Routeing' section. We believe this to be the best source of UK rail fares advice available anywhere, as we have a team of people who are familiar with the complex rail fares system who can help you. Never pay over the odds again, and ask us if you need help! See you there!

Colas Rail track machine No. DR73925 hurries through Wolverton running as 6J41 12:23 Rugby Depot Access Line to Ashford Tamper Sidings on February 27th. *Derek Elston*



Greater Anglia passengers to benefit as contactless ticketing extended from March 8th

From Sunday March 8th, passengers travelling on the Greater Anglia network will benefit from pay as you go contactless ticketing at 20 additional stations, making journeys quicker, simpler and more flexible.

The extension will make it easier for customers travelling on key commuter and airport routes into and out of London, including the Stansted Express route between London Liverpool Street and Stansted Airport, to touch in and out using a contactless bank card, smartphone, or smart device.

The extension of contactless ticketing will cover key commuter and airport routes to Southend Victoria, Witham and Stansted Airport, with stations such as Southend Airport, Chelmsford, Harlow Town and Bishop's Stortford all set to benefit. The recently opened Beaulieu Park station is also included.

Contactless ticketing allows passengers to pay for individual journeys, combining peak and off-peak fares where appropriate, with fares automatically calculated based on where and when they travel. Daily and weekly caps apply on journeys into and within London, helping customers pay the best value fare for their journeys.

Greater Anglia's Managing Director, Martin Beable, said: "We are pleased to be able to confirm that pay as you go contactless ticketing will be introduced at a further 20 stations from March 8th, making travel across our network simpler and more flexible for customers.

"This extension is another important step in modernising ticketing on the railway, allowing passengers to tap in and out and pay for the journeys they make, while improving the overall experience for those travelling into and out of London."

The introduction of contactless ticketing at these stations forms part of a wider programme to simplify fares and ticketing across the rail industry, delivered in partnership with the Department for Transport and Transport for London.

Passengers are encouraged to check that contactless is available at both their departure and destination stations before travelling and to ensure they touch in and out correctly at the start and end of each journey.

For more information about pay as you go contactless travel and the full list of stations, please visit the Greater Anglia contactless page.

National Rail

Class 40 No. D213 and Class 50 No. D400 pass Kempseye with 5Z40 09:44 Crewe HS - Bristol St. Phillips Marsh on February 26th.
Keith Davies

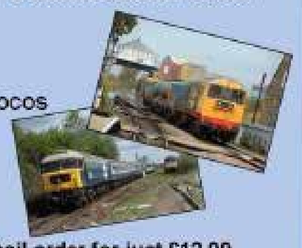
Loco Fleet List Ten

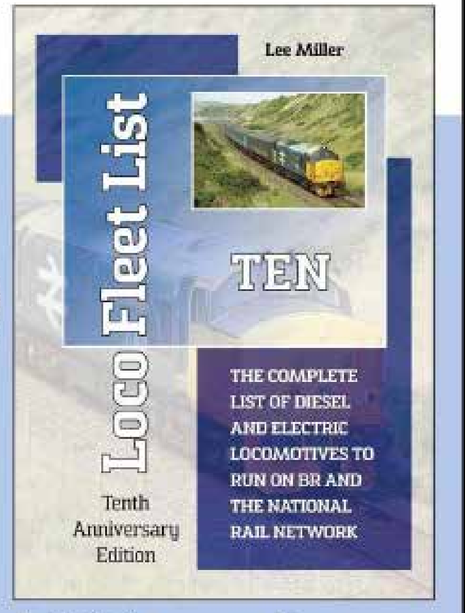
This publication gives a reference to all the Diesel & Electric Locomotives which have operated on Britain's railways from the early experimental era right up until the present day.

This information has been put together to give an easy reference to the numbering and official naming of each locomotive and includes all withdrawn, preserved and currently operating locos in TOPS classification order.

Features:

- Diesel Locomotives
- DC Electric & Electro-Diesel Locos
- AC Electric & Bi-Mode Locos
- Eurotunnel Locomotives
- Unclassified Locomotives





Loco Fleet List Ten is available via mail order for just £12.99 plus £1.99 P&P with a cheque or postal order made payable to: L Miller and sent to: 7 Wood Street, Warrington, WA1 3AY or using Paypal when visiting the Loco Fleet Shop website.

Web:www.locofleetshop.co.uk Email:lee@locofleetshop.co.uk

This special anniversary edition has undergone a complete rewrite to include scrappage dates, locations and allocations of all preserved and operational locomotives now in a perfect bound book

Greater Anglia's new Clacton wheel lathe project progresses

Construction of Greater Anglia's new wheel lathe facility in Clacton is progressing at pace through a collaboration with its delivery partner, Spencer Rail Engineering and support from the Department for Transport.

A wheel lathe enables trains to be serviced on site and will transform how Greater Anglia prepares its fleet for service. Daily wear and tear can cause small flat spots on train wheels, which are corrected using a wheel lathe. The process involves precisely measuring each wheel, calculating the required material removal and re-profiling the wheel to restore its roundness. Once complete, the wheels are measured again to confirm they meet the required standards before the train returns to service.

As of February 2026, the majority of underground works at the Clacton site, including drainage, have been completed, with above-ground construction now well underway.

The building's steel frame is in place, internal servicing pit sections are ready for fit-out, and roof cladding has been completed. Ongoing side cladding works will ensure the structure is fully watertight in the coming weeks.

The lathe itself has been produced by Hegenscheidt-MFD, a specialist railway and automotive tools manufacturer based in Erkelenz, Germany.

A new section of track has also been installed close to operational passenger lines, requiring careful planning and coordination to minimise disruption to customers and existing railway infrastructure.

Andrew Goodrum, Infrastructure & Major Projects Director, said: "The installation of the new wheel lathe at the Clacton Depot is the first time that Greater Anglia has had its own permanent wheel lathe facility.

"Not only will this £17m investment into Clacton improve the performance and reliability of services in the region, but it will also provide many new, highly skilled jobs.

"Once complete, trains will be able to be serviced much quicker than before, allowing them to return to passenger service faster."

The project remains on course for completion in summer 2026. Once operational, the £17m, 5,000 square metre facility will provide Greater Anglia with an in-house wheel turning capability, supporting improved operational performance and resilience across its fleet.

The Clacton wheel lathe will be used by the entire Greater Anglia fleet, including its Class 745, Class 720 and Class 755 trains.

Eastleigh Works

Class 08 567 and 73 202 are seen in the yard at Eastleigh Works on March 6th. *John Sloane*

GBRf's Class 59 003 and an unidentified LSL Class 57 sit in the yard at Eastleigh Works on March 6th. *John Sloane*

Beacon Rail liveried Class 18 014 is partly obscured as it rests in Eastleigh Works yard on March 6th. *John Sloane*

National Rail

Greater Anglia launches new integrated transport campaign to deliver simpler, more connected and sustainable journeys

The train operator for the East of England, Greater Anglia, has launched a new integrated transport campaign, highlighting the options for customers to make easier, more connected and more sustainable journeys across its network.

The campaign is underpinned by Greater Anglia's Integrated Transport Strategy and focuses on raising awareness of the wide range of onward travel options available when travelling, helping people to confidently complete their entire journey by public transport and reducing reliance on private cars.

Working closely with local authorities, transport operators and community partners, Greater Anglia will use the campaign to improve understanding of the "first and last mile" options for travellers' journeys – those connecting trips to and from the railway station which link them with the train. This approach supports national ambitions to reduce car dependency, improve accessibility and create a more integrated, low-carbon public transport system.

By highlighting connectivity between rail and other modes such as buses, cycling, walking, e-bikes, taxis and community transport, the campaign aims to support more sustainable travel choices, cut carbon emissions and contribute to wider regional and national decarbonisation goals.

The initiative will focus on promoting the range of integrated travel options available across the network, highlighting improvements in onward travel information, integrated ticketing products such as PlusBus, and enhanced interchange facilities, while increasing customer confidence in using public transport for their whole journeys.

Scott Dolling, Partnerships Manager at Greater Anglia, said:"Most journeys do not begin or end at a railway station, and that 'first and last mile' is often the biggest barrier to using public transport.

"This campaign is about making those connections clearer and easier, so customers can confidently use public transport for their whole journey."

As part of the wider programme, Greater Anglia will continue to invest in active travel. Cycle storage facilities are already available at every station on the network, but it is now looking at further secure compounds at some major locations, improved walking routes, and closer links with e-bike and micro-mobility providers.

Martin Beable, Managing Director at Greater Anglia, said: "We want to make public transport the natural first choice for travel across our region. That means looking beyond the train itself and focusing on the whole journey experience.

"This campaign reflects our ambition to deliver simpler, more connected and more sustainable travel for the communities we serve."

The campaign will signpost customers to onward travel options through improved station information and enhanced online journey planning content. It supports national and regional priorities around sustainable transport, accessibility and decarbonisation, and aligns with wider plans for growth, devolution and new housing developments across the Greater Anglia network.

Further information on integrated travel options, including station facilities and journey planning tools, is available at: https://www.greateranglia.co.uk/travel-information/journey-planning/integrated-transport

Image: Integrated transport graphic © Greater Anglia

Greater Anglia uses birds of prey at Chelmsford station to deter pigeons

Greater Anglia has enlisted the help of birds of prey at Chelmsford station to deter pigeons.

As part of the train operator's ongoing commitment to create better station environments for passengers, a trained hawk and falcon have recently been patrolling Chelmsford station to provide natural pest control. The hawk and falcon are accompanied by a professional falconer from NBC Environment, whose presence naturally encourages pigeons to relocate, reducing noise, fouling, and roosting in busy station areas. This approach also helps prevent damage to station infrastructure caused by the pigeons hazardous and corrosive droppings.

The Harris Hawk is particularly effective in pest control due to its pack-hunting nature and strong bond with its trainer. Meanwhile, the Gyrfalcon is a natural predator of pigeons and effectively deters them when visible on the station platforms.

Krzysztof Drozd, Facilities Contracts Manager at Greater Anglia, said:"The use of Hawks is a brilliant, non-harmful way to naturally deter pigeons and create a better environment for our passengers.

We are always looking for ways to improve station cleanliness and enhance the customer experience, and we hope that this initiative contributes to that."

Colin Boardman, Head Falconer at NBC Environment, said: "Carrying out a static display and patrols with the hawks is a highly effective way to deter pigeons by warding them away from their territory.

"Not only is it effective, but it also provides an opportunity to educate and explain the purpose of these birds to the public."

This initiative is part of Greater Anglia's wider efforts to continuously improve the passenger experience at stations across its network.

National Rail

£4m Inverclyde line upgrades completed

Network Rail has successfully completed £4m worth of upgrades across the Inverclyde line, delivering major improvements to bridges and supporting structures along the route. The upgrades have strengthened the long-term resilience and reliability of the line with engineers working tirelessly across two weekends. Across the eight-day programme, engineering teams carried out essential repairs and renewals at multiple locations which included:

Fixing and replacing parts of the walls that support the railway in Greenock, including new concrete sections; Replacing the main deck of the River Gryffe Bridge, repairing the steel to strengthen it; Repairing the steel that supports the railway on Houston Road, Georgetown; Fixing the steel under the bridge and replacing part of the platform with modern, durable materials at Station Road in Langbank.

Ross Moran, route director at Network Rail, said: "Our engineers have delivered vital upgrades that will keep the Inverclyde line reliable for years to come. Strengthening key structures is essential to maintaining a safe and resilient railway, and we're grateful to customers for their patience while we carried out this important work."

Mark Ilderton, Scot Rail service delivery director, said: "We'd like to thank our customers for their patience and understanding while the essential improvements on the Inverclyde line were carried out. The upgrades will deliver long-term benefits for customers, improving the reliability and resilience of services on the route for years to come. We recognise that engineering works can cause inconvenience, and we're grateful for the support our customers have shown throughout the project. We look forward to welcoming everyone back on board."

Facilities, accessibility and customer experience to be improved at Euston

Passengers using London Euston will benefit from a package of customer focused upgrades this spring as Network Rail continues its programme of improvements across one of the country's busiest stations. On March 2nd, work will begin to upgrade the Assisted Travel Lounge, creating a more comfortable and accessible space with increased seating capacity and improved information for customers who need additional support when travelling. While the work takes place during March, the station's passenger assistance team will continue to help customers from a temporary location in the seating area between the ramps to platforms 11 and 12. Staff will be on hand to guide passengers to the temporary area and help them onto trains as usual.

Refurbishments to Euston station's assisted travel lounge include:
Nearly doubling current seating capacity from 18 to 27, helping to meet growing demand for passenger assistance at one of the UK's busiest stations.
Replacing the ceiling, flooring, lighting and furniture to transform the facility and make it more welcoming, comfortable and accessible for everyone.
Introducing new screens and better technology to improve information provision for customers and helping staff assist passengers more easily.

Alongside a firm commitment to keep customer information on Euston's large screen, a two-week trial to test advertising content on the screen's outer sections will also begin on Monday March 2nd. The trial has been developed using feedback from customers and stakeholders, following lessons learned when the full-width screen was first introduced in 2024.

In response to that feedback, Network Rail has retained the central section of the screen for departure and customer information only. This ensures that train information remains clear, prominent, and easy to read at all times. Any future revenue generated from advertising - should it be adopted - will be reinvested into improvements benefitting passengers.

Later in March, construction will begin on a new customer service hub on the station concourse. Designed in collaboration with the Euston station team, the hub will bring rail industry staff together in one central, highly visible location, making it quicker and easier for passengers to get the help they need.

Across March and April, work will also begin to increase the amount of customer seating at Euston. First, brand new seating will be installed on the east side of the concourse, near to the ramps down to platforms 4-7. Then in April, the seating on the upstairs mezzanine will be improved and increased. This will include a refurbishment of the station's quiet-lounge seating, giving customers more space to relax away from the concourse and providing a calmer environment for those who want it.

Amanda Webster-Uz, head of operations for London Euston station, said: "Customers are at the heart of everything we do at London Euston, and our latest phase of upgrades will make the station more accessible and welcoming for everyone.

"While work continues to plan for Euston's long-term future, we're committed to delivering meaningful improvements that put today's customers first."

Adrian Worsfold, customer operations manager at Avanti West Coast, said: "The new customer information hub is the latest step in our joint industry work to improve the experience for customers travelling to and from London Euston. Once in place, it will give customers a central point to access the information they need for their journey and support our staff – alongside other operators and Network Rail – in delivering a more consistent, seamless service."

Jonny Wiseman, customer experience director at London Northwestern Railway, said: "We are working closely with colleagues at Euston station to drive improvements for passengers. The centralised customer service hub will bring colleagues from LNR, Network Rail and Avanti together to provide streamlined, timely passenger information, ensuring customers get the support they need quickly. We are looking forward to launching the new hub in the coming months."

National Rail

Charing Cross and Waterloo East stations to close for 22 days this summer for major upgrades, but routes into London remain open

South Eastern Railway is advising customers of major engineering work taking place this summer which will affect journeys into London between Sunday July 26th and Sunday August 16th 2026. During the 22 days, trains will continue to run, and routes into London will remain open. However, journeys will be different and may take longer, and customers are encouraged to think ahead about how the changes might affect their travel. Clear information on alternative routes and support will be provided before and throughout the works to help customers plan with confidence and complete their journeys.

During the works, routes into London will remain open: Southeastern services that normally run into Charing Cross will be diverted to London Victoria, London Cannon Street and London Blackfriars, with some trains terminating at London Bridge.

Ticket acceptance will be available across alternative rail routes, London Underground and London Buses to keep people moving.

We will work with transport providers to promote walking, cycling and accessible routes to help people complete their journeys. The temporary closure of Charing Cross and Waterloo East stations will allow South Eastern Railway to carry out a package of essential improvements designed to make journeys safe and reliable for years to come. Engineers will replace 1,800 metres of life-expired track between Waterloo East and Charing Cross and deliver a series of upgrades to improve reliability, safety and long-term performance.

The track, last replaced in the early 1990s, is becoming increasingly unreliable and requires extensive maintenance to keep services running safely. In recent years, faults on the approaches to London Charing Cross have caused hundreds of hours of delays. Without intervention, these issues would continue to worsen, leading to more delays for passengers.

To make the most of the closure, the 22-day programme includes drainage improvements at Waterloo East, structural repairs to Hungerford Bridge, and the railway is continuing to develop plans to bring even more work into the access. Completing these works a continuous 22-day closure means customers will experience the benefits sooner and helps avoid a long series of weekend or bank holiday closures.

Engineers, planners and timetable specialists examined a wide range of delivery options. A continuous 22-day closure in the summer, when schools are off, commuter numbers are lower, and customers generally have more flexibility, is the least disruptive and most efficient way to complete the work.

Other options considered by South Eastern Railway included: Weekend only working, requiring 60 weekend closures over 14 months, including key bank holidays, creating long-term disruption for passengers and businesses.

Four separate nine-day closures spread over 10 - 16 months, causing repeated disruption to schools, commuters and businesses, and adding significant cost and complexity.

A single 22-day closure is the more considerate and effective way to deliver this essential investment.

Scott Brightwell, Director of Operations and Safety, South Eastern Railway, said: “We know closing Charing Cross and Waterloo East for 22 days is a significant change and we’re sorry for the disruption it will cause. This is not a decision we’ve taken lightly. We’ve looked long and hard at every possible option and although none of them are without impact, a single summer closure is the least disruptive and most efficient way to carry out this vital work.

“This section of track is more than 35 years old and has caused thousands of minutes of delays for passengers in recent years. By replacing it now, and combining that with platform, drainage and bridge works, we’re tackling the root causes of disruption in one go. This means fewer closures in the future and a more reliable railway for everyone who depends on these routes.

“We’re working closely with transport partners, local businesses and communities to keep people moving with ticket acceptance on alternative rail routes, London Underground and London Buses. We are committed to ensuring customers are informed, supported and cared for throughout the 22-day closure.”

Cambrian Coast Line reopens after major track upgrade to boost reliability for the future

The 9-day planned works saw Network Rail engineers deliver a major programme of track renewal and infrastructure improvements between Pwllheli and Dovey Junction.

Between Saturday February 14th and Sunday February 22nd teams renewed 1.4 miles of track, significantly improving the condition and reliability of the railway along the scenic Cambrian Coast Line.

Teams worked around the clock throughout the closure, often in challenging winter weather conditions, to complete the work safely and on schedule.

The scale of the work included:
105 skilled staff on site each day
100 tonnes of ballast removed
2,700 tonnes of new ballast installed
3,660 sleepers installed
Two road level crossings renewed (Llwyn Cadwgan - Station Road and Bennar Fawr - Fordd Isaf)

Track renewal involves replacing key components of the railway, including rails, sleepers and ballast (the stones under the track). These are critical to ensuring trains can run safely and reliably and help reduce future disruption caused by faults or speed restrictions.

Alongside the track renewal, engineers also used the closure to deliver a range of additional improvements across the route, including track maintenance to support smoother journeys, upgrades at level crossings to enhance safety for road users and pedestrians, and detailed bridge inspections to help protect the long-term resilience of the route.

A Network Rail Wales and Borders spokesperson said, “We’re pleased to have reopened the Cambrian Coast Line following this significant programme of work between Pwllheli and Dovey Junction.

“By renewing the track and delivering maintenance, level crossing upgrades and bridge inspections at the same time, we’ve made the most of the closure to improve reliability and reduce the likelihood of future unplanned disruption.

“We’d like to thank passengers, local communities and road users for their patience, and our teams and partners who worked around the clock to complete this major upgrade safely and efficiently.”

National Rail

Network Rail Grinder, milling machines Nos. DR79102, DR79103, DR79104 and DR79105 pass Northampton as 6Q01, the 11:55 Brockenhurst Down Siding to Rugby Depot Access Line on February 9th. *Derek Elston*

Inter City liveried Class 08 822 is seen during loading onto a trailer at Wolverton Works on February 27th. *Derek Elston*

Railway through Dartford reopens for Southeastern and Thameslink passengers following major half-term upgrade

£10m of work completed on time with improvements to several stations so that trains can resume.

South Eastern Railway has successfully reopened the railway through Dartford after completing a significant upgrade programme carried out over the February half-term, with passengers thanked for their patience during this essential work

Dartford Junction, the busiest railway junction in Kent, has undergone a £10 million renewal to improve long-term reliability for customers travelling between Kent and London. The project included replacing 10 switches and crossings (points) and installing approximately 400 yards of new rail between Slade Green and Dartford.

To make full use of the planned closure, additional station improvements were delivered. At Dartford station, repainting work was completed, stepping distances between trains and platforms were reduced, and lift maintenance was undertaken to enhance reliability. Track improvements were also carried out in the nearby sidings.

Further enhancements took place across the route, including fencing replacement at Stone Crossing, a refurbishment of the accessible toilet at Greenhithe, deep cleaning at Swanscombe, and installation of new LED lighting and additional customer information screens at Northfleet.

This programme forms part of a wider £300 million investment to improve performance and reliability across the South Eastern Railway network. Follow-up work will take place on Sunday March 1st and Sunday April 5th, during which replacement bus services will operate.

David Davidson, Chief Operating Officer for South Eastern Railway, said: “We appreciate our passengers’ patience while we completed this vital investment at Dartford Junction, where 650 trains pass each day.

“This work strengthens the long-term resilience and efficiency of one of the busiest points on our network. Scheduling the upgrade during half-term helped minimise disruption for customers.”

National Rail

At Ashington, Northern's Class 158 815 has arrived on 2T35 13:56 from Newcastle, and awaits the return trip to Newcastle as 2T36 at 1437. An old platform edge from the original station (closed in 1964) is still visible on the left.
Kevin McCormick

Rail services between Huddersfield and Leeds to be impacted during May & June as part of major upgrade works

Transpennine Route Upgrade (TRU) rail engineering work will be undertaken throughout May and June, with significant disruption expected between Huddersfield and Leeds. In addition, trains will not call at Huddersfield on weekends in April.

These closures will enable the safe delivery of critical infrastructure upgrades, including track and drainage renewals, bridge works, signalling improvements, and significant station enhancements along the route between Huddersfield and Leeds. This series of upgrade works will help deliver faster, more frequent services on a greener, more reliable railway. Customers are being urged to check their journey in advance at nationalrail.co.uk before travelling. Wherever possible, customers will remain on trains, using diversionary routes or services running as close as possible to the closure areas. However, journey times will change, and some customers may need to use rail replacement buses for part of their trip.

Brighouse station will be used as a rail and bus interchange location for those travelling to or from Huddersfield during affected periods.

Paul Sumner, TRU Senior Sponsor, said: "We understand the ongoing work will cause some disruption, and we'd like to thank everybody for their patience throughout this period. The Transpennine Route Upgrade will bring major benefits, including more trains, more seats and faster, more reliable journeys across the North. These improvements, from electrifying the route to upgrading stations and modernising signalling, will help create a greener, more dependable railway that better serves local communities for years to come."

Andrew Allwright, TRU Programme Delivery Lead for Northern, said: "TRU has made a lot of progress on the route between Huddersfield and Leeds over the last few years, and will continue to do so over the next few months, delivering once in a generation upgrades for our customers that will improve accessibility at our stations, as well as improving the reliability of the railway and enabling future upgrade works to take place along that corridor. While these works are being carried out over the coming months, our services will be operating to an amended timetable and in some instances, rail replacement buses will be in operation. Due to the scale of the upcoming work, we would advise that our customers check before they travel at www.nationrail.co.uk."

National Rail

Swietelsky Rail Services' Class 37 419 is seen in the yard waiting wheel turning at Leeds Midland Road on February 10th. *Michael Lynam*

Class 66 303 'SCS Logistics' ambles through Northampton on February 13th working 4M22 the 10:26 Felixstowe South GBRf to Trafford Park Euro Terminal on February 13th. *Derek Elston*

Rare glimpse inside station's clocktower as restoration ticks along

Network Rail's ongoing transformation of Scarborough station has allowed this rare view inside the grade II-listed building's clocktower.

The £14 million upgrade includes a new roof, drainage systems, restored stonework and refurbished waiting room and ticket office.

A Railway Heritage Trust grant of £203,000 has allowed for the restoration of the clocktower as an additional benefit while the scaffolding is in place.

The clock hands are being regilded using 23¾-carat, double-thick English gold leaf – a traditional heritage technique. This is the same type of craftsmanship used on historical cathedral clocks.

The gear mechanisms, which partly protrude into the open sea air, have suffered weather damage and are being carefully dismantled, cleaned, repainted, regreased, and reassembled.

Ann Shannon, scheme project manager for Network Rail, said: "Our work to upgrade Scarborough station was already extensive and will transform the experience for passengers. The Railway Heritage Trust grant has meant we've been able to achieve even more with this exciting project. The restoration of the clocktower, with upgraded lighting, will be the crowning glory of this landmark building. We can't wait for the public to see the significant improvements when the project is completed."

Tim Hedley-Jones, director of the Railway Heritage Trust, said: "We have given many grants to help restore railway clocks over our 40-year history. Clocks and clocktowers provide important focal points for stations and the example at Scarborough is one of the best in the country. We are pleased that Network Rail is taking an exemplary approach to its restoration."

Roof repairs were started in 2021. After funding constraints were overcome, the full restoration began in spring last year.

National Rail

New training centre provides a boost as Network Rail apprentices power the future of Britain's railway

Network Rail's new training facility in Doncaster is already making a difference in helping apprentices develop the skills needed to maintain, improve and future-proof Britain's railway.

In the past year, Network Rail has welcomed 290 joiners into its apprenticeship programmes. This forms part of the organisation's wider commitment to developing skilled talent, with 1,780 apprentices recruited during the last five years.

Sunday February 8th marked 100 days since Network Rail revealed the name of the centre – the Gresley Institute – following a public vote. The building has been transformed into a modern centre for operational training, education and development. The first apprentices transferred their studies on the operations apprenticeship course to the centre in October, with final assessments taking place during National Apprenticeship Week (February 9th-15th).

There are 21 classrooms across two floors, with equipment such as signalling simulators – both traditional lever-pull models and modern systems with visual display units. The centre will eventually train up to 1,000 rail industry colleagues each year.

Apprentice Peter Turner, 29, from Newcastle, said: "I knew the railway was a great industry to come into for career progression, and I've really enjoyed myself since I've started in the business. I've enjoyed going out on different placements, like with the mobile operations managers or sitting with the control centre, but I think I've definitely enjoyed the signal train the most so far. For anyone considering this apprenticeship, I'd say look it up, go for it – it might be the best decision you'll ever make."

Apprentice Lewis Adey, 30, from County Durham, said:"I was looking for something new, like a new challenge in my career and this looked like a good opportunity to get into. Being here at the Doncaster Training Centre, with the group and seeing the progression we're making, that's been the best part of it. Having a set facility like this means you see the day-to-day rail activity but you have a separation for your studying. You haven't got all the distractions that you would in some other buildings."

Through its wide range of apprenticeship schemes, Network Rail offers hands-on experience and long-term career development across engineering, business, IT, and finance. Apprentices earn while they learn, gaining the skills needed to support the safe and reliable operation of the railway and help connect communities across Britain.

Richard Turner, Network Rail's head of apprenticeships, said:"Apprentices play a vital role in keeping Britain's railway running safely and reliably, and we're proud to welcome nearly 300 new joiners this year across engineering, business, IT and finance.

"Our programmes give people hands-on experience, the chance to earn while they learn, and the skills to build long-term careers. They also help us develop the next generation of STEM* talent and create a diverse, future-ready workforce for the railway."

As one of the UK's top 100 apprenticeship employers, Network Rail continues to develop talented apprentices across the railway. Take the first step towards an exciting career in rail at networkrail.co.uk/apprenticeships.

*Science, technology, engineering and maths

Cable thief jailed after incident at Wakefield caused major disruption

A man has been jailed for 20 months after stealing railway cable in Wakefield – causing significant disruption which cost the rail industry £57,000.

On Monday May 19th, 2025, police were called to Oakenshaw Junction after reports of someone stealing cable near the railway. When officers arrived, they found Andrew Holland close to the trackside in front of a large fire, believed to be burning railway cable.

Holland was arrested at the scene. A search found he was carrying a box cutter, which he admitted using to strip cable, and a blow torch was found nearby. During interview he admitted stealing the cable.

Holland, 38, of Denmark Street, Wakefield, admitted theft and was sentenced at Leeds Crown Court on January 30th to 20 months in prison. He was also ordered to pay a victim surcharge of £187.

The incident led to extensive disruption, with the total loss value reaching £57,000. This figure includes compensation for train delays, the value of stolen cable, labour costs, and the costs of replacing damaged materials.

Olga Barannikova, Network Rail area customer service & performance manager, said: "Cable theft is incredibly dangerous and causes huge disruption for passengers and freight. We welcome this outcome at court and will continue to work closely with British Transport Police to crack down on this criminal activity and keep the railway safe and running reliably."

PC Matthew Biggs, investigating officer, said: "Cable theft is not a victimless crime. The incident at Wakefield led to major disruption and significant financial cost, but beyond that these crimes endanger the lives of offenders, railway staff and passengers. The electricity in railway infrastructure is powerful enough to kill or cause life-changing injuries, and nothing is worth that risk. This sentencing reflects how serious the consequences are.

"We continue to work closely with Network Rail to reduce cable theft through targeted patrols, surveillance and enforcement activity across the network. We're supported by extensive CCTV coverage, and we're on duty around the clock to protect the railway and those who rely on it. I would urge the public to report anything suspicious by texting us on 61016."

British Transport Police continue to work with Network Rail to reduce cable theft across the network through patrols, surveillance and targeted enforcement activity.

National Rail

Class 47 805 ‘Roger Hosking MA 1925 - 2013’ passes through Bamber Bridge with 1Z59 07:56 Worcester Shrub Hill - Appleby on February 21st. *John Balaam*

Polos, starting from £14.00 each, minimal order of 3.

10+ Price: £11.75 EACH

Heavy weight Hoodies starting from £27.50 each, minimal order of 2.

10+ Price: £26.50 EACH

Budget Hoodies £18.10 EACH For 5 plus. (Not shown)

Softshell, from £27.00 each, minimal order of 2.

10+ Price: £25.50 EACH

Morf’s (neckwear), starting from £9.00 each, minimal order of 3.

15+ Price: £8.35 EACH

Gymsacs, starting from £5.00 each, minimal order of 3.

10+ Price: £12.75 EACH

We have a broad range of bags, from shoppers, courier bags to messenger bags.

Promotional print T-shirt, £10.50 each minimal order of 2.

10+ Price: £7.25 EACH

Hi-Vis, starting from £7.50 each, minimal order of 2

10+ Price: £6.25 EACH

Umbrellas, starting from £14.00 each, minimal order of 3.

10+ Price: £12.75 EACH

Branded merchandise, Draw bags, mouse mats, coasters.

Branded T-shirts starting from £8.70 each, minimal order of 5.

10+ Price: £7.60 EACH

If you are after an item not shown, please ask, we have a vast range.

Prices shown is example pricing, Pricing will vary on artwork / design and quantities.

Standard turn-around time 5-7 days. Prices assume collection from our Huddersfield Service Centre. Postage if required charged at cost.

Clubs and Societies Apparel

Showing your pride of your organisation, builds awareness and strength in your brand. Get the message out there consistently with consistent branded apparel. Some of our example pricing, always best to get a bespoke quote.

huddersfield@had-it.co.uk • 01484 500441 • had-print.co.uk

HAD-PRINT

Did you Know - *Ken Mumford*

Some more of the nations oddities this month:

The crew of the 2.40 pm from Pontypool Road to Llanhilleth [*and other trains routed this way*] gave this 1 in 42 incline the nickname ‘*MUCK HOLE.*’ 5789’s fireman phones Llanhilleth Middle signalman that this train has arrived safely at the STOP board.

The single line between Llanhilleth Middle [*on the Newport - Aberbeeg line*] and Crumlin Junction [*on the Pontypool Road - Aberdare/Neath line*] was worked by electric train token system. All trains from Llanhilleth up this line with a single loco load of over 20 wagons wouldn't be accepted by Crumlin Junction unless a clear run was given up this incline and must be assisted in the rear.

A Different View

London Northwestern Railway's Class 350 376 is seen at Stafford on January 29th advertising 'The Making of Harry Potter' Exhibition. *Bryan Roberts*

A Different View

West Mid's Class 196 114 working the 1G11 Shrewsbury - Birmingham New St. service is seen at Wellington on February 26th.
Richard Hargreaves

Preserved Railways

Museum of Wales Donates Two Historic Fireless Locomotives to Tanat Valley Railway

The Tanat Valley Railway is pleased to announce the donation of two fireless locomotives from the Museum of Wales, further enriching its historic collection.

Fireless locomotives are powered by reciprocating engines, utilising a reservoir of compressed air or steam that is periodically replenished from an external source. They are particularly suited to environments where fire or explosion risks are prevalent, such as in mines or chemical and food manufacturing plants.

While these locomotives have operational benefits, they are limited by the need for regular refills and a relatively short operational range. However, they remain useful in industrial settings where surplus steam is available and the locomotive's tasks do not require significant travel.

The two fireless locomotives being donated were both manufactured by Andrew Barclay of Kilmarnock, with a fascinating history:

• Locomotive No. 1966: Built in May 1929, No. 1966 was initially delivered to the J. J. Colman mustard factory in Norwich. In 1950, it was transferred to Monsanto's Newport works before being donated to the Museum of Wales in 1990.

• Locomotive No. 2238: Delivered in February 1948 to Distillers Co. at Barry Dock, No. 2238 served through several ownership changes, ultimately remaining in service with BP Chemicals until 1986.

Both locomotives have been stored in open conditions and will require significant restoration work.

A thorough inspection will be conducted before any restoration efforts begin, to ensure they are preserved for future generations of railway enthusiasts.

The Tanat Valley Railway will open its 2026 season with a free-to-enter Easter Egg Hunt Trail, taking place on Saturday April 4th and Sunday April 5th April.

Visitors will have the chance to win small prizes for successful completion of the trail, as well as enjoy monorail and Monoloco rides and explore the site's fascinating heritage.

Visit us: Nant Mawr Visitor Centre, off Blodwell Bank, Nantmawr, Oswestry, SY10 9HW

Preserved Railways

SIR NIGEL GRESLEY'S OLDEST LOCOMOTIVE REUNITED WITH ITS SUPERHEATER HEADER, CHIMNEY AND SIDETANKS

The N2 Overhaul Completion Club raises almost £45,000

The Gresley Society is delighted to announce that the oldest surviving locomotive to the design of Sir Nigel Gresley was reunited with its superheater header, chimney and sidetanks at the workshops of the North Norfolk Railway (NNR) at Weybourne in February 2026. Gresley class N2 GNR No.1744 was withdrawn from service late in 2018 for an overhaul that has proved to be considerably more extensive and costly than anticipated. This is the next step towards its anticipated return to traffic in late Spring 2026.

The overhaul began in 2019 but was impacted by the Covid-19 lockdown and the war in Ukraine which affected both timescales and costs.

Additionally, once the locomotive was stripped down, it became evident that far more work was needed than first anticipated. This has meant an extensive programme of both mechanical and boiler work leading to eventual overhaul cost of around £800,000.

The work completed on No. 1744 since Christmas includes the fitting of the superheater header to the front tubeplate of the overhauled boiler and the refitting of the Chimney to the smokebox, in addition to the installation of the refurbished sidetanks and the front of the cab.

The next key task is to install the superheater elements into the boiler and also to commence the painting of the locomotive into its distinctive GNR green livery. No. 1744 will then be weighed using the equipment at the NNR so that the springs can be balanced.

As agreed with Andy Wright, the boiler inspector, a further hydraulic test will be carried out on the boiler and then within 28 days the final in steam test with the locomotive effectively complete – the final touches being items like building the brick arch. The NNR has generously agreed to initially fund the completion of the overhaul, with the value reimbursed later through operation of the locomotive for a period without charge. However, The Gresley Society still faces a substantial funding shortfall to meet the final overhaul cost and has launched The N2 Overhaul Completion Club to raise the required £100,000 from 100 people each donating £1,000 in up to eight instalments.

Special benefits for those supporting the club include:
Certificate signed by John Cameron (President) and Philip Benham (Chairman);

Exclusive opportunity to visit No. 1744 under overhaul at the NNR;

Opportunity to buy a ticket (seat already reserved) on one of the first trains hauled by No. 1744;

Limited Edition print (100) of No. 1744 in GNR livery by Matthew Cousins (GRA);

One year's free membership of The Gresley Society Trust

The Club was launched to Gresley Society members in late November 2024 and has already raised almost £45,000 from both members and other supporters. Details of how to join The N2 Overhaul Completion Club can be found at gresley.org.

Philip Benham MBE, Chairman of The Gresley Society, commented: "The Gresley Society was created to preserve a working Gresley locomotive, and we owe it to our founders, and for the benefit and education of today's generation, to maintain that vision. The latest progress on No. 1744's overhaul at the North Norfolk Railway is one more step towards the return of Sir Nigel Gresley's oldest surviving locomotive to traffic in late spring 2026 resplendent in its distinctive Great Northern Railway livery – hopefully in time for the 150th anniversary of Sir Nigel's birth on 19 June 2026.

"However, The Gresley Society is not yet out of the woods financially and launched a major £100,000 financial appeal with The N2 Overhaul Completion Club to fund No. 1744's return to traffic which has already raised almost £45,000. I'd encourage all LNER lovers who want to see the class N2 paired once again with the Midland & Great Northern Society's unique set of Quad-Art carriages on the North Norfolk Railway to get on board with our appeal!"

Preserved Railways

VOLUNTEERS WHO STARTED SWANAGE RAILWAY RESTORATION IN 1976 GATHER FOR 50th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Pioneering volunteers who started restoration work at Swanage station when they were teenagers in 1976 have gathered to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the historic start of the Swanage Railway's rebuilding and rebirth. With those volunteers now aged in their 60s, the nostalgic exchange of memories and stories took place at Corfe Castle station on Saturday February 14th 2026, during the heritage railway's annual Community Weekend that gave the public the opportunity to go behind the scenes of the award-winning heritage line.

It was 50 years to the day - on Saturday, February 14th 1976 - that the first volunteers gained access to a disused Swanage station to start restoration and rebuilding work after the fledgling Swanage Railway Society was allowed access to the boarded up buildings by the town council. Among the pioneering veterans at the Corfe Castle station gathering were Peter Frost from Swanage and Jeremy Weller from Poole who are still dedicated Swanage Railway volunteers 50 years on – Peter being a locomotive driver and Jeremy restoring heritage coaches and wagons.

Also present at the gathering was the Swanage Railway's historic first locomotive – a small 1930s petrol shunting locomotive – that arrived at a trackless Swanage station in June, 1976, with a large sheet on the back on which were painted the words 'First loco for Swanage Railway'.

Back in 1976, Peter Frost was a teenager living in Corfe Castle – where his parents ran the Greyhound pub – while Jeremy Weller was a teenager who lived in Swanage after his parents moved to the Dorset seaside resort from London. As a child in the 1960s, Peter played at Corfe Castle station and knew the railwaymen who worked on the ten mile branch line from Wareham to Swanage which was closed in January, 1972, with Peter watching the track being lifted that summer.

Peter remembered the heady days of 1976: "Every weekend was an adventure - restoring buildings and rolling stock at Swanage station, preparing the ground to lay track or planning transport arrangements to get a team of people to retrieve track from redundant sites and regular trips to Barry Island, in south Wales, to select and prepare for transport the locomotives we hoped to purchase and restore for use on the rebuilt Swanage Railway.

"On the morning of Saturday, February 14th 1976, I hopped on my Honda 250 motor cycle and travelled the five miles to Swanage station when I joined a group of people on the platform where there was an exciting buzz as well as a feeling of expectation and determination.
"We all realised our opportunity had arrived to get involved in resurrecting the beloved Swanage Railway. There were no tracks, the platform had been demolished and the station canopy had been stripped of its lead and glass with the station building boarded up. My first job was to clean up the parcels office. Along with a number of others, we swept out all the rubbish and cleaned the walls with sand paper and washed them down before applying a liberal coat of white wash - it was an amazing transformation. "The feeling among everyone was excitement and determination - there was no doubt, no going back and a commitment to put right the wrong of the closure and demolition of the Swanage branch which I loved. Most people thought we were a bunch of train-spotting nutters and that we would never rebuild the railway. Even the railwaymen who worked on the Swanage branch thought that to rebuild the line was impossible," added Peter.

Jeremy Weller remembered: "My memory of the first day of restoration work at Swanage station was completing envelopes for a campaigning newsletter in the derelict parcels office – where the shop is now – and sweeping the platform. Our motivation was that we felt that we were on our way and expectations were high, possibly naively. None of us thought that rebuilding the Swanage Railway would take so long. Looking back, I sometimes cannot believe that we, a bunch of keen enthusiasts managed to rebuild a railway - what an experience and an achievement. It certainly gives me a sense of pride when I see a train pull out of Swanage station.

"Then there are all the friendships that have been made along the way, some of them lasting 50 years. It's also sad that so many people from the early days of rebuilding the Swanage Railway – both the campaigners and the re-builders - are no longer with us.

"It's important that people realise the amount of effort and money that has gone into rebuilding the Swanage Railway that so many people enjoy today," added Jeremy.

Anyone interested in finding out more about volunteering on the Swanage Railway should email iwanttovolunteer@swanagerailway.co.uk while details about volunteering can also be found at swanagerailwaytrust.org/volunteering.

Photo: Swanage station 1976 ©ANDREW PM WRIGHT

Preserved Railways

FIRST NEW GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY LOCOMOTIVE TO BE BUILT SINCE 1950s TO STAR IN SPRING STEAM GALA

SWANAGE RAILWAY

The first steam locomotive to be built to a Great Western Railway Company design since the early 1950s is to star in the Swanage Railway's seven-engine passenger and freight train Spring Steam Gala from Friday March 27th, to Sunday March 29th, 2026, inclusive.

A pioneering and historic new-build project by the 6880 Betton Grange Society, No. 6880 'Betton Grange' was constructed between 1998 and 2024 to be the 81st Grange class steam locomotive.

All 80 original Grange class steam locomotives - built between 1936 and 1939, at the Swindon works of the Great Western Railway in Wiltshire, to haul passenger and freight trains - had been withdrawn and scrapped by the mid-1960s.

The popular annual three-day steam spectacular will see some trains running along the entire nine miles of the Swanage Railway – from Swanage to Corfe Castle and four miles beyond Norden to the River Frome within sight of Wareham.

Owned by the 6880 Betton Grange Society, No. 6880 'Betton Grange' is based at the Gloucester Warwickshire Steam Railway with the locomotive's visit to the Swanage Railway being the only one planned to another heritage railway in 2026.

With a busy timetable of passenger and demonstration freight trains during the three days – and an evening train service between Swanage and Norden on the Friday and Saturday - the other two visiting steam locomotives for the Spring Steam Gala will be two Austerity saddle tank engines built for hauling vital freight trains during the Second World War.

Built in 1943, Austerity No. WD 75091 carries the number 68067 - from a J94 class tank engine scrapped in 1971 – and appears courtesy of the Roger Hibbert Locomotive Collection and the Great Central Railway.

Built in 1944, Austerity No. WD152 'Rennes' worked on the Longmoor Military Railway, in Hampshire, during the 1940s and 1950s, and appears at the Spring Steam Gala courtesy of the Dean Forest Railway after a major engineering overhaul.

The Spring Steam Gala will also see the Swanage Railway's five resident steam locomotives in action – 1940s Southern Railway Bulleid Pacifics No. 34072 '257 Squadron' and No. 34070 'Manston', 1920s Southern Railway U class No. 31806 and Victorian 1893 London and South Western Railway T3 No. 563.

Newly upgraded for hauling excursion trains on the national railway network, Swanage Railway resident 1940s Southern Railway West Country class Bulleid Pacific No. 34028 'Eddystone' will be hauling trains on the Sunday of the Spring Steam Gala.

Featuring a range of beers, ales and ciders, evening trains will be running on the Friday and Saturday of the steam gala until 11pm with the two wartime 1940s Austerity steam locomotives double-heading the four evening trains on the Friday and No. 6880 'Betton Grange' hauling trains on the Saturday evening.

Food and drink will be available across the Swanage Railway during the Spring Steam Gala, including hot drinks and snacks from the Brake Train on-train buffet as well as a range of takeaway favourites available from Swanage, Corfe Castle and Norden stations.

The newly refurbished shop will also be open at Swanage station where there will be railway trade stands on the platform.

Spring Steam Gala organising committee chairman Alexander Atkins said: "We are delighted to be hosting the first steam locomotive to be built to a Great Western Railway Company design since the early 1950s. Constructed between 1998 and 2024, No. 6880 'Betton Grange' is a remarkable engineering achievement and a fine steam locomotive.

"Built in the early 1940s, the two wartime saddle tank Austerity steam locomotives also have a fascinating history and played an important part in hauling vital freight trains during the Second World War before going on to have busy railway careers with the coming of peace. "We are delighted to be able to offer enthusiasts, and the public, such a wide variety of steam locomotives at work through the beautiful Isle of Purbeck countryside and past the dramatic ruins of Corfe Castle.

"I would like to thank all the dedicated volunteers who have worked so hard to plan and stage such a complicated event as our seven steam locomotive Spring Steam Gala which promises to be a wonderful and evocative taste of yesteryear," added Alexander who is a volunteer steam locomotive driver, the chairman of the Swanage Railway Trust and a director of the Swanage Railway Company which operates the heritage trains.

Photo: Austerity No. 68067 ©DECLAN HARGREAVES

Preserved Railways

National Railway Museum Victorian T9 No. 120 news update from the Swanage Railway's 563 Locomotive

In its 50th anniversary year, Swanage Railway has reached agreement with the National Railway Museum (NRM) for the overhaul of London and South Western Railway Class T9 4-4-0 No.120 – the only surviving example of the famous "Greyhound" class – marking an exciting milestone for the Railway with the aim of returning the historic locomotive to steam.

Taking place during Swanage Railway's 50th anniversary year, the project marks a particularly significant milestone in the Railway's story and reflects its continued commitment to safeguarding historic locomotives for future generations. Following an extensive engineering assessment of the locomotive, work has already commenced.

The T9 is owned by the NRM, which gifted T3 563 to the Swanage Railway in 2017. This agreement therefore builds on that established relationship. While 120 remains an asset of the National Collection, the Swanage Railway's intention is to look after her as one of its own, such that Swanage can become her long-term home. 120 will not only become a key component of the SR's motive power strategy going forward, but will also provide an operational locomotive from the NRM collection for the public to enjoy. The overhaul is expected to take around three years to complete.

Swanage Railway Chief Executive Officer Abbie King said: "Starting this project during our 50th anniversary year feels incredibly special. It is a moment to reflect on everything that has been achieved over the past five decades, while also looking ahead to the future of the Railway. Being able to share such an important part of our heritage with our local community and visitors as part of this anniversary year makes it all the more meaningful."

She was overhauled at the Mid-Hants Railway in the early 1980s and then subsequently by the Flour Mill in the Forest of Dean. 30120 entered service on the Bodmin & Wenford Railway in 2010 before moving to Swanage as a resident in 2017. 30120 was retired from traffic in 2020 and has been awaiting overhaul since. With this announcement, the only surviving "Greyhound" gets the chance to run again – and building on the success of the T3 project, the 563 Locomotive Group has an established team ready to deliver this.

The overhaul of the T9 will be split between the Swanage Railway's own works at Herston and the Flour Mill workshop in the Forest of Dean. The locomotive chassis will be tackled at Herston, whilst the Flour Mill will be focusing on the boiler and tender.

Swanage Railway Engineering Director and 563LG Chairman Nathan Au said: "Overhauling the chassis at Herston also helps us to maintain, develop and fund the essential engineering skills that we need in-house, while the Flour Mill undertakes the specialist boiler work that they are ideally placed to do. We have formed a great partnership with the Flour Mill thanks to 563, and the split of the 120's chassis from the boiler across two sites will enable us to work in parallel to reduce the time to complete the overhaul."

To deliver the overhaul that 120 deserves, the extensively repaired cylinder block will be replaced. This was successfully repaired in 2017 using a process called "cold stitching".

Although the block was still serviceable when the locomotive was withdrawn, the durability of this repair long term is unknown and is an obvious point of potential failure. To give 120 the best chances of not only steaming through this next ten-year boiler ticket but also surviving for future generations to enjoy, the Railway and the NRM have agreed that the block should be replaced as part of this overhaul.

The tender will also be thoroughly overhauled as so far as is known this has not been done since the locomotive was first preserved. This is an exciting project in its own right as it is the only example of an LSWR "Watercart" tender in preservation.

The cost of the overhaul is estimated at £750,000. Steam locomotive overhauls are however notoriously difficult to predict with any accuracy as not all components can be fully assessed until fully dismantled. That is a large amount of money to find, especially in the current climate, but we are pleased to report that we already have around half of that sum as a result of some very generous donations and a substantial bequest. This announcement is thus made on firm foundations that enables work to start immediately, but with a need for further financial support.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Designed by William Adams' successor Dugald Drummond, the LSWR Class T9 gained the nickname "Greyhounds" for their quick turn of speed. No.120 was built at Nine Elms Locomotive Works in 1899. It entered Southern Railway ownership in 1923 and was rebuilt with a superheater in 1927. Renumbered 30120 following nationalisation in 1948, it was allocated to various sheds throughout its lifespan including Guildford, Dorchester and Exmouth Junction and Eastleigh.

The locomotive would have worked semi-fast passenger duties on the Western Section of British Railways Southern Region, and it is highly likely to have worked the Swanage Branch on occasion during this time. Following initial withdrawal at Exmouth Junction in 1961, 30120 was repainted in LSWR green and hauled steam specials until final withdrawal as the last operational T9 in 1963, joining the National Collection.

For more information about the T9's return to steam and T3 563 and how you can support the project, please visit https://563locomotivegroup.co.uk/ or contact Nathan Au, Chairman on 07725-330385 or by email nathan.au@swanagerailway.co.uk

Photo: T9 30120 Corfe Castle ANDREW PM WRIGHT

Preserved Railways

WORLD FAMOUS ‘FLYING SCOTSMAN’ TO CELEBRATE SWANAGE RAILWAY 50th ANNIVERSARY

SWANAGE RAILWAY

Record-breaking ‘Flying Scotsman’ – the most famous and iconic steam locomotive in the world – is to visit the Swanage Railway in the autumn to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the heritage line rebuilt since 1976.

Owned by the National Railway Museum in York, the iconic 97-tonne A3 class locomotive – completed in 1923 by the London and North Eastern Railway (L.N.E.R.) – will be on the Isle of Purbeck heritage line for ten days from Friday, October 23rd 2026, to Sunday November 1st 2026, inclusive.

‘Flying Scotsman’ will be on static display at Swanage station on October 23rd, 26th, 27th, 30th and 31st and hauling trains between Swanage, Harman’s Cross, Corfe Castle and Norden on October 24th, 25th, 28th and 29th October as well as on November 1st.

During a test run in 1934, the Nigel Gresley-designed No. 60103 ‘Flying Scotsman’ was the first steam locomotive in the United Kingdom to haul a train at 100 miles an hour.

Coupled behind ‘Flying Scotsman’ will be the newly restored and overhauled late 1940s ‘Devon Belle’ Pullman observation carriage that dedicated Swanage Railway volunteers rescued from San Francisco in 2007 where it was being used as a company boardroom.

It was between 1969 and 1972 that ‘Flying Scotsman’ ran with the ‘Devon Belle’ carriage in the United States of America during a tour of the country to promote British exports. Sadly, the company running the tour went bankrupt with ‘Flying Scotsman’ returning home with the Pullman observation carriage remaining in the USA.

Swanage Railway Chief Executive Officer Abbie King said: “We are incredibly excited and delighted to welcome ‘Flying Scotsman’ to our beautiful part of the world during the Swanage Railway’s 50th anniversary year.

“It feels especially meaningful to be able to share such a world famous and iconic steam locomotive with both our local community and visitors alike as we celebrate five decades of rebuilding, preserving and operating a heritage railway in the Isle of Purbeck.

“It will be marvellous to admire ‘Flying Scotsman’ hauling the ‘Devon Belle’ Pullman observation carriage through the Isle of Purbeck because they operated as a pair across the USA between 1969 and 1972.

“The public will have the rare chance to experience the excitement and thrill of travelling in style in the ‘Devon Belle’ as it is hauled by the world’s most famous steam locomotive through the beautiful Purbeck countryside and past the historic ruins of Corfe Castle.

“We are deeply grateful to the National Railway Museum for its continued support of the Swanage Railway and for helping us to bring this very special 50th anniversary to life with the visit of ‘Flying Scotsman’,” added Abbie.

Costing £7,944 to build, ‘Flying Scotsman’ was named after the prestigious London to Edinburgh express train service that the locomotive helped to operate – the journey time being eight hours.

In 1924, ‘Flying Scotsman’ appeared at the British Empire Exhibition in London and in 1963 British Railways withdrew the locomotive from service.

Purchased by the National Railway Museum in 2004, ‘Flying Scotsman’ was restored thanks to a £4.2 million, ten-year project funded by the National Heritage Memorial Fund and the Heritage Lottery Fund as well as from public donations.

No. 60103 ‘Flying Scotsman’ previously visited the Swanage Railway in 2019 and 2022.

When owned by the late Tony Marchington, ‘Flying Scotsman’ spent the summer of 1994 hauling trains on the three miles of line from Swanage to Harman’s Cross. Harman’s Cross was then the limit of Swanage Railway train services before the opening of the relaid line to Corfe Castle and Norden in 1995.

Photo: Flying Scotsman Corfe Castle in 2022 ©ANDREW PM WRIGHT

Preserved Railways

GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY TO HOST D9015 TULYAR FOR HISTORIC RETURN TO PASSENGER SERVICE IN 2026

The Great Central Railway is delighted to confirm that Class 55 Deltic D9015 Tulyar will be based at the railway during 2026 — marking a major milestone for diesel preservation as the locomotive prepares to haul its first passenger train in 29 years.

Owned by the Deltic Preservation Society (DPS), D9015 is one of the most historically important surviving Deltics, and its arrival continues the long-standing partnership between the Great Central Railway and the Society.

For many enthusiasts, the chance to see Tulyar in action will be a once-in-a-generation opportunity, as the locomotive returns to the kind of work for which it was built.

The History of D9015

D9015 entered British Railways service on October 13th 1961, built at a cost of £156,000, and was delivered in BR two-tone green without yellow warning panels — already carrying the name Tulyar, after the Aga Khan's famous racehorse.

During its BR career, D9015 amassed approximately 2.25 million miles, appeared at the May 1980 Rainhill Trials, 'ROCKET 150', representing the class, and remained in frontline service until 2nd January 1982, when it worked the northbound leg of the famous Deltic Scotsman Farewell rail tour from King's Cross to Edinburgh.

Preserved since the mid-1980s, the locomotive saw extensive use on the heritage railway circuit before being withdrawn in April 1997 for major bodywork and mechanical attention.

Since then, the Deltic Preservation Society's long-term restoration programme has seen around £450,000 invested in known expenditure, alongside many tens of thousands of volunteer hours.

A significant milestone was reached on July 31st 2025, when D9015 was successfully started for the first time since 1997 — a landmark moment in its return to operation and an important step towards its historic return to passenger duties.

A Landmark Moment: First Passenger Train In 29 Years

During its stay at the Great Central Railway in 2026, D9015 will be available for a limited number of operating days, including Deltic Driving Experiences, with dates to be announced in due course. It is hoped that the locomotive will also be able to feature at the Great Central Railway's Spring Diesel Gala (April 24th-26th), subject to operational requirements and ongoing preparation.

The Great Central Railway can also confirm that the first passenger train hauled by D9015 in 35 years will be a Deltic Preservation Society members' train at the railway — a fitting and symbolic moment, giving DPS members the honour of being the first passengers behind Tulyar in passenger service for more than three decades. See DPS website for Membership details

Malcolm Holmes, General Manager of the Great Central Railway, said: "To see D9015 return to passenger service after 29 years is genuinely historic, and we're delighted that the Great Central Railway will play a part in that story. There's something uniquely special about a Deltic in full voice on a main line heritage railway, and Tulyar is a locomotive with enormous significance. We know this will be a major moment for diesel enthusiasts — and for everyone who has supported the Society's remarkable restoration effort over the years."

Limited Deltic Driving Experiences – And Gift Vouchers On Sale Now

GCR is also pleased to confirm that D9015 will be made available for a limited number of Drive a Train Experience (DATEX) opportunities during 2026. These will represent the first opportunity in a generation for enthusiasts to take the controls of this iconic Class 55 Deltic in a heritage railway setting.

A limited number of Deltic Driving Experience gift vouchers are available to purchase now at gcrailway.co.uk/shop, with demand expected to be exceptionally high. Gift voucher holders will receive first refusal on driving dates, with driving experience slots allocated to voucher holders before remaining dates are offered more widely.

Further details, including confirmed operating dates and information about the release of DATEX driving dates, will be announced in due course at www.gcrailway.co.uk

Image: ©Nigel Julian

Preserved Railways

STEAM MEETS SCREEN: GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY STEALS THE SPOTLIGHT ON NETFLIX

The Great Central Railway has once again taken centre stage, with one of its home-fleet steam locomotives, Great Western Railway icon No. 6990 'Witherslack Hall', appearing in the brand-new Netflix series Seven Dials.

While filming took place outside of GCR's home turf of Charnwood in Leicestershire, the locomotive's on-screen role is a powerful stamp of authenticity – reinforcing the Great Central Railway's reputation as the UK's most cinematic heritage railway and the only one to offer a true double-track main line steam experience.

Whether a production calls for dramatic railway action, an atmospheric period station scene, or a picturesque rural branch line, GCR delivers the versatility, facilities, and specialist expertise to bring creative visions to life. Offering a truly authentic main line experience unmatched by any other heritage railway in the UK, the Great Central Railway is firmly established as the filmmaker's premier railway location of choice.

In fact, the Great Central Railway's impressive screen credits include major films such as The Hours starring Nicole Kidman, Shadowlands with Sir Anthony Hopkins, Goodnight Mister Tom, Enigma, Victoria, and Cemetery Junction. The line has also appeared in some of the UK's most popular television dramas, including The Crown, Happy Valley, Ripper Street, and Casualty.

With double-track running, large period station buildings, a fully operational turntable, and an extensive fleet of steam and diesel locomotives, heritage carriages, and freight wagons, the railway offers an unparalleled backdrop for film, television, music videos, and photography. Its convenient location – just ten minutes from Junction 23 of the M1 – ensures easy access for production crews and equipment, making it a practical as well as visually striking choice.

As audiences discover Seven Dials on Netflix, the Great Central Railway continues to cement its status as one of the UK's most versatile and authentic filming locations – where history, heritage, and cinematic storytelling meet on the main line.

East Lancs Railway

Class 47 765 departs Irwell Vale on February 7th with a service to Rawtenstall. *Michael Lynam*

Class 50 015 approaches Townsend Fold en route to Rawtenstall with Class 42 No. D832 on the rear on February 7th. *Michael Lynam*

Class 122 Gloucester DMU No. W55001 and Class 104 BRCW two-car DMU Nos. M50455 and M50517 depart Irwell Vale on February 7th with a service to Rawtenstall. *Michael Lynam*

East Lancs Railway

Barclay 1969 ‘J. N. Derbyshire’ and No. 32 ‘Gothenburg’ stand at Bury Bolton Street after arriving with a service from Ramsbottom on February 22nd. *Lee Stanford*

Class 24 No. D5053 (5054 in disguise) approaches Townsend Fold en route to Rawtenstall on February 7th. *Michael Lynam*

The ELR held a ‘small engines’ weekend on February 21st/22nd and on the latter date visiting ‘Well Tanks’ Kerr Stuart No. 3036 and Borrows No. 48 are seen at Castlecroft before backing down to Bolton Street station to operate their train. *Lee Stanford*

East Lancs Railway

Class 50 015 emerges through the gloom of Rossendale at Duckworth Lane crossing during the East Lancashire Railway's Diesel Winter Warmer Day on February 7th. *Jeff Nicholls*

Class 47 765 arrives at Irwell Vale on February 7th with a service to Bury. *Michael Lynam*

Class 122 Gloucester DMU No. W55001 and Class 104 BRCW 2Car DMU Nos. M50455 and M50517 pass Townsend Fold on February 7th with a service to Bury. *Michael Lynam*

East Lancs Railway

A wet day in Rossendale sees ‘Warship’ No. D832 top and tailing with Class 50 015 during the East Lancs Railway’s Winter Warmer Diesel Day on February 7th. *Jeff Nicholls*

On February 7th, Class 50 015 approaches Townsend Fold en route to Rawtenstall with Class 42 No. D832 on the rear. *Michael Lynam*

During a slightly brighter spell, Class 24 No. D5054, masquerading as D5053, passes DuckworthLanecrossingontheEastLancashire Railway’s Winter Warmer Day, February 7th, Class 47 765 was trailing at the rear of the train. *Jeff Nicholls*

Hythe Pier Railway

The scene at the currently closed Hythe Pier Railway on March 7th. The Hythe Pier Railway and Ferry service, connecting Hythe to Southampton, has been suspended since August 2024 due to structural damage to the pier pontoon. As of February 2026, the service remains closed. *John Sloane*

From the Archives

Class 45 055 'ROYAL CORPS OF TRANSPORT' passes Peak Forest signal box with a train of original ICI hoppers, on June 22nd 1983.
Barry Longson

From the Archives

Class 50 039 awaits departure time at London Paddington on April 30th 1983. Note the lack of tactile paving and yellow lines on the platform. Also the open doors on both trains and the parcel trolley left in the platform centre. How did we survive? *Barry Longson*

Class 31 108 is seen working a Bury bound service at Summerseat on July 14th 2001. *Paul Godding*

Class 40 155 slogs its way to the summit of Miles Platting bank, on July 21st 1984. In those days, the CIS building, seen in the background, was the tallest in Manchester. *Barry Longson*

From the Archives

Back in the days of BR, when a major event took place at Wembley, numerous specials were used to transport fans. On May 21st 1983, Manchester United played Brighton in the FA cup final. Here Class 86 250 arrives into Stockport utilising the Pullman stock on train number 1L13, one of fifteen specials noted on this day. *Barry Longson*

There was a short period of time when Class 58s worked through Crewe on coal trains. Here Class 58 020 is seen on October 25th 1985 with a full rake of HAA hoppers in tow. *Barry Longson*

Class 31 461, 45 112, 31 459 and 31 128 are seen lined up at Tyseley. *Paul Godding*

From the Archives

Network South East's Class 456 017 calls at Wandsworth Road on June 15th 1999 with a service to London Victoria. *Paul Godding*

NSE Class 455 829 stands at London Bridge on July 19th 1997. *Paul Godding*

Network South East's Class 456 005 calls at Wandsworth Road on August 1st 1996 with a service to London Victoria. *Paul Godding*

From the Archives

Taken from a low vantage point, Deltic No. D9000 ‘Royal Scots Grey’ powers north at Red Bank, Newton-le-Willows, with a Crewe - Carlisle charter on September 24th 2022. *Paul Senior*

From the Archives

Connex liveried Class 455 820 arrives at Clapham Jct. *Paul Godding*

Over the rooftops of Warrington, Class 47 853 leads 47 841 on a Liverpool - Scarborough 'Tour de France' special on July 5th 2014. *Jeff Nicholls*

Enhanced with 'golden' buffers, Class 47 841 brings up the rear of a 'Tour de France' special as it pauses at Warrington Central. 47 853 was the lead loco of the Liverpool - Scarborough special. Photographed from the roof of a local car park on July 5th 2014. *Jeff Nicholls*

From the Archives

Stanton Nos. 52, 56 and 54 are Sentinel/RR 0-6-0 hydraulic shunters and they provided a startling sight at Stanton Ironworks at Ilkeston on April 28th 1978.
John Sloane

From the Archives

Class 47 369 rests at Cardiff Canton depot as a multiple unit heads for Barry on June 16th 1988. *John Sloane*

Grand Central Adelante Class 180 101 runs into Hartlepool on March 16th 2011 with the 09:18 from Sunderland to London King's Cross. *John Sloane*

Complete with golden buffers, Class 47 853 hammers through Glazebrook station with a Liverpool - Scarborough 'Tour de France' special early on the morning of July 6th 2014. 47 813 brought up the rear of the train. *Jeff Nicholls*

From the Archives

Class 86 421 ‘London School of Economics’ whisks past Farington on a service to Glasgow Central on June 6th 1988. *John Sloane*

Class 57 604 ‘Pendennis Castle’ gleams at London Paddington as it waits to take the empty stock of the Night Riviera to Old Oak Common on April 29th 2011. *John Sloane*

Stobart liveried Class 92 017 passes Bradley on March 4th 2011 with the northbound Tesco train from Daventry to Scotland. *John Sloane*