

Railtalk

Issue 64
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Magazine



A Happy New Year to all our readers

Welcome to Issue 64 of Railtalk Magazine. Each month we bring you a jam packed round up of the best pictures, news and reports.

Firstly I hope everyone has had a exciting Christmas and Santa brought some nice railway related items for your entertainment. Myself I've had a nice selection of DVDs to fester upon over the break, and I'm sure the neighbours have enjoyed every minute.

However after Christmas comes the New Year and we have the lovely London fireworks display that I've promised myself year after year I will visit but never do, and along with the New Year celebrations there is always the resolutions. Maybe to visit the gym or eat healthier. But mine this year is something more simpler, its to get out more. Every month we get a flood of pictures from across the country of spectacular scenery and traction (like below), but I never personally photograph many. So this year I think I will get out there and give the old camera a good workout.

Andy Patten

This issue wouldn't be possible without: Richard Hargreaves, Carl Grocott, Jonathan McGurk, Dave Harris, Jon Jebb, Derek Elston, Pete Cheshire, David Mead, Brian Battersby, Steve Andrews, David Hollowood, James Stoker, Steve Thompson, Richard Jones, Gary S. Smith, Craig Stretten, Jonathan Gill, Alex Roberts, Julian Churchill, Colin Irwin, Steve Madden, Ian Furness, Phil Martin, Alan Usher, CJ Sutcliffe, James Paice, Chris Morrison, Yorkie, Danny Sladdin, Derek Hopkins, Charlie Robbins, Mike Williams, Daniel Stanbridge, John Coleman, John Martin, Wayne Radford, Barry Beeston, Robert Barton, Ben Bucki, Darrel Hendrie, Neil Davies, Geoff Barton, John Alsop, Alan Naylor, Chris Stanley, Lewis Mitchell, Richard Holmes, John Edkins, James Bartlett, Mark Walker, Matt Price, Martin Hill, Geoff Barton, Nathan Gibson, John Edkins, Mark Summers, Steve Dave, Fred Gray-North, Stuart Hillis, Graham Court, Andrew Wilson, Matt Edkins, Joseph May, Michael J Alderdice and the guys at RailUK.

Welcome

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Submissions

Pictures, articles and news can be entered through the forum, or by email to us at:

entries@railtalk.net

Please include a detailed description and credits.

Railtalk Magazine

Railtalk Magazine is published monthly by Railtalk Group. © Railtalk

Front Cover: Southern Railways Merchant Navy Class No. 35017 "Belgian Marine" powers its way through Holmethorpe with the 1285 Shalford - London Victoria, Venice Simplon Orient Express luncheon excursion on December 12th. [Matt Price](#)
This Page: Class 92 003 "Beethoven" drags 92 042, 92 031, 90 020 and 90 019 as 0Z27 Crewe IEMD to Wembley passing Church Brampton on December 27th. [Derek Elston](#)

Charter Scene



Pathfinder Tours - The Festive Jingle Jangle
On December 17th, the Festive Jingle Jangle ran from Westbury to Cheshire and Merseyside, seen here on the outward leg heading through Stafford with Class 92 037 leading the train. [Richard Hargreaves](#)



Pathfinder Tours - The Festive Jingle Jangle
DBS Class 60 011 heads through Acton Bridge with
1266 Pathfinder Tour "The Festive Jingle Jangle"
from Westbury - Edge Hill on December 17th. [Dave Harris](#)



UK Railtours - THE CANTERBURY CHRISTMAS SPECIAL

Above: Southern Railways Merchant Navy No.35017 "Belgian Marine" leads 1Z88 London Victoria - Canterbury West through Swanley on December 10th. [Matt Price](#)

Below: Making an a rare appearance on a non-VSOE train, ex-SR Merchant Navy Class No. 35028 "Clan Line" (running as long scrapped classmate No. 35017 "Belgian Marine") steams up the gradient through Bearsted, Kent, whilst working UK Railtours' 1Z88 0845 London Victoria to Canterbury West "The Canterbury Christmas Special". [Craig Stretten](#)



Railway Touring Company - THE CAPITAL CHRISTMAS EXPRESS

Above: On November 26th, Battle of Britain Class No. 34067 "Tangmere" hauled the 07.55hrs from Swanage to London and was diverted at short notice to London Euston due to no platforms being available at Waterloo to accommodate it. Therefore, it was possibly the first train to run between Swanage and London Euston (?). Here the train runs at speed through Foxhills, between Ashurst New Forest and Totton. [David Mead](#)

Steam Dreams - The Cathedrals Express

Below: A1 No. 60163 "Tornado" departs Northampton with the Cathedrals Express to Canterbury West on a grey armistice day, November 11th. [Derek Elston](#)



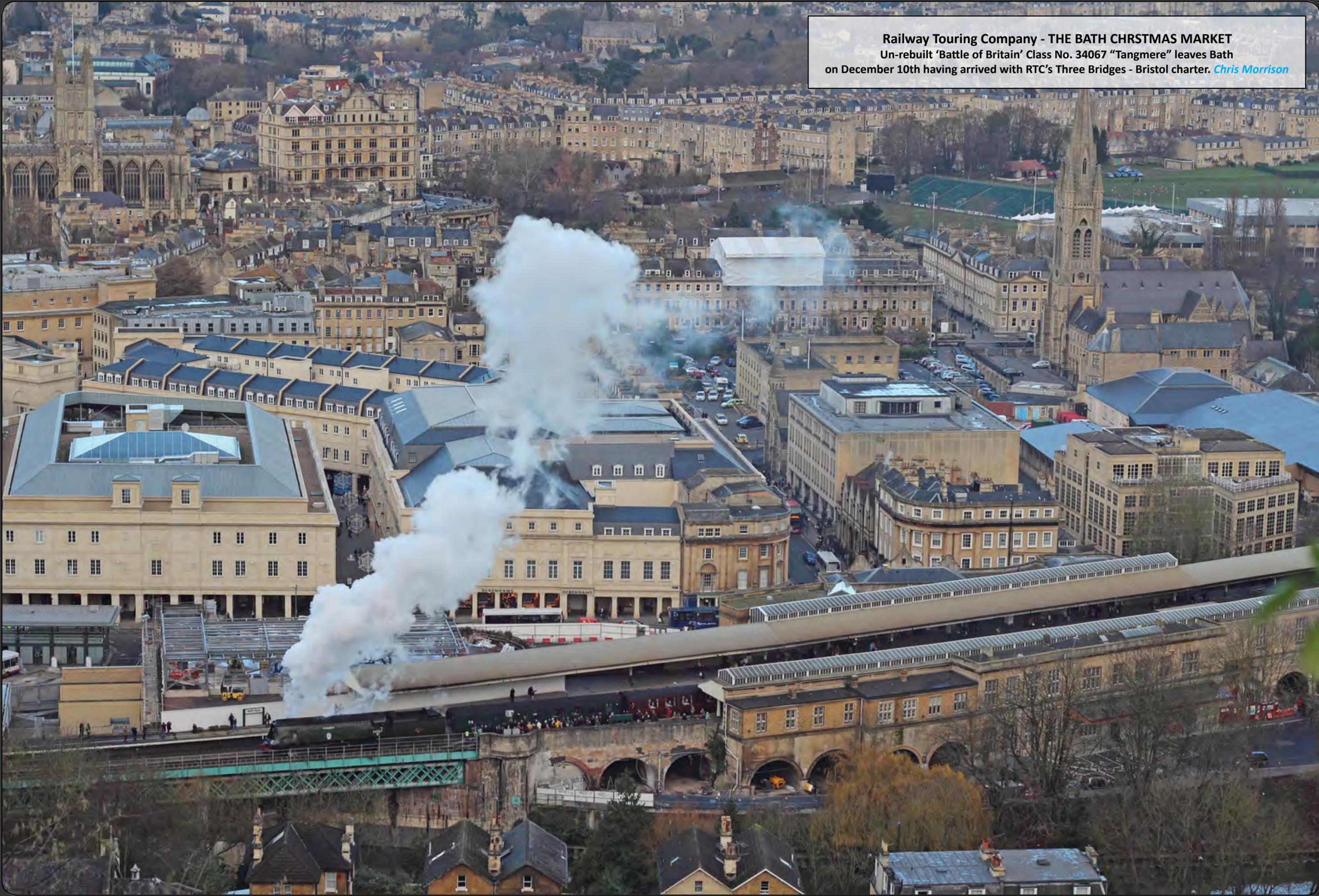
Steam Dreams - The Cathedrals Express
On December 1st, BR Standard Class 7 No. 70000 "Britannia" is seen working Steam Dream's 1Z82 Rainham (Kent) - Bristol "Cathedrals Express" running about half hour late through Ruscombe. [Wayne Radford](#)





Steam Dreams - The Cathedrals Express
On December 10th, BR Standard Class 7 No. 70000 "Britannia" powers through West Hornden with a Southend Victoria - Winchester charter. The train was running some 35mins late due to the late arrival of stock into Southend. [Charlie Robbins](#)

Railway Touring Company - THE BATH CHRSTMAS MARKET
Un-rebuilt 'Battle of Britain' Class No. 34067 "Tangmere" leaves Bath
on December 10th having arrived with RTC's Three Bridges - Bristol charter. *Chris Morrison*



Steam Dreams - The Cathedrals Express
LNER A1 No. 60163 "Tornado" takes the curve on the approach to
Sawbridgeworth, hauling the Chertsey - Ely
"Cathedrals Express" on December 12th. *Charlie Robbins*



Steam Dreams - The Cathedrals Express
LNER A1 No. 60163 "Tornado" is seen here arriving at Purley working
1263 Chertsey - Ely "Cathedrals Express" on December 12th.
Matt Price





Cheshire Cat Railtours

Above: Class 67 022 arrives into Shrewsbury early on December 10th with 1Z30 0616 Cardiff Central to Durham "Cheshire Cat" railtour. *Neil Davies*

Below: Class 67 022 pauses at York whilst working the trip to Durham on December 10th. *John Martin*



Hastings Diesels - THE OLD CURIOSITY MYSTERY TOUR
 'Hastings' DEMU No. 1001 departs Ashford, Kent in fine style as it rounds the curve onto the Maidstone East line working the 1Z83 Ashford - Rochester leg of HDL's "Old Curiosity Mystery Tour" on December 3rd. *Craig Stretten*



Hastings Diesels - THE OLD CURIOSITY MYSTERY TOUR
On December 3rd, Hastings DEMU No. 1001 heads the 1281 Hastings - Rochester
"The Old Curiosity Mystery Tour" through Tonbridge. [Wayne Radford](#)



Hastings Diesels - THE OLD CURIOSITY MYSTERY TOUR

GBRF's Class 73 213 leads the preserved Class 201 'Hastings' DEMU No. 1001 past Chart Leacon, Ashford, whilst forming Hastings Diesels Limited's 1Z82 Rochester - Ashford "Old Curiosity Mystery Tour" on December 3rd. The Class 73 was used due to an AWS fault on one of the motor coaches and the train was due to go down to Hastings via Rye, but due to late running caused by the AWS fault this was cut back to Ashford. [Craig Stretten](#)



Railway Touring Company - THE LINDUM FAYRE
On December 3rd, BR Britannia Class, 4-6-2 No. 70013 "Oliver Cromwell" is seen reversing the stock into Terrace Sidings, Lincoln having worked to Lincoln from London Kings Cross. *Steve Thompson*





Railway Touring Company - The Christmas White Rose
On December 10th BR 7MT 4-6-2 No 70013 "Oliver Cromwell"
heads through Doncaster in weak winter sunshine heading the Christmas
White Rose charter from Cambridge to York. [Steve Thompson](#)

Railway Touring Company - The Christmas White Rose
BR Britannia Class 7MT 4-6-2 No. "70013 Oliver Cromwell" heads through Colton Jct. with the London Kings Cross - York charter on December 17th. [Steve Thompson](#)



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Upload Your Photos to private or public collection, allowing anyone to view, comment and rate your photos if you wish.

A great addition is also the option to write your own articles for the magazine. Any thoughts, reviews or stories can be posted, which are then published for our readers.



Northern Belle

Above: On December 7th, the Northern Belle ran from Cardiff Central - Fishguard & Haverfordwest with a Christmas Lunch special. This is Class 47 790 leading the train passed Llangewydd. [Lewis Mitchell](#)

Below: Class 47 832 was on the rear of the train. [Lewis Mitchell](#)





Steam Dreams - THE CATHEDRALS EXPRESS

Above: A1 No. 60163 "Tornado" thunders through Swindon with the Cathedrals Express, 1286 Ashford to Bristol Temple Meads on December 17th. [Derek Elston](#)
 Below: "Tornado" is seen approaching West Brompton, with the Ashford to Bristol railtour. [Derek Elston](#)



Steam Dreams - The Cathedrals Express

Above: BR Britannia Class 7MT 4-6-2 No. 70000 "Britannia" heads through Hemel Hempstead around 30 mins late working 1286 London Euston to Chester "Cathedrals Express" on December 3rd. [Derek Elston](#)
 Below: Seen later on the same morning "Britannia" heads past Rowley en route to Chester. [Colin Irwin](#)



DRS - Private Charter

Class 47 828 and Class 37 601 pause at Shrewsbury on December 1st working a private excursion from Crewe to Crewe via a circular of Chester and Shrewsbury. [Richard Hargreaves](#)



Railtourer - Canterbury Christmas Special
On December 3rd, Class 47 851 heads Railtourer's 1274 Doncaster - Canterbury West through Chart Leacon, with 47 237 on the rear. [Wayne Radford](#)



SRPS - The Santa Express
Deltic Class 55 022 "Royal Scots Grey" is seen at Lincoln on December 2nd
having arrived from Linlithgow with the SRPS Santa Express.
Steve Thompson



Vintage Trains - The Christmas White Rose
Great Western 4073 Castle Class No. 5043 "Earl of Mount Edgcumbe"
is seen storming past the Nemesis Rail depot at Burton on Trent, with the
1241 The Christmas White Rose, Tyseley to York on December 17th.
Stuart Hillis





Vintage Trains - The Christmas White Rose

Above: Great Western 4073 Castle Class No. 5043 "Earl of Mount Edgcumbe" heads past Colton Jct. on 1241 The Christmas White Rose, Tyseley to York on December 17th. [Steve Thompson](#)

NENTA - Yorkshire Christmas Festival

Above: Class 47 580 heads the 1270 North Walsham - Skipton NENTA tour through Doncaster on December 3rd. [Class47](#)



Railway Touring Company - THE YORK YULETIDE EXPRESS
LMS Princess Class 4-6-2 No. 46201 "Princess Elizabeth" heads out of Manchester on December 11th with the Liverpool - York charter in very dull and damp conditions. [Colin Irwin](#)



VSOE

Class 67 025 "Western Star" arrives into Lincoln at the head of a VSOE Pullman service from London Victoria, December 2nd. [Steve Thompson](#)



Cruise Saver Travel - Cruise Saver Express
DRS Class 47 810 "Peter Bath MBE" leads 47 501 "Craftsman" on 1272
Southampton - Edinburgh Boat Train, passing northbound through Burton On
Trent on December 3rd. Out of sight, Class 37 604 was on the rear.

Stuart Hillis



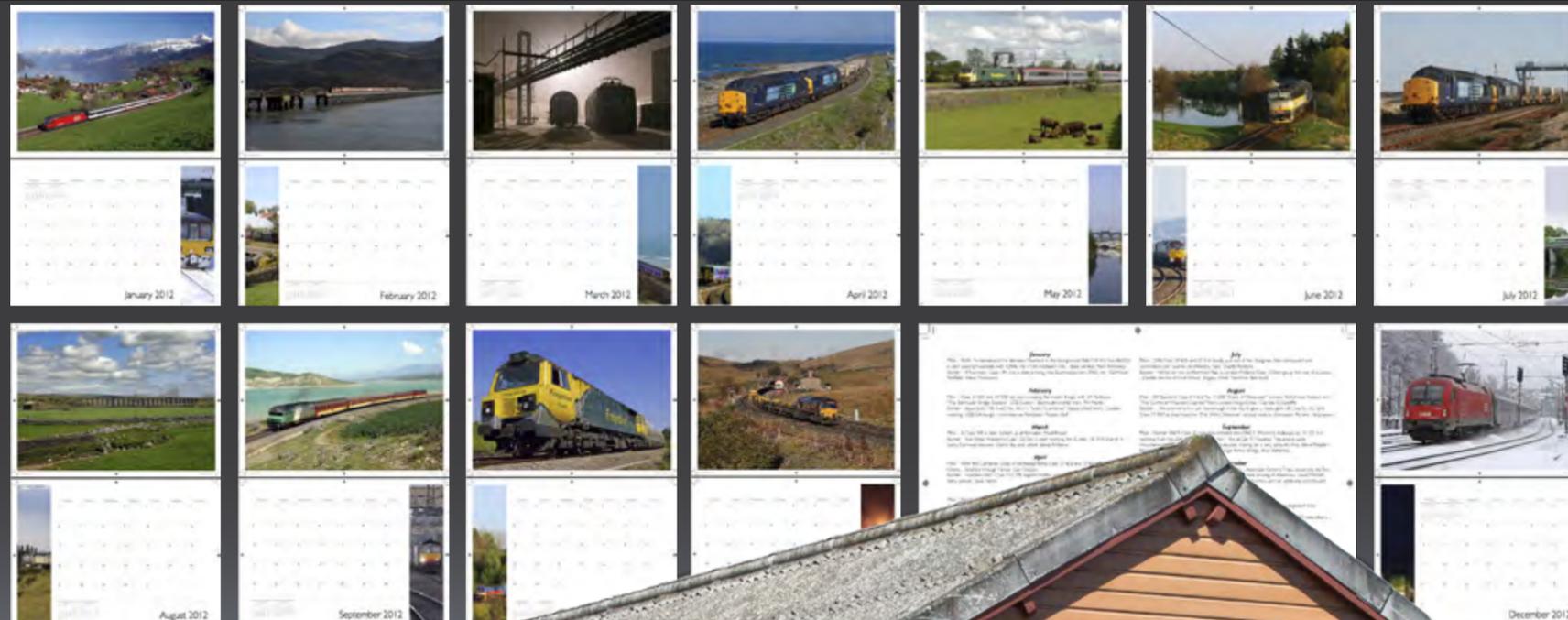
Railtalk | Calendar 2012

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Class 37 667 and 37 087 head the Penultimate RHTT service of the season on the Shenfield - Clacton diagram, December 9th. [Charlie Robbins](#)

Almost a full house a Lincoln on December 3rd, as from left to right is a Class 156 having arrived from Peterborough, a Class 222 from Leicester, Class 66 033 on the RHTT, EMT power car No. 43048 on the rear of a Nottingham departure and another Class 156 in the bay. [Steve Thompson](#)





Above: On December 10th, DRS Class 37 611 and 37 607 are seen parked up at Derby. [Richard Hargreaves](#)
Below: DB Schenker liveried Class 66 097, is seen passing at Keb Wood Crossing with 6C75 Immingham Bulk Terminal - Scunthorpe CHP coal on December 12th. [Steve Thompson](#)



Above: On December 10th, DBS Class 66 046 heads a MGR working through Worksop. [Class47](#)



On December 1st, Network Rail's NMT paid a visit to Norwich Thorpe running from Derby via Ely. This is power car 43 062 "John Armitt" seen departing Norwich in fast lowering sun. [Charlie Robbins](#)



ETL's Class 86 701 "Orion" formally named "City of Lancaster" is seen here with former classmate Class 86 101 "Sir William A Stanier FRS" at Carlisle on December 24th. *Dave Harris*





Above: London Overground's Class 172 007 is seen at Barking on December 12th with a service to Harrow-on-the-Hill. [Brian Battersby](#)

Below: Class 319 012 and 319 369 approach Blackfriars whilst working the 11.14 to Bedford passing the work site for the rebuilding of the station on December 20th. [Derek Elston](#)



Above: As part of the big unit swap around that occurred in November/ December, Class 156 497 which was a Northern unit has moved to East Midlands Trains, seen here on November 29th arriving into Worksop working the 09:33 2W04 Nottingham to Worksop. [John Martin](#)

Below: With DBSO No. 9703 leading and Class 31 106 on the rear, a Network Rail test train heads home to Derby, passing Burton on Trent in very low sunlight on December 3rd. [Stuart Hillis](#)



On December 17th, a mega 10 loco convoy worked 0X12 Alexandra Dock Jct. - Westbury comprising Class 66 238, 66 080 66 002, 66 162, 66 037, 66 043, 66 061, 66 100, 66 108, and 66 213, seen here upon arrival at Westbury. The front five locos continued onto Eastleigh whilst the rear five remained at Westbury. [Julian Churchill](#)





DRS Class 37 218 is seen on the approach to Manchester Piccadilly clagging nicely with 4Z51 Trafford Park - Daventry wagon move, December 22nd. [Dave Harris](#)

Class 60 071 "Ribblehead Viaduct" is seen working the 6B25
11:18 Westerleigh - Robeston on December 28th through
Llangewydd. [Lewis Mitchell](#)



The latest Class 60 in the refurbishment program, Class 60 074 "Teenage Spirit" is seen arriving into Bedford with 0260 Toton TMD - Bedford test run on December 14th. [Steve Madden](#)



Ex Fastline Class 66 301 now in DRS livery is seen working the 4Z48 Daventry - Tilbury through Church Brampton on December 20th. [Steve Madden](#)



DBS Class 92 036 storms through Acton Bridge Station with a northbound Tesco Express Intermodal service on December 17th. *Dave Harris*





Above: It looks like a Freightliner loco, but it's not. Now operated by GBRf Class 66 741 heads south through Stafford on December 14th. *Phil Martin*
 Below: On December 2nd, Class 60 065 "Spirit Of Jaguar" is seen working a new flow, the 6Z81 Liverpool - Ratcliffe Power Station, photographed joining the main line from North Staffs Junction. *Stuart Hillis*



Above and Below: Class 20 227 and 20 142 are seen at Worksop on November 26th with the 3S12 Sheffield to Sheffield RHTT working. *John Martin*



On December 10th, East Midlands Trains HST power car No. 43043 is seen on the rear of a London St. Pancras - Nottingham service at East Midlands Parkway. Whilst heading in the opposite direction is No. 43066.

Richard Hargreaves



Class 86 628 and 86 627 work the 4L75 09.58 Basford Hall - Felixstowe
through Althorp on November 30th. [Steve Madden](#)



On December 17th, recently rebranded East Coast HST power car No. 43272 leads a train of mostly EMT-liveried stock south through Colton Jct.
Power car 43313 was on the rear. [Steve Thompson](#)



Class 70 002 heads through Shifnal with the
6M55 Portbury to Rugeley loaded coal on December 17th.

Phil Martin



On December 11th, Class 60 045 is seen returning to Doncaster Up Decoy after an overnight ballast working at Brocklesby, Seen here passing Frodingham Jct. with it's train of MTA/ MHAs loaded with spoil and stone. [Steve Thompson](#)





Above: On hire to DB Schenker on December 10th, DRS Class 37 602 heads through Derby. [Richard Hargreaves](#)
 Below: GBRf Class 66 729 heads through Doncaster on December 9th with a rake of JNAs. [John Martin](#)



Above: On December 28th, Freightliner Class 66 616 dragged out 70 005, 70 016, 70 015 and 70 014 from the sidings adjacent to the running lines and shunted the consist between the two shed buildings. This reduced the view of the locos considerably and left a head on view of 70014 from the entrance gate at Leeds Midland Road as the best one to be had. [David Hollowood](#)
 Below: On December 5th, Colas Class 66 847 passes through Newton Abbot on its way to Heathfield with the 6Z50 empty log train. [Steve Andrews](#)





Above: Network Rail's Class 31 602 heads out of Derby with a test train on December 10th. [Richard Hargreaves](#)
Below: Ex Central Trains/London Midland now with First Great Western, Class 150 122 forms the 1716 to Severn Beach at Bristol Temple Meads on December 10th. [Chris Morrison](#)



Above: Chiltern Class 168 109 speeds through West Hampstead on November 12th. [Brian Battersby](#)
Below: An old chap looks on, very confused, as an East Midland Trains Class 222 arrives into York heading for London St. Pancras, instead of the heavy delayed LMS No. 6201 "Princess Elizabeth" on December 11th. [Colin Irwin](#)





Above: Network Rail MPV (DR98922/72) is seen in Fareham station on the night of November 26th, working an Eastleigh to Eastleigh via Havant, Ascot, Reading, Havant and Fareham circuit. [Derek Hopkins](#)
 Below: On December 14th, Class 66 305 now in DRS livery heads north through Stafford. [Phil Martin](#)



Above: East Midlands Trains Class 222 005 arrives into Chesterfield with the 12:39 1C45 Sheffield to London St. Pancras on December 14th. [John Martin](#)
 Below: On December 20th, Class 37 038 and 37 607 work the 2Q78 Derby - Derby circular, on the very little used freight only Leicester - Burton On Trent branch. This is Class 37 607 and test train about to enter Gresley Tunnel at Swain's Park. [Stuart Hillis](#)





Now working for First Great Western, Class 150 101 is seen at Bristol Temple Meads on a Taunton - Cardiff service, December 10th.
Chris Morrison



Above: Freightliner's Class 70 003 heads out of Ellesmere Port on December 27th with a loaded MGR working heading for Fiddlers Ferry Power Station. *Brian Battersby*
Below: Class 66 007 awaits the road at Platform 17 with a south bound intermodal service, December 19th. *Derek Elston*



A filthy Class 66 123 is seen at Lincoln on December 3rd having arrived on the front of 3J88 RHTT from Toton, with 66033 on the rear.
Steve Thompson



Above: Another unit that has recently been transferred is Class 150 116. Still carrying Central Trains livery, the unit is now operated by Northern, seen here at Manchester Piccadilly on a working to Buxton. [Class47](#)
 Below: DBS Class 66 199 heads south through Acton Bridge with the 6042 Halewood - Southampton on December 15th. [Brian Battersby](#)



Above: On December 28th, Refurbished Arriva Trains Wales Class 158 837 leads 158 818 through Wombridge, Telford with a Birmingham International service. [Richard Hargreaves](#)
 Below: Class 158 840 leads 158 831 through Wellington on December 21st. [Paul Godding](#)





Above: DBS Class 92 015 restarts from a signal check in the loop at Penrith station with 6S94 Dollands Moor to Irvine China Clay on December 7th. [David Hollowood](#)
 Below: Freightliner's Class 86 639 works south through Acton Bridge on December 15th with the well loaded 4K64 Garston - Crewe Basford Hall. [Brian Battersby](#)



Above: Class 66 144 is seen on an unidentified ballast working at Church Brampton on December 27th. [Derek Elston](#)
 Below: The ex Scotrail Class 322s have at last started working for Northern. This is Class 322 484 with the 10:08 2B09 Leeds to Doncaster arriving into Doncaster on December 9th. [John Martin](#)



DRS Class 37 606 and 37 602 head through Dawlish on December 5th working 1Q13 Derby to Plymouth Laira. [Steve Andrews](#)





Above: A rare chance to see a Class 08 shunting in Doncaster on December 3rd when Class 08 405 appeared with some engineers wagons. [Richard Hargreaves](#)
 Below: Class 319 364 is seen at St. Pancras International with the late running 10.34 departure to Bedford on December 20th. [Derek Elston](#)



Above: Last day for the Class 20s on the North Lincs RHTT was December 9th and here is a last view of 3S14 Grimsby Town - Malton on that day. Class 20 905 lead the way with 20 901 on the back, seen here cheerfully chugging up Appleby Bank. [Steve Thompson](#)
 Below: National Express East Anglia's Class 379 004 approaches Bethnal Green with a service from Stansted Airport on December 20th. [Derek Elston](#)

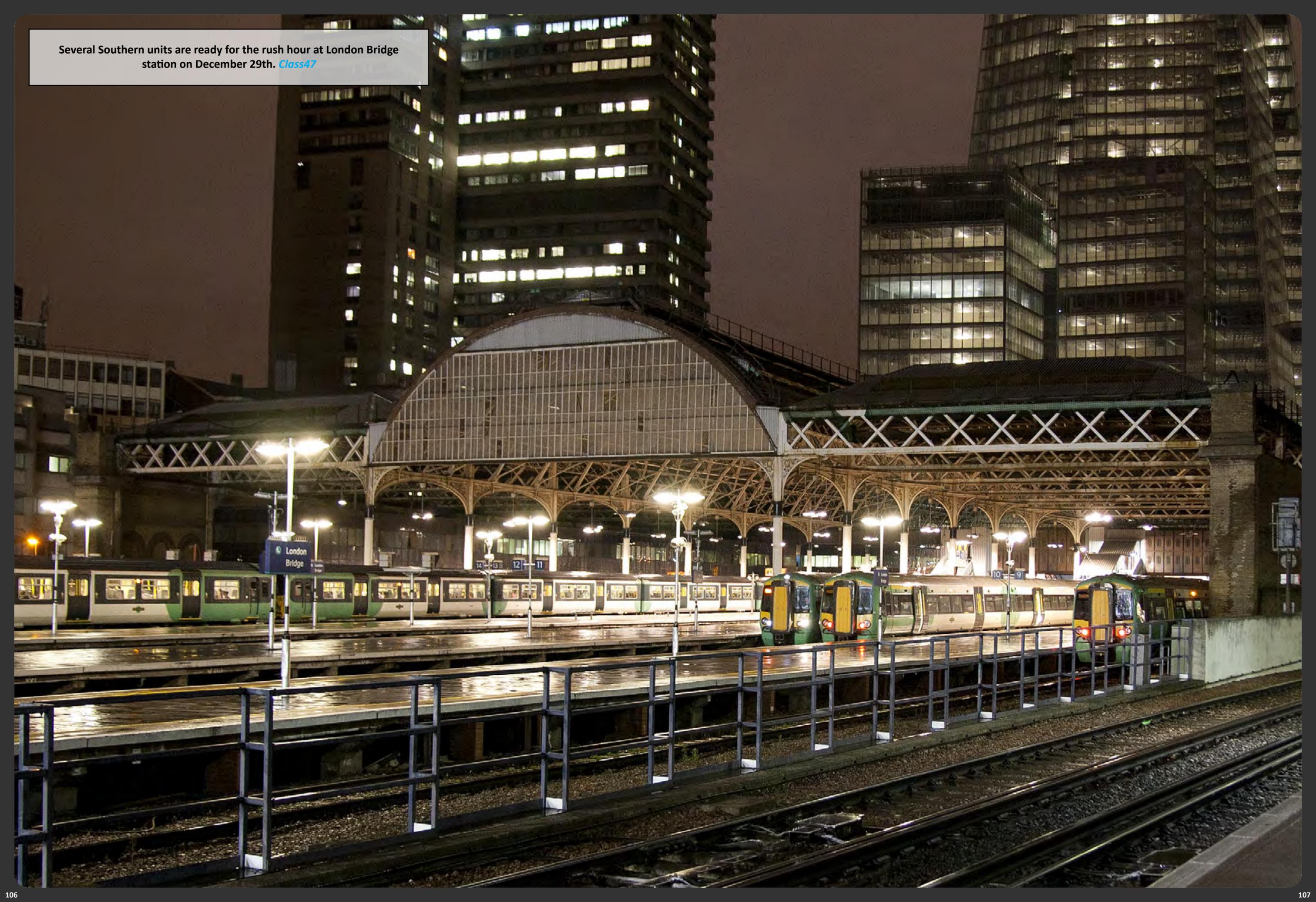


On December 12th, the recently-outshopped Class 60 091 is seen leaning into the curve at Keb Wood Crossing on 6K21 Santon - Immingham empties.

Steve Thompson



Several Southern units are ready for the rush hour at London Bridge station on December 29th. [Class47](#)





Above: Class 375 922 pauses at a rain soaked London Bridge station on December 29th. [Class47](#)
Below: GBRf Class 66 725 leads classmate 66 731 through Doncaster on December 3rd with an empty MGR service. [Class47](#)



Above: South West Trains's Class 455 873 is seen at Clapham Jct. with a London Waterloo - Wimbledon service on December 29th. [Class47](#)





Above: Class 172 211 pauses at Smethwick Galton Bridge on December 17th with a Dorridge - Kidderminster working. [Brian Battersby](#)
Right: East Midland Trains Class 222 007 heads out of East Midlands Parkway on December 10th with a St. Pancras - Sheffield service. [Class47](#)
Below: FGW power car No. 43086 is on the rear of a London bound service departing Swindon on December 17th. [Derek Elston](#)



Class 66 113 passes through Penrith at great speed with the
6C25 Carlisle Yard to Shap Quarry on December 7th.

David Hollowood



In the midst of a heavy downpour, Class 325 004 leads 325 015 and 325 002 with the 1M23 Shieldmuir to Willesden Royal Mail Terminal through Acton Bridge on December 15th. *Brian Battersby*





Above: Class 66 087 heads directly into the winter sunshine at Doncaster on December 9th with a loaded rail train. [John Martin](#)
 Right: On one of the final working for this years RHTT season in the North East, Class 20 142 leads 20 227 into Doncaster on December 3rd. [Richard Hargreaves](#)
 Bottom Left: On December 29th, First Great Western Class 165 104 is seen under the restored roof of London Paddington. [Class47](#)
 Bottom Right: London Overground Class 378 209 departs Clapham Junction bound for Stratford on December 19th. [Derek Elston](#)



Freightliner's Class 66 623 "Bill Bolsover" in Bardon Aggregates blue, pauses under Brunel's magnificent roof at Bristol Temple Meads with an engineers train, December 17th. [Chris Morrison](#)





Above: On December 21st and in dire light. GBRf Class 66 740 is on route learning duty from Wellingborough - Kingbury & return, seen here passing Spring Cottage, on the rarely used freight only line, heading for Coalville. [Stuart Hillis](#)
 Left: Northern's Class 180s have returned to First Great Western. This is Class 180 108 heading south on December 15th working 5Z80 Newton Heath - Old Oak Common. [Brian Battersby](#)
 Below: Having returned some Anglian RHTT sets to York Works, DRS Class 37 610, 37 603 and 37 667 enjoy a rest at York from what has been a hectic few months. [Class47](#)



On November 30th, Class 20 227 and 20142 pass Althorpe working 3S14 Grimsby Town - Malton. The "chimneys" of Keadby Power Station are in the background. [Steve Thompson](#)





Above: Catching the last rays of afternoon sunshine, an East Midlands Trains HST speeds through the Nottinghamshire countryside on December 10th. [Class47](#)
 Below: One of the few unit to still carry National Express branding, Class 315 846 heads through Stratford on November 12th with a London Liverpool St. - Shenfield service. [Brian Battersby](#)

Above: The latest Pendolino to arrive in the UK continues to undertake test runs along the West Coast main line. This is Class 390 055 speeding south through Acton Bridge on a wet December 15th. [Brian Battersby](#)
 Below: Southern's Class 377 415 speeds through Penge West with a Brighton service on December 20th. [Derek Elston](#)



Friday December 16th saw the arrival of tram 02 at Blackpool. On site now are 01, 02, 04, 05. Tram 03 is at Litchurch Lane at the time of writing.

David Hollowood



Going Underground



Above: Metropolitan line A60 stock No. 5080 is seen arriving into Uxbridge on November 12th. [Brian Battersby](#)
Below: Heading for Watford, A60 stock No. 5057 is seen arriving into Harrow-on-the-Hill. [Brian Battersby](#)



News and Features



Above: Metropolitan line A60 stock No. 5040 heads a Baker St. service through West Hampstead on November 12th. [Brian Battersby](#)
Below: Heading for Aldgate, A60 No. 5161 pauses at Harrow-on-the-Hill on November 12th. [Brian Battersby](#)



Going Underground

1996 stock No. 96022 is seen at Finchley Road on November 12th heading for Wembley Park. *Brian Battersby*



Scot-Rail - life north of the border

ScotRail Class 380 105 departs Prestonpans working Edinburgh - North Berwick service on November 19th. [Robert Duff](#)



Scot-Rail - life north of the border



GBRf Class 66 737 is seen departing Millerhill, while working the 6S45 North Blyth - Fort William loaded alumina tanks on November 19th. [Robert Duff](#)

Manchester Metrolink



One of the original Series 1 trams No. 1005 is seen at Altrincham on November 26th with a service to Piccadilly. [Richard Hargreaves](#)

Manchester Metrolink



December 17th saw the arrival of tram No. 3047 to Manchester.

David Hollowood

Fares Advice with RailUK

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

Should we get Oyster Cards?

Q: My wife and I are staying in London on the weekend of 14/15 January. On the Saturday we are visiting Hampton Court, and on the Sunday we'll just potter around the city (which for us normally includes multiple tube journeys, hopping around various sights etc)

We are staying in Harrow, within easy walking distance of Kenton and Northwick Park stations.

I guess I have a few questions. We don't stay in London very often - maybe one weekend a year - and we usually buy one day travelcards. Is there much benefit to us in getting an Oyster Card? I've read about an activation fee and/or a deposit on the card, is this just dead money for us? Also does the credit on an Oyster Card ever expire?

Is the journey from Kenton to Hampton Court do-able on a travelcard? I think Hampton Court is within the zones system, though obviously well outside the tube network. The TfL travel planner is throwing up some epic journeys, presumably because of engineering work on the Hampton Court branch that weekend. The journey will probably involve a combination of tube, overground and bus - how simple would that be to a first-time Oyster user?

I've heard nightmare stories about people forgetting to swipe in or out and getting gripped.

A: On the Saturday, assuming you have no railcard, you have two options.

1) Buy a Zones 1-6 Travelcard for £8.50, which will allow travel via central London and unlimited journeys within the Travelcard Zones.

2) If you are making no other journeys on that day, you could travel as follows:

Bakerloo/London Overground southbound Kenton-Willesden Jn London Overground Willesden Jn-Clapham Jn
British Rail: Clapham Jn-Tolworth Replacement bus Tolworth-Hampton Court.

Travelling via this route, you could buy a Kenton-Hampton Court, route Clapham Jn not London for £7.70 each.

On the Sunday, unless you have a railcard, it depends how many journeys you intend to make. If you are making more than 3 or 4 journeys, I would buy a Travelcard as the Oyster will cap at the same rate anyway.

Declassified First Class: Compensation Procedures

Q: On December 15th I travelled on a First Class Advance from Bath Spa to London Paddington (and beyond to Southend Victoria). This was on the 18:13 departure from BTH due to arrive at PAD at 19:38 (I think). However, the journey prior to this departure, the 17:43, had a failure at Bristol Temple Meads and as such did not operate any further (this journey starts back at Weston-super-Mare). As a result the 18:13 from BTH (18:00 from BRI) had to accommodate the loadings from both services, and was subjected to two changes: one, it called additionally at Didcot Parkway, making it five minutes late thereafter; and two, more importantly, First class was officially declassified on departure from Bath

Spa. This left me with a First Class on a service that although booked as having First Class accommodation had no official First Class accommodation.

A: Simply write to FGW, enclose your tickets, and in theory you should get the difference in price... however there is a slight complication here in that I am unsure what ticket would be judged to be the applicable ticket to discount the price to.. it could be argued to be the cheapest standard ticket for immediate travel (which would likely get you nothing back as you had a First Advance) but it could also be argued to be the equivalent price level of Standard Advance.

It may depend on whether First Class was officially declassified or not. For example if some people were given a free upgrade or the guard did not get around to charging people who wished to upgrade, then I do not see how that could possibly be an issue, but if it is announced as being declassified then there is effectively no First Class accommodation provided.

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.

Ken opens fabulous new station at West Hampstead

Ken Livingstone officially opened the new West Hampstead Thameslink station on December 14th, which has been completed after 18 months of construction.



Photo: Ken Livingstone opens the new station, flanked by (from left) Andy Duffin, Keith Moffit and David Statham

Local councillors and residents were also in attendance to meet the Network Rail delivery team and managers of the new station, First Capital Connect. The redevelopment of the station is part of the wider Thameslink Programme, a £6bn scheme to introduce longer and more frequent trains on the route from Bedford to Brighton. The new station building has been designed to improve access to the Thameslink route train service and improve the interchange with nearby Underground and Overground services. It will ease congestion and boost capacity for increased use in the future. It links to a new wider footbridge with lifts to all platforms that have themselves been lengthened to accommodate 50% longer 12-carriage trains that enter service in 2018.

The station has been relocated to Iverson Road where the railway embankment was built up to widen the pavement from 1.5m to 12m. Incorporating the existing lime trees into this new public space and allowing the station to be seen from the High Street, West End Lane, were also central to the new station design. A green tiled wall, designed to reflect the changing colours of the lime trees, has been included to provide an interesting feature, brightening the walkway while also drawing people towards the station. Ken Livingstone, London Mayoral Candidate said "The new station at West Hampstead will make a big difference to people in terms of easing congestion, catering for the increased capacity on rail services, and helping with access. It will be welcomed by local passengers who use these services every day." David Statham, First Capital Connect Projects Director, said: "The new station relieves the chronic congestion our customers frequently suffered trying to reach our services and provides lifts to all platforms for people with disabilities, parents with buggies and anyone with heavy luggage." "The interchange with London Underground is much easier from Iverson Road and its junction with West End Lane is much safer. This is a real improvement for the local community." Andy Duffin, Network Rail Project Director for Railway Systems said: "The opening of West Hampstead Station marks an important day in the life of the Thameslink Programme. We have done an awful lot of work behind the scenes to lengthen platforms and upgrade power supplies. At West Hampstead this has allowed us to transform the station, creating step-free access to all platforms for the first time and relocating the station for an easier interchange."

As part of the Thameslink Programme, Network Rail has lengthened platforms at 14 stations on the Thameslink route for longer 12-carriage trains. That's an additional 4km of extra platform and carriage space, twice the length of Luton Airport runway, or 34 football pitches laid end-to-end. More than 160km of new power cable has been laid to provide the power demanded by longer trains, and signalling systems along the route and through central London have been upgraded and replaced. The vast majority of this work has been completed overnight and at weekends to reduce disruption to passengers. To mark the opening of the station a local photography competition was organised. The winning six entries now have their photographs displayed on the back of the Iverson Road wall to be seen by passengers on the platforms.

Rail passengers to benefit from new measures to deliver easier journeys during disruption

Alternative route maps, improved ticket acceptance and better communication to help customers

New collaborative approach to improve service from three major London terminal stations

Plans welcomed by Passenger Focus

Train operators have announced a new package of measures to help make journeys easier for passengers during times of disruption. The new initiative, which builds upon and expands existing arrangements, covers three of London's biggest terminal stations and will benefit millions of passengers a year.

Measures include:

- The introduction of new maps with easily identifiable alternative routes for passengers affected by disruption
- A better process for acceptance of train tickets on alternative services
- Improved communications between station teams at London St Pancras International, Kings Cross and Euston.

David Horne, Managing Director for East Midlands Trains whose services run from London St Pancras, said: "We know that any disruption affecting any one of these three major London terminal stations can have a major impact on our passengers. "By working in partnership, we have developed simple yet effective customer focused plans to ensure that we can work together to deliver the best possible service for our passengers.

"The new alternative route maps provide passengers with a clear and realistic alternative route for them to take in the event of disruption, and also give an idea of the journey time they can expect. "We're really pleased to have worked with our industry partners to develop this initiative and hope that it will help to reduce the impact of disruption on rail passengers."

Robin Gisby, managing director, Network Operation, Network Rail, said: "The rail industry continues to work hard to minimise the impact on passengers during times of disruption. This means keeping people on trains rather than buses and providing better information so they can make more informed choices about their journeys. This initiative is a step in the right direction."



Guy Dangerfield from Passenger Focus, the independent passenger watchdog, added: "Passengers will welcome news that the train companies have put together clear advice about the options passengers have if any one of the key north to south routes suffers major disruption. Although there will still be inconvenience, being clear to passengers about the different routes they can take, roughly how long it will take and that their tickets will be valid is a big step forward. Passengers say to us that during disruption rail companies should act joined up and do more to help them get around problems – this initiative should do both".

The train operators involved in the initiative are: East Midlands Trains, Virgin Trains, East Coast, First Capital Connect, CrossCountry, Grand Central and First Hull Trains. The initiative has also been supported by Network Rail.

MAJOR CONSTRUCTION COMPLETE ON KING'S CROSS WESTERN CONCOURSE

Over 600 people – from engineers, electricians and builders to carpenters, stone masons and abseilers – who are working to transform King's Cross station got into the festive spirit recently to celebrate the end of major construction work on the new western concourse.



The new concourse is the stand-out feature of the £500m redevelopment of King's Cross to make it into a world-class transport hub. The striking domed roof covers an area three-times the size of the existing concourse and big enough to fit over six Olympic-sized swimming pools. As well as providing a brighter, more spacious station, it will contain a wide

range of new food and drink outlets and shops, plus improved facilities which will improve the journey experience for passengers. Ian Fry, Network Rail's King's Cross project director, said: "Today marks an important milestone in the redevelopment of King's Cross station. With the major construction completed on schedule we can focus on fitting out the retail units and installing the new passenger facilities so passengers can take full advantage of their new station when it opens in 2012."

Work to build the Western concourse, which started in 2009, involved up to 1,150 people on site at any one time and included the installation of:

- 1,000 tonnes of steel
- 5,000,000 ceramic tiles
- 500 lights
- 1,000,000 specially made heritage bricks to restore and rebuild WW2 bomb damage and the ticket office
- 9,000m² of granite floor tiles
- 5,000,000 metres of cabling

Over 600 people – from engineers, electricians and builders to carpenters, stone masons and abseilers – who are working to transform King's Cross station celebrate the end of major construction work on the new western concourse.

Freightliner launches new improved biomass wagon to meet the requirements for the Power industry

Freightliner Heavy Haul has unveiled its new prototype covered hopper wagon that has been developed for the biomass market. The wagon is a modified HHA coal hopper wagon which has covers fitted to ensure that the product is kept dry whilst being conveyed from loading site to destination. The wagon modification was manufactured at the WH Davies workshops at Shirebrook and offers the most advanced design covered hopper wagon in the UK biomass market. The wagon was moved from Shirebrook to the Freightliner workshops at York earlier this week and has already had viewings from several generating companies who are examining the potential for the generation of renewable power from sustainable biomass. Michael Leadbetter, Freightliner's General Manager Coal & Biomass, added "Visits by other customers are already lined up to examine the wagon. The wagon and concept has been extremely well received so far by everyone. We have worked well with the designers and manufacturers to develop this wagon. Having developed its design following consultation with the generation industry, I am now confident to inject it into the market and we will be undertaking trials with it in the near future."

East Midlands Trains launches 1,500 additional seats

Thousands of extra seats now available on busy Nottingham to Liverpool route

Ten trains every weekday providing double the seating capacity

Additional service extended through to Norwich

Rail passengers have received a Christmas present with a difference, with the launch of an additional 1,500 seats a day on East Midlands Trains' services between Nottingham, Sheffield, Manchester and Liverpool.

The improvements have been made possible as a result of East Midlands Trains working with the Department for Transport to secure four additional trains for its network.

The introduction of these trains means that an additional 10 trains every weekday on the busy Nottingham - Sheffield - Liverpool route will be strengthened to provide double the seating capacity.

In addition, and following passenger and stakeholder feedback, the 13.52 Liverpool to Nottingham service will be extended through to Norwich.

Rail Minister Theresa Villiers said: "These extra carriages are great news for passengers. The Government is determined to tackle overcrowding and provide better, more comfortable journeys, which is why we are funding this extra capacity. "We are now embarked on one of the biggest programmes of rail capacity expansion since the Victorian era. In total we plan to introduce 2,700 new rail carriages on to the network by May 2019. These vital improvements will support economic growth and make life better for passengers."

David Horne, Managing Director of East Midlands Trains, said: "We've already made some significant improvements for passengers using services on our Liverpool to Norwich line, with refurbished trains, additional seats and an improved timetable. This has all helped to improve customer satisfaction on this line, with the most recent independent passenger survey showing that 92% of passengers are satisfied with their service.

"However, we want to continue building on that success and are therefore very pleased to be launching so many extra seats for passengers travelling from Nottingham and Sheffield through to Manchester and Liverpool.

"We would like to thank our passengers and stakeholders for their steadfast support in helping us to bring about these improvements."

David Brown, Director General for the South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYPT), added: "We have long argued for more seating capacity on these key routes to make the journeys more enjoyable for those people wishing to travel. These additional seats will create much required capacity to enable people to travel in comfort between South Yorkshire, Nottingham, Manchester and Liverpool."

East Midlands Trains joined forces with Northern Rail at an event in Sheffield recently to mark the introduction of the additional seats being provided by both train operators.

Pictured are David Horne, Managing Director for East Midlands Trains, Steve Butcher, Chief Operating Officer from Northern Rail,



Rail passengers benefit from improved winter contingency plans

East Midlands Trains and Network Rail measures to tackle severe weather

Better communication, special timetables and more reliable trains

New Twitter feed, more help points and screens at stations, special train anti-freeze

East Midlands Trains have announced a package of measures to reassure passengers that it is better prepared than ever before to deal with severe weather following last year's harsh winter.

In partnership with Network Rail, which manages the rail network's track and signalling, East Midlands Trains has reviewed the experience of the past two winters to strengthen existing extensive contingency plans and help further protect train services for passengers.

The new measures include improved customer communication, better contingency timetables and technical work to help trains handle extreme conditions.

A new dedicated Twitter feed will alert passengers using the popular social media channel to how their service is running. East Midlands Trains is also investing in improved customer information screens, as well as introducing help-points at nearly 30 stations.

A special anti-freeze that can withstand temperatures as low as minus 28 degrees Celsius will be used in on-train coolant systems. The lowest recorded temperature in the UK was minus 27.2 degrees Celsius on 30 December 1995 at Altnaharra in the Scottish Highlands.

Other measures include:

- Special contingency timetables agreed in advance with Network Rail to help keep main routes open
- New agreements with neighbouring train operators to help passengers travel more easily on alternative routes
- Improved coupling system on many trains to allow them to "split and join" more reliably during extreme winter conditions
- Better contingency plans to help with removing snow from stations and maintenance depots
- Steps to ensure rail services are seen as a high priority for fuel deliveries
- Improved management of key points by Network Rail, including completed power upgrades on key points heaters. Network Rail has also invested in a new system to allow remote monitoring of points heaters to predict issues before they have a significant impact upon performance.

David Horne, Managing Director for East Midlands Trains, said: "We have worked with Network Rail and our maintenance partners, Bombardier, to use our experience and passenger feedback from the last two years to ensure we are better prepared than ever before to deal with the impact of severe winter weather.

"Our staff did a great job of running as many train services as possible last year. This was despite some exceptionally challenging circumstances, which saw significantly lower temperatures than the railway infrastructure and our trains were originally designed to withstand.

"However, we know that there are always improvements to be made, particularly in communicating with our customers and making sure our fleet of trains is better prepared to deal with the kind of freezing temperatures we experienced last year.

"We will always face challenges in times of severe weather disruption, but the plans we have in place for this year will help us to make sure that we can offer our passengers the best possible service and the most useful information in these difficult circumstances."

Martin Frobisher, route managing director for Network Rail, said: "We have learned some useful lessons following the extreme weather last year. Our teams are well prepared and, working with East Midlands Trains, we are confident we can deliver the best possible service this winter."

First Great Western on fares increase – January 2012

First Great Western has committed to a three-point plan to keep its fares as low as possible when ticket prices change in January 2012.

This year, First Great Western will be:

- implementing the Chancellor's decision to limit average regulated fares to RPI+1%
- waiving the option to use 'average fare baskets' to raise some fares above this figure
- imposing the same limit on unregulated fares, which train operators can set independently of government policy

In addition, the price of the best value Standard Advance Purchase fares, which account for 1.1 million ticket sales every year, will be frozen. The decision means most fares will change in line with additional fuel and running costs the train company faces, plus the percentage point requested by the government. Some fares will not rise at all.

The change is half that seen by motorists who, according to the RAC, have seen the average cost of running a car soar by some 12% in the past year. First Great Western Managing Director Mark Hopwood said: "We recognise the challenges the current economic climate brings, and we have worked hard to limit the impact of fares changes on customers. Many fares across our network won't rise at all, and those that do - whether regulated or unregulated

- will not rise above the formula set by government. "With the average cost of running a car soaring by 12% in the past year, we hope our decision will encourage even more people to recognise the value that train travel offers."

FGW INTRODUCES ADDITIONAL CARRIAGES TO BRISTOL

First Great Western has welcome six additional train carriages to train services across the Bristol area, from Monday, December 12. Earlier this year First Great Western secured a deal with the Department for Transport to deliver six additional vehicles to improve capacity in the Bristol area. Two additional Class 150 units (four vehicles) and two Class 153 units (two vehicles) were received from London Midland, and First Great Western has been working hard to have the units ready for the launch of the December timetable.

The trains are expected to provide an extra 800 seats on services around the city at peak times alone.

This latest strengthening comes in addition to last month's announcement of First Great Western successfully secured investing in 48 additional carriages to come into service across the network between February and September 2012.

First Great Western Managing Director Mark Hopwood said: "Passenger growth in and around Bristol has risen throughout our franchise. While that demand is gratifying in one respect, it can lead to overcrowding on peak services, which is why we've been working for some time to secure additional carriages.

"I'm delighted customers can now benefit, and I applaud the Department for Transport, Members of Parliament, local authorities and other key partners who supported our efforts."

Rail Minister Theresa Villiers said: "These extra carriages are great news for passengers. The Government is determined to tackle overcrowding and provide better, more comfortable journeys, which is why we are funding this extra capacity. "We are now embarked on one of the biggest programmes of rail capacity expansion since the Victorian era. In total we plan to introduce 2,700 new rail carriages on to the network by May 2019. These vital improvements will support economic growth and make life better for passengers."

Bristol West MP Stephen Williams said: 'I am delighted that my constituents will benefit from increased capacity around the city. I frequently receive complaints from constituents about busy trains to and from Temple Meads; this is a much needed and welcome addition. I will continue to work with my Coalition colleagues and First Great Western to ensure that we improve transport for passengers in Bristol.'

Longer 12-carriage trains operate for first time on Thameslink route

First Capital Connect have launched its first 12-carriage train service between Bedford and Brighton on the Thameslink route. These services are 50% longer than any FCC has run on the route before. Together with further improvements provided in the new December timetable, they add over 3,200 extra seats a day.

The 12-carriage trains mark an important milestone in the Government's £6bn Thameslink Programme, which is designed to ease capacity on one of the country's busiest rail routes. When completed, the programme will also add new destinations to the north-south cross-London Thameslink rail network and more frequent services across central London. Network Rail has upgraded power supplies and signalling systems, and extended platforms at a dozen stations north of London to accommodate today's longer 12-carriage trains. It is also redeveloping two major central London stations – Blackfriars and Farringdon.

In this first phase, four services have been lengthened to 12 carriages between Bedford and Brighton in the morning and four in the evening. A further four services from Sutton have been lengthened to eight carriages. More 12-carriage services will follow with the introduction of a new fleet of trains being delivered by the Thameslink Programme from 2015.

Theresa Villiers said: "These longer carriages will make a real difference to commuters travelling on these busy routes. Despite the deficit we inherited, we are determined to invest in Britain's future. So we're delivering a major programme of rail improvements and capacity expansion to support economic growth and improve life for commuters. "The longer trains introduced today will deliver the first passenger benefits from the long awaited Thameslink project. The Thameslink upgrade is a key part of our massive programme of rail improvements which is as big as anything undertaken since the Victorian era and includes Crossrail."

First Capital Connect Managing Director Neal Lawson, who met the Minister at Farringdon, said: "Since 2006 we've added almost a third more rush hour seats to the route. Today, together with other improvements we've delivered on the Thameslink route, these first-ever 12-carriage trains give us over 3,200 more seats at our busiest times of the day, which we have targeted on our most crowded services. "We look forward to fabulous new stations here at Farringdon and Blackfriars and to working closely with our industry partners to deliver the next phase of the programme, with a new fleet of trains and still more 12-carriage services in years to come."

Simon Blanchflower, Network Rail's senior sponsor for the Thameslink Programme, said:

"This has been made possible by many, many hours of behind the scenes work from Network Rail, the train operator, and, of course, our contracting partners. Passengers will continue to see additional benefits as the first phase of the programme reaches completion before the Olympics in the summer.

"Our end goal is to provide a north-south metro-like rail service through the heart of London with 24 trains an hour in each direction and today we have moved one, very big, step closer." Nigel Holness, London Underground Network Services Director, said: "It's great to see all of the work that has gone into improving Farringdon for both LU and National Rail customers leading to First Capital Connect now running 12-car services. There are further improvements being made to the station which will be completed by the summer

Photo: Rail Minister Theresa Villiers is met by FCC MD Neal Lawson



More than 68 million days out have been ruined by the British weather in the last 12 months

Heavy British rain has meant that two thirds of us have had to cancel plans or head home early at some point after a day has turned into a wash out, new research reports.

Fourteen million BBQ's, 3.8 million weddings, and 5.3 million trips to theme parks or zoos have been spoilt because of constant showers over the last year.

It also emerged that the average Brit ends up £62 out of pocket as a result of changing their plans after buying tickets for events and trains in advance.

The research was commissioned by Southern Railway to mark their new Rainy Day Guarantee, whereby you can now receive a full refund on uncollected tickets bought online at southernrailway.com, using any excuse whatsoever – even the weather.

Alistair Buckle, Head of Marketing from Southern Railway, said: "It is clear that most of us have been affected by the weather at some point in our daily lives. Whether we've arranged a special outing or are travelling to an event, heavy rain can affect our plans to the extent of cancelling on our family and friends."

"Most people set aside time and money for special day out, be it a festival, concert, family BBQ or a trip to the zoo, and while we may check the weather forecast, it isn't always easy to get money back on these events missed due to the rain." "What's more, not only are we wasting money by not going on a day out as planned, by changing our minds due to the weather the majority of Brits actually end up spending more money on last minute ideas, for example going to the cinema, spontaneously eating out or using unplanned-for transport."

Rainy weather has ruined 5.7 million days out at sporting events like football matches and tennis games, and 9.5 million Brits have had plans for picnics or lunch cancelled. 48% said they would prefer a full refund for a cancelled event, instead of a rescheduled date.

Nearly 5 million have bought tickets for festivals like Glastonbury or open air concerts only to have the day ruined by rain, while a quarter of Brits have ended up cancelling on friends and family because of the bad weather.

Nearly all Brits said they had been caught out in heavy rain in the last 12 months with the average person getting 'completely drenched' three times. Three quarters of women have also had a day or night out ruined as a result of the rain, upsetting their hair style and destroying shoes, with more than a quarter saying it has ruined more than 7 days in the last year. Families have found themselves housebound four times in the past 12 months after plans have changed so much they have run out of stuff to do.

The average Brit claims to spend an extra £63 as a result of their plans changing at the last minute because of the weather. Despite the fact that 84% of Brits take caution for future disruptions by having at least one insurance policy or guarantee, 71% said they have never made a claim.

Alistair Buckle, Head of Marketing from Southern Railway, said: "We all like to plan ahead and try and foresee any potential weather problems that may disrupt our day out. Unfortunately, when it comes to rain it is difficult to avoid natural elements ruining what we had planned."

"We identified the importance flexibility of travel means for our rail users, and have responded to this with the creation of the Southern Railway Rainy Day Guarantee. This allows customers who have bought Anytime, Off Peak or Advance train tickets online at southernrailway.com to receive a full 100% refund, whatever the reason, provided they haven't collected their tickets."

"Any excuse can be used to qualify for the refund, from a bad hair day or poor weather forecast to a simple change of mind. This Rainy Day Guarantee applies to all Anytime, Off Peak or Advance tickets booked online for travel throughout the UK, and isn't limited to the Southern Railway network. As Southern doesn't have any booking or credit card fees, this Guarantee really does mean 100% money back. In essence, it makes an inflexible ticket, flexible. We are the first and only rail company to do this, and are hoping the option of a refund will make planning days out for our customers that little bit easier."

CHRISTMAS SEES GIANT LEAP TOWARDS NEW STREET TRANSFORMATION

The redevelopment of Birmingham New Street station took a major step forward over the Christmas break as engineers successfully completed several large projects in and around the station. It is now just one year to go until the first phase of the project will complete when a new station concourse opens to passengers.

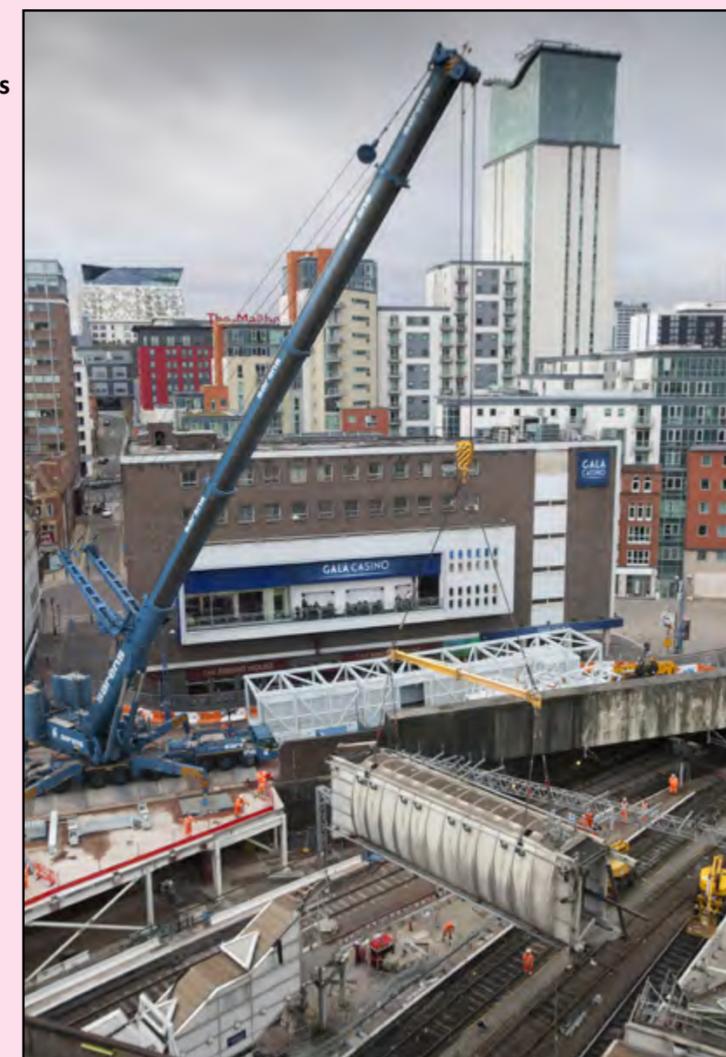
One of the most challenging pieces of work was the installation of new sections to extend the Navigation Street footbridge at the west end of the station. Working from Christmas Day through to 27 December, engineers used a 700 tonne crane to lift out an old section of the bridge and install the new sections while the station was closed to passengers. When the extended bridge opens at the end of 2012, it will provide access to Platform 12 for the first time and create a new station entrance on Hill Street.

Chris Montgomery, Network Rail project director said: "The work we have completed over the Christmas break represents a major step forward in our exciting plans to rebuild Birmingham New Street for the thousands of passengers who use it every day. Undertaking projects on this scale in the heart of Birmingham city centre represents a huge logistical challenge and we planned the work carefully to minimise disruption to passengers and Christmas shoppers visiting the city centre."

In addition to the bridge extension, other major work taking place at New Street over the Christmas break included:

- The construction of a tower crane outside the front of the station. The crane will be used through 2012 to construct the new public square opposite the Bullring
- The removal of the old Pallasades link bridge and escalator above Station Street. The removal of the redundant structures is another step towards the construction of the new John Lewis department store which will get underway in 2012.
- Preparatory work on platforms 1-7 to construct the foundations for new public space at the front of the station.
- Construction of new train crew accommodation above Platform 1

Phase 1 of the project will complete at Christmas 2012 when the first half of the new station concourse opens, work will then begin to redevelop the existing station area used by passengers today. The project is set to complete in 2015. Mike Whitby, Leader of Birmingham City Council commented: "I am delighted that as the year ends we are celebrating another major milestone in the New Street project. Engineers have successfully lifted a new section of bridge into place, and we are determined to bring the project in on-time and on-budget. 2012 promises to be a really exciting year for the station, and I am eagerly looking forward to more announcements that add to Birmingham's reputation as the capital of the region." New Street station fully reopened for services this morning (29 December) when all 11 operational platforms returned to passenger use. Geoff Inskip, chief executive of Centro, the region's transport authority, added: "Whilst a lot of the work so far has not been visible to passengers, the installation of this new bridge clearly shows the excellent progress being made towards delivering a bigger, brighter and visually stunning New Street Station - a world class facility the whole West Midlands can be proud of."



NEW FREIGHT DEAL TO MOVE DEVON TIMBER BY RAIL

Hundreds of lorries will be kept from West Country roads, owing to a successful collaboration between Network Rail, Colas Rail Freight, Devon Council and Kronospan – the country's largest manufacturer of chipboard products. As part of this partnership, a disused freight line of 4 miles between Newton Abbot and Heathfield has been brought back to use. This will enable Colas Rail Freight to transport timber produced by Kronospan from Teignbridge (Devon) to Chirk (North Wales) by train, supporting a three-year contract between both companies.

The weekly services will start today and each freight train will consist of 14 wagons, carrying around 600 tonnes of timber. This will potentially remove around 24 lorries from the roads and help reduce carbon emission in the West Country. Patrick Hallgate, route managing director for Network Rail Western said: "Britain relies on rail and the value of rail freight is considerable. For businesses, rail freight can offer a cheaper, quicker and more practical alternative to moving goods by road. Almost £700m of social and environment benefits each year can be attributed to freight traffic on Britain's railways."

"Without the railway, the anticipated growth in freight traffic over the next 30 years would mean an extra 1.5m lorry journeys on Britain's roads each year. Each freight train can take around 60 lorries off the roads and by shifting traffic from already congested roads to rail will bring greater future benefits." Simon Ball, head of freight for Colas Rail Freight, explained that thanks to his company's close working relationship with Network Rail and with the cooperation of Devon County Council's highways department, the terminal was in working order within a few weeks.

He added: "The branch has not seen a train for many years and needed to be capable of taking freight trains again. We arranged for it to be checked, cleared and then prepared for service with road access. The vegetation in the old goods yard was cut back and, after levelling, firm standing was created by rolling into the ground hundreds of tonnes of material.

"With this project we have demonstrated yet again that we are flexible and able to move quickly to create fully functional, fit for purpose freight terminals in a very short time."

Colas is developing its position as the leading provider of rail haulage for timber products by investing in rolling stock and terminals and by developing a network of contacts with key rail organisations and local authorities.



CHRISTMAS DELIVERY FOR RAIL PASSENGERS AT YORK – FASTER TRAINS AND MORE SERVICES



The south end of York station is no longer a bottleneck for services on the east coast main line (ECML) after engineers worked through Christmas to bring online new track and signalling systems.

Infrastructure work at Holgate to install an additional line and new junction were completed on time and on budget earlier in 2011. But because the programme to control the new signalling layout is extensive and complicated, the commissioning was held back to Christmas, when no trains were running.

Phil Verster, route managing director for Network Rail, said: "This scheme has been long-awaited in York and will bring real benefits to passengers. At a basic level it will mean less time spent waiting on board a train to get a platform outside York station. On a wider level this is one of a number of schemes we are delivering on the ECML by April 2014 which will allow faster services and more trains to run on the route.

"Until recently, investment on this scale would have meant extensive disruption to passengers through cancellations and rail replacement buses while the work was completed. We have worked closely with the train operators to minimise the disruption; including the decision to commission at Christmas when trains were not running."

Previously trains travelling from Leeds to the north east and Scotland conflicted with other passenger services, often resulting in trains being forced to stand before they could access a platform. This has now been resolved, creating greater freedom of operation and a better flow of trains into and out of the station.

The investment at Holgate is worth around £9.5m and is part of a package of works scheduled between 2009 and 2014 to improve capacity and the reliability of services on the ECML. In all the investment in the ECML is worth approximately £600m.

The commissioning began after the last service on Christmas Eve and was complete by 4am on Tuesday 27 December.

Up to 40 people per shift were working over Christmas to bring the system online.

WORK TO MAKE PITSEA STATION ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL COMPLETE

Passengers at Pitsea station have step-free access between the station entrance and all platforms for the first time, following the completion of a major improvement scheme by Network Rail.

The £3.6m project, part of the national Access for All programme, included the installation of a new footbridge, three new lifts and the refurbishment of the existing concrete footbridge, making it easier and safer for passengers to move around the station.

Stephen Metcalfe, MP for South Basildon and East Thurrock, who officially opened the new facilities on Friday December 12, said: "Since its opening in 1855, the station has proudly served Pitsea and I am delighted to see these fantastic improvements that will allow a new generation of travellers to benefit from its services."



"Despite these challenging times, the government is committed to investing in infrastructure and local services. I am extremely pleased that the residents of Pitsea will reap the rewards of this. I would like to thank Network Rail for delivering these improvements and do hope that they will be of benefit for many years to come."

Dave Ward, Network Rail route managing director, said: "These new improvements will make a big difference to passengers, especially those with reduced mobility or with small children, and are part of our plans to build a bigger, better railway. The new lifts and footbridge will better meet the needs of passengers and businesses in Pitsea."

In addition to the accessibility improvements, Network Rail has carried out platform extensions and resurfacing work to enable 12-car services to call at the station in future. The co-ordination of both improvement projects meant any disruption to passengers and local residents was kept to a minimum.

Julian Drury, managing director of c2c, said: "This major upgrade at Pitsea station represents part of the continual investment programme c2c has undertaken with our partners on the Shoeburyness to Fenchurch Street line. We are proud to serve the people of South Essex and we want to make a positive contribution to the communities we serve. These improvements at Pitsea will make a real difference to our customers, improving access to the platforms and making journeys easier for everyone."

First Hull Trains launches new, complimentary first class menu

First Hull Trains has recently launched its new, complimentary menu for first class passengers on-board its Hull to London services.



Photo: Alison and Tracy on-board First Hull Trains

The new menu offers a fresh variety of dishes, ranging from delectable breakfast choices such as smoked salmon and cream cheese bagels and hot bacon paninis, to a varied dinner menu boasting succulent beef stew, mushrooms melts and much more. Initial reactions to the new choices available have been very positive, especially the new hot dishes which are welcomed by passengers as the winter weather continues.

Tracy, a frequent passenger on First Hull Trains, said: "I travel with First Hull Trains often because I always receive superb customer service on-board. The is lovely, and really adds to the quality of the journey to London, making it relaxing. The new menu is great. It really is a wonderful service."

David Townend, sales and marketing manager, said: "At First Hull Trains, we believe that it important to frequently update our on-board menus to ensure that we are providing customers with the best possible service throughout the year. The menu has been designed to make sure that there is something to suit every passenger's taste available"

Northern welcomes additional carriages

From Monday 12 December, passengers through our five major urban centres have had more seats on peak time trains as Northern introduced 50 additional carriages across their network. The carriages are the result of the Department for Transport's rolling stock programme, which has secured a total of 60 additional carriages for Northern, meaning more seats on 20% of their major urban centre peak time trains - benefitting Manchester, Leeds, Liverpool, Sheffield and Newcastle.

Ian Bevan, Managing Director of Northern, and Cllr Andrew Fender, Chair of the Transport for Greater Manchester Committee, welcomed the 07.13 Leeds to Manchester Victoria train, arriving in at 08.53 with 111 additional seats. Ian comments: "Overcrowding has been one of the biggest challenges we have faced and one of the biggest causes of complaint for our passengers. Thanks to the additional carriages we will be providing 2.2million extra seats per year during the peak hours. We know that these extra carriages will not eradicate overcrowding, but will certainly provide significantly improved journeys for our customers from their introduction this morning."

Rail Minister Theresa Villiers said: "These extra carriages are great news for passengers. The Government is determined to tackle overcrowding and provide better, more comfortable journeys, which is why we are funding this extra capacity. "We are now embarked on one of the biggest programmes of rail capacity expansion since the Victorian era. In total we plan to introduce 2,700 new rail carriages on to the network by May 2019. These vital improvements will support economic growth and make life better for passengers." Councillor Andrew Fender, Chair of the Transport for Greater Manchester Committee, says: "This rolling stock will certainly help to ease overcrowding on some key services, which is good news for commuters. TfGM has worked closely with Government and Northern to secure this extra capacity, and our local MPs have also played an important role." To manage the maintenance requirements of our enhanced fleet, Northern have worked with Network Rail to reopen Allerton depot in Merseyside.

FINISHED ON THE FORTH – BRIDGE REPAINTING NOW COMPLETE

Iconic structure scaffold-free for the first time in over a decade as repair and repainting programme draws to a close

£130m refurbishment project will mean no full-scale repainting for at least two decades

Network Rail has announced that its 10-year, £130m programme of refurbishment and repainting on the Forth Bridge has reached an end. With the scaffolding which has encased the bridge for over a decade now removed, the 125-year-old structure will not need a full paint job for at least 20 years. The project, delivered by Network Rail and main contractor Balfour Beatty Regional Civil Engineering, involved encasing the bridge in up to 4,000 tonnes of scaffolding, painting over 230,000sqm of steel and all 6.5 million rivets in the structure.

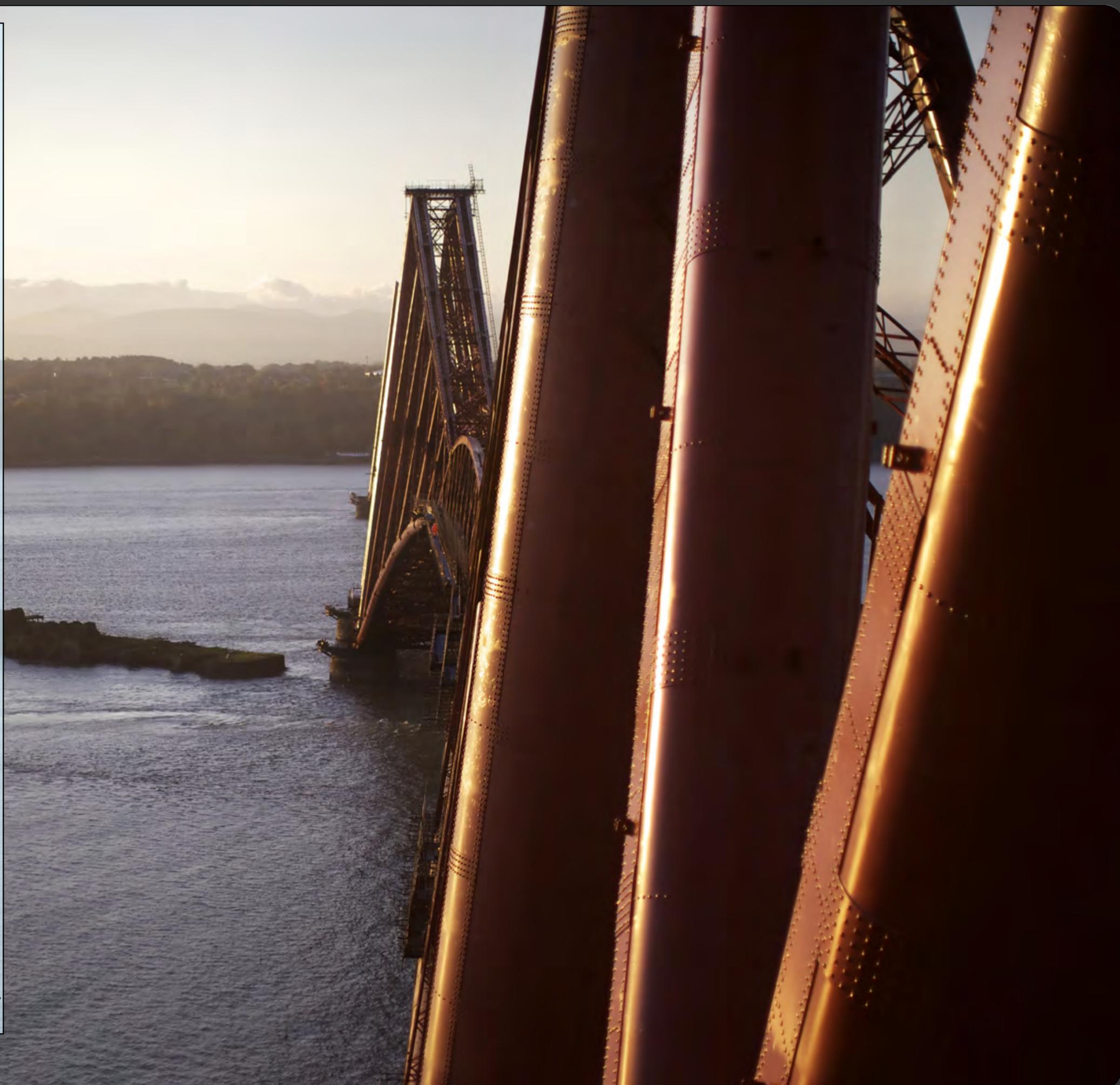
Over the life of the project more than 1,500 people have worked on the structure, with up to 400 people a day on the bridge at the height of the refurbishment works. David Simpson, Network Rail route managing director for Scotland, said: “The completion of this refurbishment will safeguard the future of one of the country’s most famous landmarks. “Repainting the bridge has long been considered one of the world’s never-ending tasks, and the refurbishment programme we have just completed has been one of the biggest engineering challenges Network Rail has faced. “Our staff and contractors can take real pride in their achievements on this project, not least in the fact that through their efforts this amazing structure will remain free of major maintenance work for at least two decades.” Marshall Scott, Managing Director of Balfour Beatty Regional Civil Engineering, added: “Balfour Beatty is immensely proud to have successfully delivered the programme to refurbish the Forth Bridge over the past decade.

“It is a testament to the skill and commitment of the project team, and the subcontractors and suppliers, involved in this significant and complex programme of works that the iconic Forth Bridge has been returned to its original condition.”

With the main refurbishment work completed, contractors will continue to work around the structure between now and spring 2012, decommissioning site compounds and restoring the public viewing area at the North Queensferry side of the bridge.

In the years ahead, a small team of specialists and engineers will continue to monitor and maintain the bridge, which is regularly exposed to extreme conditions due to its location above the Firth of Forth.

Photo: Paint is applied in three layers - a primer, a glass-flake epoxy and a top-coat. It’s the top-coat which gives the bridge its colour and its lustre, made to match the red-oxide paint first applied over 121 years ago. The RSPB protected island of Inchgarvie is visible in the background.
© Network Rail.



View from the Outside

This month Andy and I went to Switzerland and I loved it. We got free boat, tram and bus travel around Geneva and I know this is a train magazine but I am letting you broaden your horizons and acknowledge how good the boat services were at Geneva.

It was like 'the way to travel'. Apart from that the prices of everything was huge such as a McDonalds that cost us nearly 30 pounds! Trains however were also free with a travel card that we had given with our hotel and so I would definitely recommend staying at the Hotel Cornivan in Geneva. But beware, water cost five francs in our hotel!

I just asked Andy what I could say about the trains over there but he is still banging on about the boats! I would urge you to go at Christmas time like we did as their Christmas lights are amazing.

I hope you all had a great Christmas and New Year.

Until next month, happy training.

If you have any comments, about my articles or any ideas about what I could write about please drop me an email, I always love the fan mail.

megan.thomason@railtalkmagazine.co.uk

More carriages for Southern announced

The Department for Transport is providing over £80m towards a £188m deal led by Southern Railways to build 130 new railway carriages. The new trains are to be built by Derby-based train maker Bombardier following a procurement competition run by Southern.

The Department for Transport and Southern have agreed to vary the franchise agreement to support this procurement. Transport Secretary Justine Greening said: "This deal for more than a hundred new carriages is great news for rail passengers and brilliant news for Bombardier and Derby.

"It lands Bombardier with a crucial train order and I look forward to Bombardier workers in Derby being among the winners of this important deal.

"This deal, helped along by my department, shows my determination to invest in Britain's railways: our support for Southern will boost capacity while helping British jobs. I can't think of a better outcome."

The funding was earmarked by Greening in the Chancellor's Autumn Statement last month but is only being announced today following the signing of the contract between Bombardier and Southern.

The deal is expected to be formally announced shortly to the stock exchange in Toronto, where Bombardier Transportation UK Ltd.'s parent company is based.

Southern Railways' passengers will experience the capacity benefits when the new carriages enter service in December 2013. The fresh order for rolling stock is also expected to have positive knock-on effects for Bombardier workers in Derby and elsewhere.

Southern operate train services in South London, Surrey, Sussex and Kent. The agreement that has been reached between Southern and the Government also provides certainty to Southern about the expiry date of the franchise, which has been fixed at 25 July 2015. This provides clarity to any parties that may be interested in the new Thameslink franchise that commences in September 2013, with services that Southern currently operate being amalgamated into the Thameslink franchise in July 2015.

WORK TO BEGIN ON ASHFORD TO HASTINGS RAIL UPGRADE

Work starts on 9 January 2012 on a major upgrade of the railway between Hastings and Ashford which will provide more reliable journeys for passengers and be the first step in potentially reducing journey times in the future.

The nine-week programme centres on essential maintenance work in Ore tunnel to improve the drainage and repair lining to the inside of the structure to prevent water seeping through. In order to take full advantage of the track closure, Network Rail engineers have re-scheduled a wide range of other improvement works to avoid further disruption in the future and allow better services for passengers in the years to come. These include:

- Renewing the track through the tunnel and around the Ore area; ¾ mile of track between Rye and Winchelsea; and around one mile of track between Ashford and Ham Street. This will result in old, noisy jointed track being replaced with smooth continuous rails.
- Refurbishment of three sets of points to improve reliability
- Replacement of rail-over-road bridges at Doleham and Three Oaks
- Surveys and maintenance of an embankment between Ashford and Ham Street
- Maintenance of 18 bridges and culverts between Ashford and Hastings
- Track improvements (tamping) to enable the line speed to be increased in the future between Rye and Hastings

Fiona Taylor, Network Rail's route managing director for Kent, said: "The maintenance work in Ore tunnel is vital for us to continue running a safe and reliable railway. We appreciate the impact this will have on passengers' journeys which is why we have programmed so much other work to be done at the same time to reduce the amount of potential disruption in the future.

"There is never an ideal time to carry out this scale of work and after seeking the views of community and business representatives we were keen to avoid the summer months which are so important for the local economy. We thank passengers in advance for their patience while we carry out this important work and are confident the improvements we are making are the first step towards cutting journey times which is great news for passengers in the long term." During the work there will be no trains running between Ashford and Hastings. Southern has been working with Network Rail, highways and local authorities to put a rail replacement bus and taxi service in place. Work is scheduled for completion on 9 March 2012.

OVERWHELMING SUPPORT FOR VISION TO TRANSFORM RAIL IN THE NORTH

People across the north of England have given their backing to Network Rail's plans to improve rail links across the region. The feedback shows a large public appetite for more journeys by rail. More than two thousand people attended events in stations, town halls and shopping centres and gave their feedback online during a recent consultation.

Network Rail's biggest ever consultation exercise in the north showcased exciting plans for the Northern Hub, a vision for rail investment across the region. If fully funded the Hub would allow faster, more frequent journeys. It includes the Ordsall Chord, a new short section of railway near Manchester which will reduce journey times by easing a major bottleneck; work to electrify the network between Manchester and Liverpool and the Lancashire triangle, and plans to fully restore Manchester Victoria station.

Network Rail's Graham Botham, said: "The scale of this consultation clearly demonstrates our ambition to stimulate economic growth by better connecting the towns and cities of the north. It is hugely encouraging that the overwhelming majority of the public in the region support our plans to make it easier for people to get to work, do business, go shopping and visit friends and family."

Network Rail is inviting further comment on all aspects of the vision during consultations to be held in 2012.

The Nosh Report

Welcome to another "Nosh Report", remember that this is your chance to let everyone know where to go for something to eat or drink, (eg: cafe, takeaway, sandwich shop) when out and about. It can also be about whilst you are on a railtour or sampling the delights of on train catering.

May I firstly wish you all a very Happy New Year and I hope that Santa brought you loads of presents.

This month I have to take my hat off to Colin Irwin who has once again out done me in the quality and uniqueness of establishment. I really hope that we here more from Colin, as he obviously knows some rather tasty places to eat.

Colin's suggestion this month is :

Porkys Review

High up in the peak district near the spa town of Buxton, located right on the A6 near Dove Holes, is a small roadside catering van which is yet again a shining example of "smaller is better". The location of the van itself couldn't be much better for the railway enthusiast, especially since the restart of the "Buxton Spa Express" by UK Railtours, as it is located not only on the main A6 road between Stockport and Buxton, but also right beside the Buxton Line between Eaves and Barmoor Clough tunnels, and right next to a particularly nice looking (and popular) curve in the line.

The name of this establishment is surprisingly well known, albeit for different reasons than catering. Named "Porkys", the café is run by a gentleman by the name of Mick Bronzo, and not only serves food on location, but also takes orders by phone (numbers are included at the end of this review). So if you happen to be heading to or from Buxton or Stockport via the A6 and feel the need for breakfast or lunch, give Mick a call in advance and you can have your food ready for your arrival on location.

The menu consists of the usual suspects at such food establishments, classic breakfast barmes with fillings such as sausages, bacon, egg and spam, burgers, with or without cheese, hot dogs, steak sandwiches. selection of pies, meat & potato, steak & kidney, cheese & onion Also, on Thursday and Friday nights, Micks van doubles up as a mobile fish and chip bar, serving not only fish and chips but also a selection of pies, steak and kidney puddings, regular and battered sausages, and even kebabs and spam fritters. The gem of this place is not just the fact the sandwiches are of outstanding quality, both in taste and in build, even with toasted muffins, it's the selection of sauces on offer, not just tomato and brown sauce, but also mayonnaise, garlic mayo, mustard, mild chilli and hot chilli sauce.

Truthfully I have never seen a selection quite like it at such an establishment before, and it works too. Try the sausage, bacon and cheese sandwich with chilli sauce, it's certainly different, and in a good way. All enclosed in a lightly toasted barmcake and served with a smile and witty conversation.



If you are ever chasing a railtour across the Buxton Line or travelling up to the Peak Forest stone quarries, maybe for a class 60 on a stone train such as Tunstead - Oakleigh or Peak Forest - Salford, make sure you make a stop off at Porkys for breakfast/brunch/lunch/whatever. I'd fully recommend it to anyone.

Mick Bronzo/Porkys Catering Trailer Services
Mobile: 07511 076 249
Tel: 01298 70512

Mmmmmm.. well I'm convinced, thanks Colin and as I always say, if you know of anywhere that is worth a mention then please let me know, I always enjoy visiting new places and discovering new locations.
Until next month,

steve.roberts@railtalkmagazine.co.uk
Stephen W Roberts



FROM PLATFORM TO CATWALK – FUTURE FASHION STARS UNVEILED

East Coast and Premier Models choose winners of model search

Train operator East Coast and Premier Model Management – stars of Channel 4's The Model Agency programme – have unveiled the winners of the East Coast Premier Model Search in London.

Premier Model scouts discovered Eleanor Carling, 16 from Newcastle and Morris Pendlebury, 17 from Skipton, during the search, which took place on board East Coast trains and in its stations, after the scouts scoured the length of the UK, from London to Edinburgh over the last five months.

The new faces, who were unveiled at a media photo call at in Central London, have both won a 12 month contract with Premier Model who will represent them and help to establish their career in the fashion industry.

Both Eleanor and Morris will also receive a 2-day trip in London, with First Class travel to the capital and £250 in prize money, and in addition, £250 worth of rail travel vouchers, courtesy of East Coast, to help with their travel expenses to London when they begin their modelling work.

Paul Williams, Media and Communications Manager at East Coast, said: "We are really pleased that Premier has found some future fashion stars during the search along the East Coast route, and excited to see how their careers progress after their discovery.

"We're really proud of the East Coast Premier Model Search and have enjoyed working with Carole and the team at Premier over the last five months.

"Eleanor was one of several girls who were scouted in Newcastle, and Morris in Leeds, both of which are two of our major destinations, which goes to show that there is plenty of talent up north."

The search consisted of Premier scouts travelling on East Coast trains to various destinations along the route, and holding scouting events at stations along the route including Glasgow Central, Harrogate, Peterborough, Doncaster, Newcastle, Edinburgh, York and Leeds.

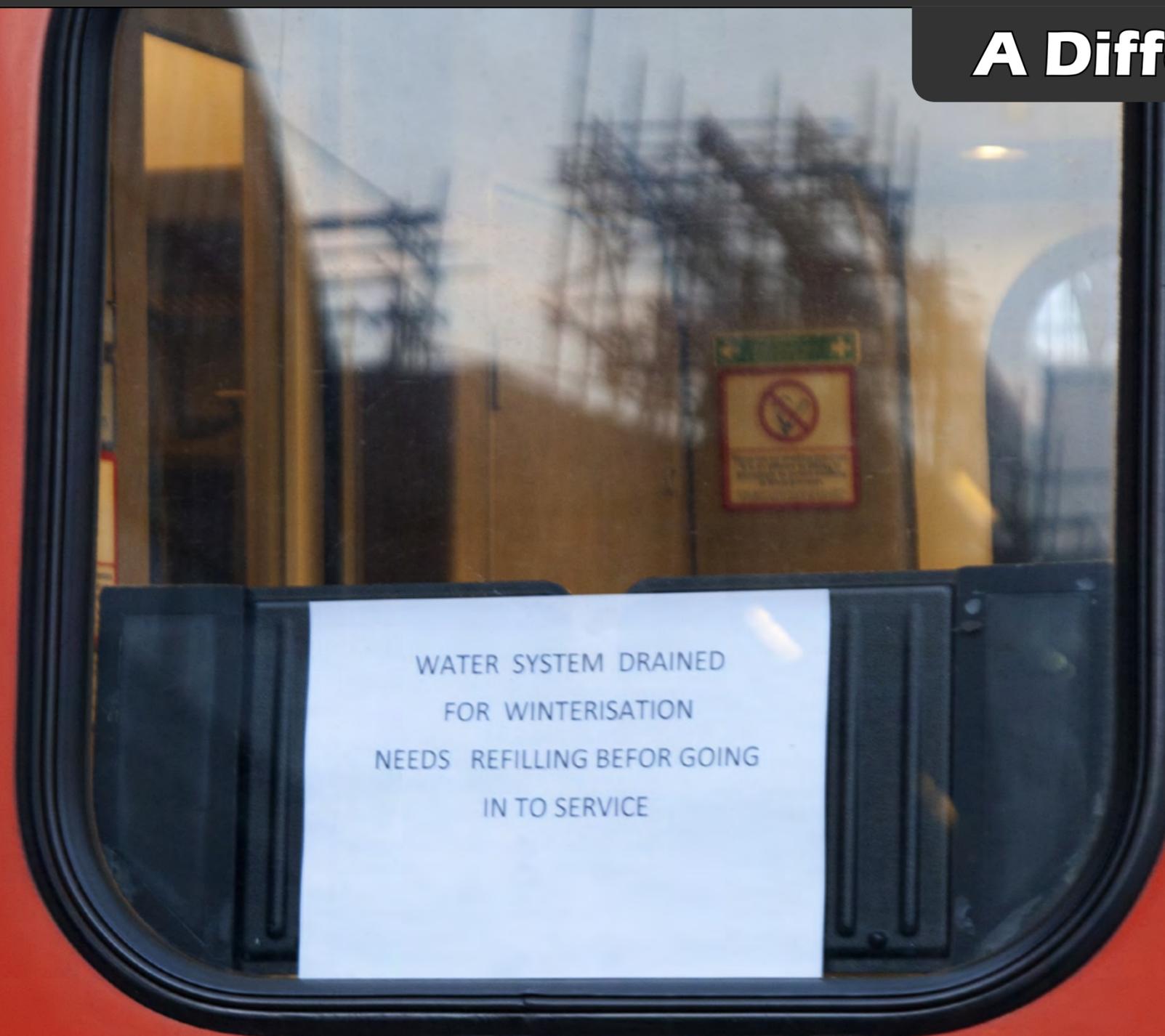
Carole White, Founder of Premier Model Management, said: "We feel extremely privileged to have been able to work with East Coast on the model search; we travelled the country high and low from Kings Cross to Aberdeen in search of new and fresh talent. It has been one of the most enjoyable and exciting scouting projects we have worked on and we feel that have achieved everything that we could have ever hoped for in discovering both Morris and Eleanor- definitely two faces to look out for in the near future!"

Throughout the search, Premier's scouts used the fabulous accommodation provided by Principal Hayley – an inspirational collection of hotels and conference venues across the UK and Europe – The Grand Central Hotel, Glasgow; The Met, Leeds; Kenwood Hall, Sheffield; The George Hotel, Edinburgh; Royal York Hotel, York.

Photo: Eleanor Carling, 16 from Newcastle, poses with Carole White, founder of Premier Model Management, and Morris Pendlebury, 18 from Skipton, after they were both announced as the winners of the East Coast Premier Model Search in Central London, Thursday 15 December.



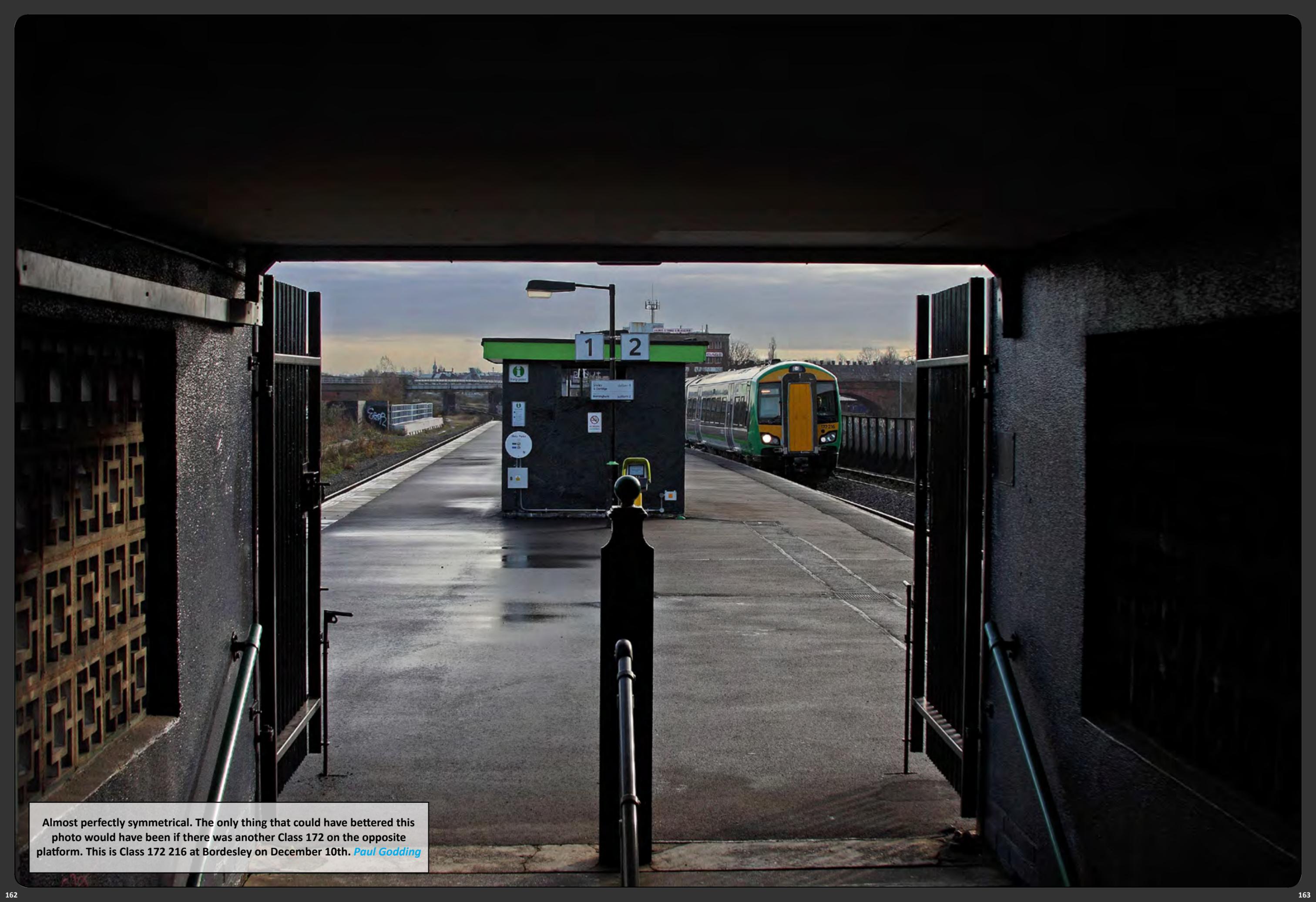
A Different View



WATER SYSTEM DRAINED
FOR WINTERISATION
NEEDS REFILLING BEFOR GOING
IN TO SERVICE



Seen on an East Coast MkIV at London Kings Cross in December.
Do they really have that many coaches that some go into
store for the winter? [Class47](#)



Almost perfectly symmetrical. The only thing that could have bettered this photo would have been if there was another Class 172 on the opposite platform. This is Class 172 216 at Bordesley on December 10th. [Paul Godding](#)



Looking down on Class 66 037 at Margam depot in December, it could almost be a model. [David Hollowood](#)



DRS Class 37 683 stands sheeted over at the heritage centre on December 12th. [Brian Battersby](#)

Looking smart in its two tone green livery, Class 47 192 is seen at Crewe on December 12th. [Brian Battersby](#)





HUGE FESTIVAL OF STEAM FOR GCR THREE DAY WINTER GALA 27th, 28th, 29th Jan 2012

10 locos in steam for one of railway's biggest ever events Return of 'Oliver Cromwell', First visit by M7 loco, Debut of Ivatt Class 2

The Great Central Railway is going for gold in Olympic year! The award winning Leicestershire line is all set to stage one of its biggest gala events ever, with up to ten locomotives in action. It will be a winter steam festival full of action to delight enthusiasts and families.

Among the vintage machines appearing - the GCR O4 which will have celebrated it's 100 birthday just days before, the debut of a freshly restored Ivatt Class 2 (once famous for its regular television appearances) and the triumphant return of BR Standard 7 Oliver Cromwell to the line!

Kate Tilley, the Great Central Railway marketing manager said, "It will be a spectacular event. From the huge line up and variety of motive power to the range of other attractions including demonstrations of our brand new turntable, there will be something for everyone."

The expected locomotive line up includes...

The return of BR Standard 7, Britannia, No. 70013 "Oliver Cromwell" to the Great Central after thrilling performances on the main line network.

GCR O4 No. 63601 marking its 100th birthday. (The gala will be one of the last chances to see it in steam before it is withdrawn for boiler overhaul work).

The Leicestershire debut of Ivatt Class 2 No. 46521, returning to steam after many years undergoing overhaul. This locomotive is perhaps better known as 'Blossom' from the popular BBCTV series 'Oh Doctor Beeching'.

Special guest appearance of exLSWR M7 No. 30053 from the Swanage Railway - the first ever visit from this type of engine to the GCR.

Also expected to run are SR King Arthur Class No. 30777 "Sir Lamiel", LMS 8F No. 8624, GWR Hall No. 4953 "Pitchford Hall", BR Standard 2 No. 78019, GNR N2 No. 1744 and LMS 3F No. 47406

In addition two locomotives will be on static display at Quorn station and open for cab tours.

On each day there will be a busy schedule of passenger trains hauled by various locomotives, supplemented at weekends with an intensive display of passing freight and postal trains.

Quorn station has seen substantial investment in the last two years and will be the venue for other major attractions at the steam festival. The new turntable will be demonstrated at regular intervals and the Butler Henderson tea room will not only be selling its famous range of refreshments but real ale as well.

On Saturday evening the renowned GCR twilight show returns. As dusk falls there will be an intense period of activity at Quorn station including freight trains and a night time non-stop mail drop by the travelling post office train - all the more dramatic under cover of darkness.

At this event visitors are being offered the chance to get even closer to the action with a footplate pass. For just £40 you can book a place in the cab of a locomotive as it roars along the track, passing other trains on the way. Precise times will be available closer to the event but for now would be footplate riders are asked to register their interest by calling 01509 632315.

"There are so many special features about this gala," added Kate. "We've really pulled out the stops. It's a fitting tribute to the centenary of the O4 and a grand celebration of railways through the decades. We hope it will be the first must visit event of 2012."

Full timetables and fares will be available at www.gcrailway.co.uk closer to the event. A gala programme will also be available.

Attractions and locomotives appear subject to availability and by kind arrangements of the owners and the National Railway Museum

www.southerncountiesrailwaysociety.co.uk

SOUTHERN COUNTIES RAILWAY SOCIETY

A club for anyone interested in the railways of Southampton, Hampshire, Dorset and the surrounding area.

Established in 1948 by a group of school friends who shared the common interest in transport, particularly the Railways. The aim of the Society was to foster an interest in rail transport by arranging meetings and visits to railways installations. This still can be found today with regular meetings and a monthly new letters all full of information related to the area formally operated by Southern Railways.

Membership is open to any persons aged 14 years or older. Subscriptions Annually; £10.00, Family (Two or More c/o same address) £15.00

Class 73 006 is seen at Crewe Heritage Centre on
December 12th. *Brian Battersby*





RAIL NUTS is the answer to all your dreams! You can blog away to like-minded people all day long. RAIL NUTS is dedicated to people worldwide who are passionate about railways. Not just engines, but the whole railway scene. The railways changed and enhanced our world now RAIL NUTS can increase the clarity of your interest. Join a community of passionate, like-minded people who wish to get the facts right. The latest technology will be employed to give you absolutely top quality photographs and yes, more importantly, videos, enabling all of us to see in real time any special events or, indeed, sometimes mundane events, happening on railways throughout the world.



Join The *Class 58 Locomotive Group* and help support the restoration of 58016!

There are various ways to help the C58LG:

- Become a Member
- Make a donation
- Become a working volunteer
- Buy official C58LG merchandise



C58LG
Class 58 Locomotive Group

Preserving the Legacy of the Class 58s
Visit Our Website www.c58lg.co.uk
for all the upto date news on 58016!

Class 55 009 "Alycidon" enters Grantham with a northbound Kings Cross - York service during August 1979. Plenty of old bits of kit in evidence, including a GWR Siphon G parcels van on the right. The kid in the tracksuit must be in his late thirties now. *Chris Morrison*





Above: Class 81 005 is seen stabled in Birmingham New St. on December 3rd 1987. [Richard Hargreaves](#)
Below: Class 37 275 "Oor Wullie" leads 37 412 through Crewe, date unknown. [Brian Battersby](#)

Above: Eastleigh Crompton Class 33 028 heads a return Stratford-upon-Avon - Victoria VSOE charter, taking the Hatton line at Bearley Junction on May 22nd 1987. The signals and box disappeared in October 2010. [Chris Morrison](#)
Below: Class 56 014 heads into Bridgnorth on the Severn Valley Railway in May 1992. [Brian Battersby](#)



One of the most delightful train rides in the United Kingdom must be The Cambrian Coast between Machynlleth and Pwllheli. On 28th May 1984 a DMU approaches Barmouth on a Pwllheli bound service. These units were ideal for window viewing unlike the modern units which now operate on the route. Barmouth's location on the west coast of North Wales and lying between a mountain range and the sea on the mouth of the river Mawddach is arguably one of the most beautiful locations in Wales. It rests just within the south west corner of Snowdonia National Park and is steeped in a history rich with connections to the shipping and slate industries. *David Mead*





Above: Load Haul liveried Class 56 084 heads through Warrington on a MGR working, July 30th 1999. [Paul Godding](#)
Below: Class 90 018 hauls a failed 90 003 through Crewe with a West Coast service to Manchester. [Brian Battersby](#)



Above: Class 56 020 is seen stripped at CF Booths during a visit on August 30th 1997. [Paul Godding](#)
Below: Class 47 308 in Dutch livery is seen at Crewe Basford Hall open day, August 1995. [Derek Elston](#)





Above: Class 47 472 departs Holyhead with a liner, date unknown. *Derek Elston*
Below: Three Class 73s and a Class 33 are seen stabled at Woking in 1982. *Derek Elston*



Above: Class 20 118 is seen at Crewe Basford Hall open day in August 1994. *Brian Battersby*
Below: Class 47 306 heads a short freight through Trench on November 13th 1987. *Richard Hargreaves*





Above: The driver of Class 55 003 "Meld" waits for the off from Grantham with a Kings Cross - York working in August 1979. [Chris Morrison](#)
 Below: Class 304 043 stands at Crewe on December 5th 1987 ready to work a service to Liverpool. [Richard Hargreaves](#)



Above: Mainline freight liveried Class 37 077 is seen at Warrington on April 24th 1999. [Paul Godding](#)
 Below: Class 37 402 runs round its train having arrived off the North Wales Coast at Crewe, July 23rd 1994. [Paul Godding](#)



Class 121 single car DMU No. 55033 in Midline livery, calls at Wilmcote on a Leamington - Stratford-upon-Avon service on a freezing January 12th 1987.
The attractive lattice footbridge and station buildings remain today.

Chris Morrison



Thanks for reading this issue,
see you again next month.



On December 5th, Class 66 847 is seen working up the branch to Heathfield with 6Z50 empty log train. This was the first day of working for this service. [Steve Andrews](#)