

Milton Keynes Model Railway Club

Quarterly Newsletter



Issue 223

Autumn 2026

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Chairman's News

Hello all, and welcome to our latest club newsletter.

As always, it has been a busy few months for the Club with so much going on, despite the heatwave! Since the last newsletter, we have welcomed several new members to the Club and we look forward to your input and hope that you are able to gain from the Club, as much as the rest of us.

Our new OO Gauge layout is coming on strongly, with the fiddle yard section now having all the track laid. Work has also commenced on the track for the scenic section. With a bit of rejigging in the club room, the layout is now up in its entirety, making it feel even more real. As always, all members are welcome to get involved with it and should anyone have any questions, Paul Egerton is the project leader.

Work is also well underway for next year's raffle layout, after the huge success of this year's. The new layout is OO this time and the boards have already been built, with track having been laid and wiring being the current task. This layout is a great chance for members to learn new skills and for more experienced modellers to pass on their expertise. Peter Stiles is the leader of the project and there is a task board up in the smaller room, with what needs to be done.

We had our first Club Open Day of the year at the end of June. Thank you to everyone who attended and showed the Club in its best light. Although the numbers of visitors weren't as high as some of our previous, the feedback was all very positive from the public. Special thanks to James's Mum for the delicious cakes again. Our next Open Day is scheduled for Saturday 24th October, so make sure to spread the word and hopefully we'll get more visitors and maybe a couple of new members.

Moving away from model trains to the full-size ones, I enjoyed a long weekend break recently in Aberystwyth, with James Woodley and Ashley Goodall. We visited four preserved railways, the Vale of Rheidol, Talylyn, Welshpool & Llanfair and the Corris Railway. This has provided lots of inspiration for modelling and possibly my diorama entry for the 2027 competition.

I hope to see most of you at the Club over the coming weeks and if anyone has any suggestions at all please feel free to speak to either myself or any other committee member. We still have a good amount of second-hand sales items coming into the Club, with some more OO Gauge stock due to go on sale in the coming weeks, from the late brother of Phil Ramsden. All money raised directly helps both the family and the Club, so all purchases are appreciated. All that's left is to say that I hope are enjoying the summer and keep modelling!

Tim Byrne
Chairman



Colin French

1943 - 2026

We have recently lost one of our longest serving honorary members and our former Vice – Chairman. Colin worked for the Buckinghamshire Ambulance Service and was in a management role, when he became an early member of MKMRS. Although promotion took him to Suffolk in 1978, he continued to support MKMRS, by bringing his “pointless” layouts to many of our exhibitions over the years. When such occasions demanded it, Colin proudly wore his MKMRS polo shirt.

My wife Jenny and I attended Colin’s funeral service on 4th August at Seven Hills Crematorium near Ipswich and the wake at The Limeburner’s, Offord, near to the family home in Somersham. We were joined by Chris Bell, who along with her late husband Geoff, was involved in many MKMRS past events and served the Gauge O Guild with distinction over many years, as part of the exhibition team. Chris and Geoff, along with Colin and Margaret French were honoured, by being awarded the GOG Order of Merit in recognition of outstanding service to the Guild.

Colin was born in Wolverton on 13th November 1943 and on leaving school, worked for a time in the Signal & Telegraph Department of British Railways. He became a prison officer and later joined the ambulance service as a paramedic. He rose through the ranks, joining Suffolk as their No. 2. Prior to the move, Colin and Margaret lived in New Bradwell with their three girls Julie, Sharon and Debbie. Colin was a devotee of the Somerset & Dorset Railway and the girls’ initials produced S, D & J by some coincidence! In addition to his daughters, Colin had five grandchildren and several great grandchildren, organising family events was another speciality!

With the amalgamation of several county services took place (Suffolk is now part of the East Anglia Ambulance Service which stretches these days into neighbouring Bedfordshire) Colin took retirement.

Colin soon found plenty to keep him occupied in retirement. As well as his modelling interests, Colin was a volunteer at the Bressingham Steam Railway for many years alongside Margaret, Colin being a regular driver on the narrow-gauge line. Colin later joined the emerging Mid Suffolk Light Railway, which is based at Brockford near Stowmarket, where he too became a driver. A recent knee problem restricted Colin to guard duties and it was in that role that he worked the opening train over the extension to Aspell Halt last August with his photograph appearing on the BBC news story <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c24zn092vzqo> appearing near the bottom of the page.

Colin was initially an OO gauge modeller and a devotee of the Somerset & Dorset Joint Railway. His first layout was a fictitious S&DJR terminus whilst his second was an impressive portrayal of the Burnham-on-Sea terminus of that company, complete with the lifeboat station. Les Wood and I supported Colin at many exhibitions on the Chiltern Model Railway Association circuit, sometimes picking up trophies for the best layout.

In earlier days, MKMRS had a very active O gauge group and Colin made the step up. He built many micro layouts after moving to Suffolk and was involved with several of the GOG local groups. Colin, with Margaret, was a regular at many shows around East Anglia and further afield. Indeed, when we exhibited our own club O gauge layout ‘Frimingham’ at the Gauge O Guild show at Kettering in March, Colin & Margaret were also exhibiting. Needless to say, Colin was impressed with our clubs return to O gauge modelling and of course the usual banter took place.

Colin was only diagnosed with a particularly vicious form of cancer four weeks before his passing, on 1st July at St. Elizabeth Hospice. His rapid passing came as a great shock to us all.



Colin with his first S&DJR terminus complete with trophy

Not everyone will have known Colin's name, but his many appearances at our exhibitions and many others, the last was in 2025, but they will recognise him from this picture.



Colin was a talented modeller, an inspiration and a friend to many.

On behalf of MKMRS our condolences have been passed to Margaret and the wider family. Colin will be sadly missed by many. RIP Colin.

Dennis Lovett

2027 Exhibition

First off, a very big thank you to everyone who helped make the 2026 exhibition such a success, as we would not be able to run the event without you. With the new venue working well for us, we just need to do some more notices outside and inside, so to start, we now have two large banners we can put up outside the venue, to let passing people know what is on, and the flyers will now have What3Words, etc. location information on them, as some people didn't have up to date sat nav data.

The school were very happy with the way we ran the event, especially the effort made clearing up, and with them happy to welcome us back for next year, we have booked the venue again. A major change for next year though, is that the show is moving to a two day format and will run on Saturday 5th June (10am-4:30pm) and Sunday 6th June (10am-4pm), hopefully catching a few more people who are unable to attend on a Saturday, due to other activities, especially those with young families.

Also new for next years' exhibition, we will have a vintage bus doing the run between the station and the show, which we hope will attract more people to the show by public transport.

The Committee

Brinklow On The Road

Picture (Dennis Lovett) of Brinklow at the Northampton exhibition at Roade on 18 July 2026.



Whose Line Is It Anyway? – Part 2

So after the last newsletter, what's been happening with the TT120 layout? Well, not much other than all the main baseboards are now made (five boards, each of 1.2m x 0.9m) and the final decision on the track layout is about to be confirmed. This layout will be DC and DCC. Mike Biss, who is the lead on this build, has also sought out some 3D prints of a loco that uses a Hornby chassis and running gear and the intention is to use a few of these as the layout is based on the GWR station and large sidings that were used for the china clay works of Lostwithiel in south Cornwall.

Although Mike only showed a few of us the 3D printed loco unfinished, it really did look the part. Of course there were also local trains and also the normal train consists of through trains and ordinary goods trains.

So we are moving this layout forward, but after recently speaking with Ed's family with an update, they came up with what I thought was a good idea for our club members to help out with rolling stock and other items to the layout, by purchasing items and having them listed on a separate display board as, for example, "brake van purchased by Fred Bloggs in memory of my partner/mother/father/sister/brother/etc"

I would like to ask you, the club members, to really help this layout to fruition by supporting the build by any means, by offering to buy a couple of items of rolling stock, that is coaches, goods wagons or trucks or even TT120 buildings or station paraphernalia etc. Obviously you should check with Mike beforehand, to ensure you get the correct items for the layout and its period. It is only right that any item gifted to the layout will be recorded, so that at the layouts outings to shows, people can see this was well supported by our club members!

Team TT120

TT:120 Layout Update

The layout will be based on the late 80's to early 90's period, so around the transition between the old 'Clay Hood' style wagons (not available) and the newer 'CDA' style wagons (available). For the Clay Hoods, we will most likely have to go down the 3D printing route, which will be nice to have something on the layout which is not available RTR.

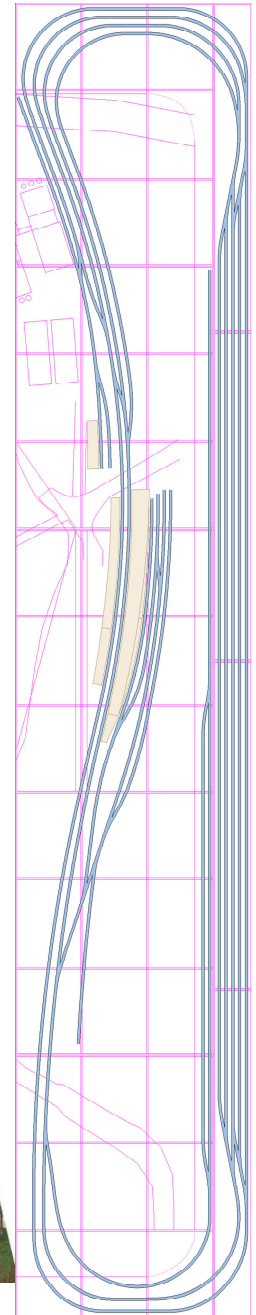


This means we will have Class 37's, Class 50's and HST's running (pre & post sectorisation liveries), which are all available, plus some others. Oh, and of course a steam engine rail tour. The track plan is shown on the next page and operation has the full clay trains arrive at the station from the south mostly (some come from the north as well), where they go into the sidings to the north. The loco then runs around it, connects back up and then takes it down the branch line to Fowey Harbour, for onward transport by ship. When empty, the moves are done in reverse, so giving plenty of movement on scene, including wrong way running

through the station. With all this movement, the level crossing barriers were down on average 22 minutes an hour!

There are not a lot of buildings on the scenic area, just the signal box, small building on the platform, a big shed in a field, a garage/showroom and the creamery site. Most of the scenic area is scrubland, river and trees. We have the road bridge at one end as a scenic break (real bridge built to bypass the level crossing) and we can possibly pull the tunnel, from 1¼ miles down the route, forward as the break at the other end.

The picture shows the station in 1996, so slightly later than we plan on, but which basically has everything in it that we are planning on creating. The curves through the station are accurately modelled on the track plan.



Mike Biss

All Change

Growing up, all I wanted to do was work on the railway. When I was 18, I applied to work on Bletchley station and never got the job. As happens, life took me in a different direction. To be honest, if you had asked me a year ago if I could see myself doing anything other than being a driving instructor, I would have said no.

Two years ago, my wife suggested I join the Club, to be around others who are into modelling, rather than just meeting up with various other modellers I knew around the country or spoke with on our Friday night Zoom meetings. Having joined the Club, not only did I find myself around other modellers, but also others who worked on the railway. Because of this, unknowingly a seed had been sown. Then a chance meeting with an old

driving instructor I used to speak to, who was now a driver for Avanti, watered that seed. We spoke for about 10 minutes and he told me that I really should give it a go, as it was the best thing he ever did.

A few weeks later, I was on the London Northwestern website buying some tickets when, I saw a “careers” link. It peaked my interest and there was an advert for a Senior Conductor job. I spoke with the family about it and they all agreed that if I wanted to make a change, they would support me. I also looked around other operators sites and found a Drivers job for Chiltern, which was also of interest to me.

With that, in November I applied for both jobs. There was a long closing date for both jobs and the two months wait to hear anything, felt like a lifetime. I ended up only having a reply from London Northwestern for the Senior Conductor role.

I was initially asked to perform three psychometric tests that were all aimed at my personal thought processes and how I would deal with situations. The questions were all either multiple choice or questions I had to grade from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”. I submitted my answers and waited again for a reply. It was about two weeks later when I had another email asking me to partake in round two of the psychometric testing. This one proved to be much harder. These sets of tests were to gauge speed, accuracy and learning capabilities. The test was broken down into three sections. Section one you had to read several paragraphs of text and answer five questions on each. This was done against the clock and there wasn’t enough time to answer all the questions (although I didn’t know that at the time). Section two we had to mark various symbols in a grid as quick and accurately as you could, again there isn’t enough time to complete each grid fully. Then the last section we had to check ticket validity against a scenario we had been given, again without enough time to complete all of the questions. At the end of the test, I said to my wife that I thought I hadn’t done very well, but at least I still had a job I was happy in, so it wasn’t the end of the world.

To my surprise, two days later I received an email offering me an interview. I could either have one that was five weeks away or one in three days’ time! Not wanting to sit and dwell on it for five weeks, I grabbed the earlier interview.

The interview was to be held at Bletchley station. I spent the next couple of days researching what sort of questions I might be asked and how best to answer them; bearing in mind I hadn’t done a job interview for 27 years. From my research, it transpired that they like the STAR technique (Situation, Task, Action, Result). My wife and I did a bit of practice at home, with me looking to answer questions using this technique.

The interview was as expected, with lots of questions based on safety and customer service, an example of this being “tell me about a time where you had to deal with a difficult customer”.

I came out of the interview feeling very positive about how I had done, as both myself and the interviewers were talking like they were offering me the job there and then, with language like “when” instead of “if”, with them even asking if there was space available on the next training course in two weeks, would I be able to start then.

It was two weeks later when I received an email from HR, offering me a role with a training start date of July 13th, at the training academy in Birmingham.

To be Cont.....

Carl White

Raffle '27 - August

Heya!

As you may, or may not know, we made sufficient monies from the Raffle'd-off layout at the June exhibition to warrant us attempting similar this year; similar, not same.

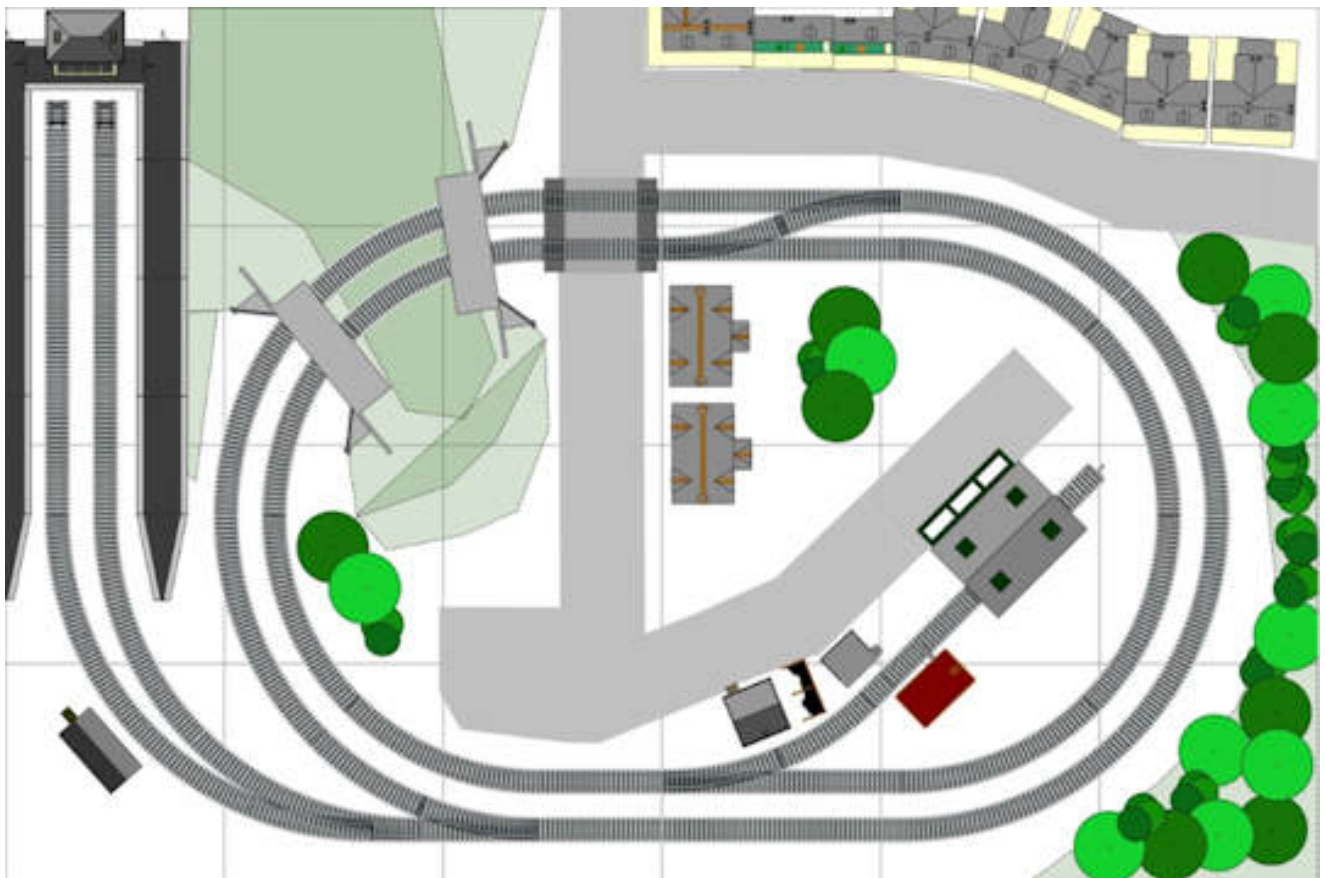
So, we're building a layout *from scratch* to raffle off next year – this time an “OO” layout, this time a two-baseboard 6' x 4' extravaganza! Well, within reason!

The layout is being made on a budget of £100, attempting to build it based on “things we have around the club” and on donations – Carl is whipping up traders and manufacturers to see what he can get. I'm on a slow-burn process of “put £5 bids on useful looking things on eBay in case I get them”. If I don't get them – no loss; if I do get them – something cheap for the layout.

As the idea of this is to promote modelling skills among Club members, we are attempting to only use buildings and such like that have been “built” by members of the Club. To this end, there is a pile of kits in the boardroom, which you are all free to pick up and build from – although please let me know what you're doing, so I can keep track of what's being done.

Serving Suggestion

This is the track plan of the layout, and it shows a “suggestion” of how buildings/scenery will be built up. I'm hoping that we'll end up constructing more buildings than we need, so that we can pick and choose about which we have on here and also to give us a head start on Raffle '28!



The loops are 1st and 2nd radius. This allows us room on the board for the two loops and a station, but does restrict the trains that can be run, but realistically speaking this should be someone's "first steps" in the hobby and we'd hope their first purchase after getting this wouldn't be a Big Boy.

The Cunning Plan

If you've been in the club recently, you will have wandered into the boardroom and seen "the plan".

By that, I mean the wall covered with post-it notes. Each post-it note is a "task" that needs to be done to complete the layout, and the wall is split up into columns.

Let's see, a picture paints a thousand Terry Savalas':



There's a column for "done". These are the tasks that have been, well, "done".

There is a column for "in progress". These are the tasks that have been picked up and are actively being worked on. Some of the tasks are one-person tasks, but a number are group tasks you can join in with!

There is a column for "next up". These are the tasks that we'll be getting to once we've emptied the "in progress" column. Look here to see if there's anything you'd like to be involved in – you're allowed to write your name on the post-it to show your interest.

There is a column (a very full one, at the present time) called "future" - these are the tasks we'll be getting round to. Every couple of weeks I'll move some of these tasks into the "next up" column.

Then there's the Brucie-Bonus column "anytime" - these are tasks that can be done at, you've guessed it - anytime. Most of them do have to be completed **before** another task, but they can at least be started anytime – the clue is in the name 😊 e.g. the buildings that we need are in this column.

This isn't the entirety of the work we have to do – I'll have forgotten things and there will be things that turn up as 'Good Ideas' or 'Unforeseen Consequences'. That's not a problem, in fact it's expected - we just add more post-it notes to the wall!

Whilst most of the post-its have a "number" on them, that isn't necessarily the sequence things will be done in – that's just the sequence they were in the Excel sheet when I wrote this up. The number allows us to attempt to control "dependencies" - if a task can't happen until another one, then that "another" task's number is noted in the bottom-right-hand-corner.

So Far, So Good

Progress so far has been impressive – with a number of members of staff joining in on the fun and games.

We have the baseboards made. We have the track laid (on cork). We have the underboard track-wiring completed (and we *love* the "Wago" connectors!). We've tested a locomotive around the track after each iteration.

You can monitor the up-to-date progress on the layout by popping into the 'board room and staring at the wall for a minute.

Ask Not What the Club...

Please come into the boardroom and see how we're doing – please read the post-its and, please put your name down to do one or more!

If you don't know how to do one of the tasks and want to know how it's done, then you can be added as a "helper" when that task is picked up. If you're an expert in something and feel that you could show other people how you do something – then we can arrange that as a training session!

I don't know how to Do Everything – so I'm learning things as we go; I think everyone can learn something from this process!

This is, hopefully, going to be fairly fast-moving – keep an eye on the wall and the documents I post up there and with a bit of luck, we'll be finished before you realise!

Cheers,

Peter Stiles



Making Changes

I have a home layout (my first as an adult) which I built primarily as a learning tool. Through it, I learnt to solder, wire, model terrain and buildings, and develop my painting and weathering. I was already fairly adept at building rolling stock and locomotive kits, but I hadn't previously had the opportunity to explore a wider range of skills.

I deliberately built the layout to be challenging. I wanted to wire a three-way point, model a curved station, install isolating switches, signals and lighting, and generally tackle things I had not done before. The ultimate goal was always to acquire those skills and eventually use them to rebuild the layout into something more ambitious and something I could be genuinely proud of.

Having learnt what I needed to, and accomplished what I could, I've recently decided to rebuild the layout into my "dream" layout - at least one that can fit in my flat!

Step 1 - What do I want?

I enjoy 1950's Southern steam. Specifically the Exmouth, Budleigh and Sidmouth branch lines. I had many happy times with my family in the region! It's a lovely place and I highly recommend a visit!

I want to operate my railway with purpose - I want required goods to come in and shipped goods to leave, in a way that is representative of the local community. What does the local community need? What do businesses do, are they producing goods or services? If it's summer or winter, how does local coal traffic flow? These are questions that can change how I operate the railway realistically and ultimately how the layout is planned.

Step 2 - Track plan

I use AnyRail for planning layouts. I started by sizing up my railway room and adding my existing baseboards. I have good knowledge of the station configurations on the lines I'd like to model. Unfortunately, I don't have the space for a scale model, so I've opted to replicate the flavour of the region instead.

I wanted to incorporate a private siding, which adds a separate area with some operational interest. It also gives me a way to extend the usable track space and provide a change of scenery, from the rural railway into something more industrial.

My approach in AnyRail is fairly iterative. I work between the prototype inspiration, the physical limitations of the existing baseboards and the way I actually want to operate the railway. A station layout might begin with something based quite closely on the real railway, but then gets compressed or rearranged, until it fits the available space, while still retaining the important operational features.

One of the biggest constraints has actually been curve radius and track, Code 75 Bullhead. I use Spratt & Winkle couplings on the majority of my stock (for hands-free shunting), while my kit-built locomotives and rolling stock have much tighter clearances and three-link couplings. To operate everything reliably, I need curves equivalent to a seventh-radius curve - tricky! That requirement very quickly dictates what can and cannot fit on the baseboards.

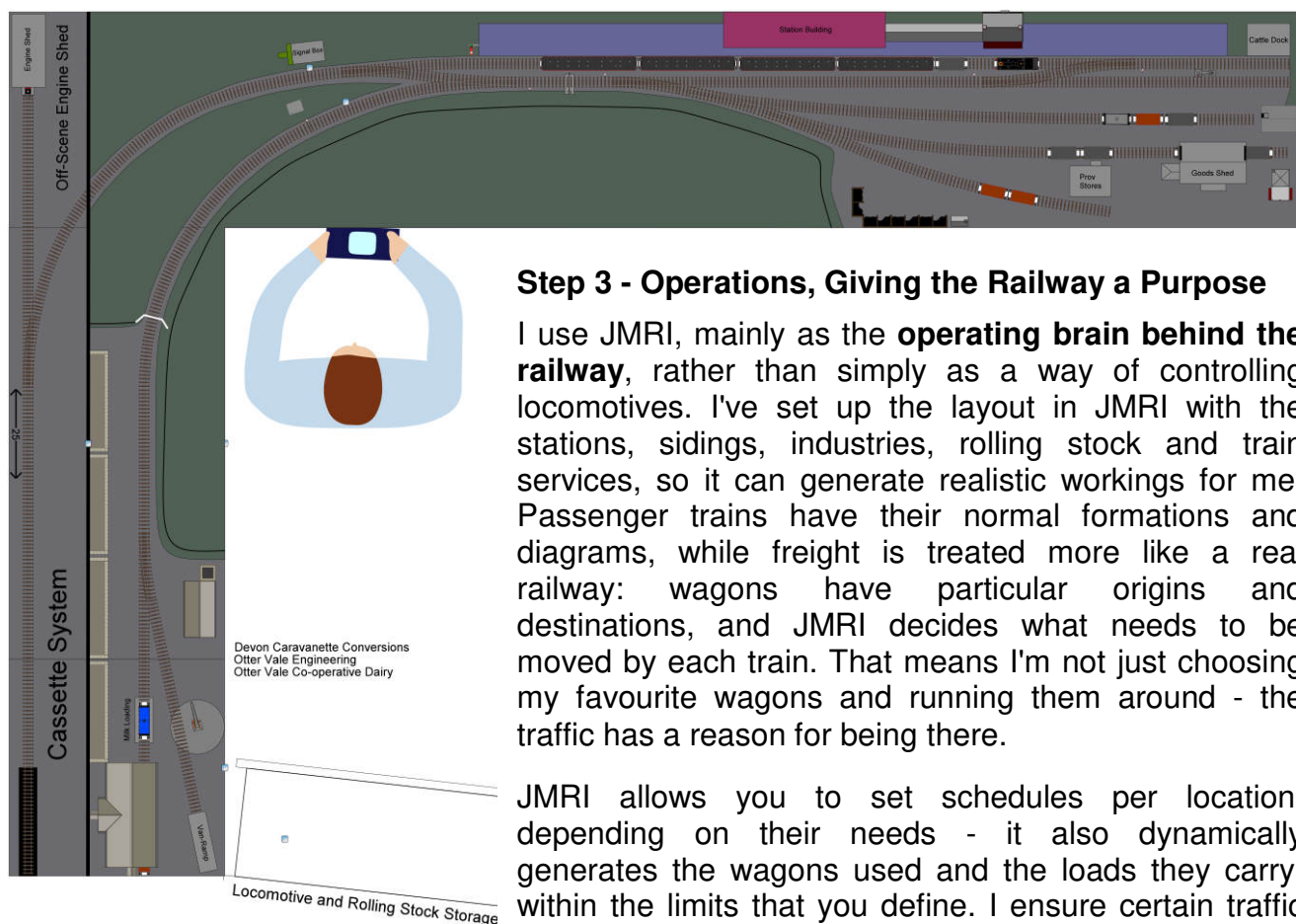
Rather than drawing the layout I would ideally like, and then trying to fit the curves into it afterwards, I started with the main curve and built outwards.

AnyRail is perfect for testing different things extremely quickly. A design that initially looks sensible, can soon reveal an awkward shunting movement, a siding that is too short or a

platform, that simply will not accommodate some of the stock I want to run. It is much easier to overcome those compromises on the screen, than after the track has been laid.

I also spent time researching the industries and communities that existed locally, using them as inspiration for what the railway would actually need to serve. I don't add sidings simply because there is space for them. I try to give each one a purpose, whether that's agricultural traffic, local industry, general goods or something very specific. That then feeds directly into the next stage: working out how the railway would realistically operate.

The main objective throughout has been **realistic operation**, rather than simply fitting in as much track as possible. I want trains to arrive, depart and shunt in a representative way. It's all a balance between the real world prototype, the physical requirements of the rolling stock and the space available. In some respects the restrictions are useful: rather than filling every available inch with track, they force the railway into a simpler and, hopefully, more believable arrangement.



Step 3 - Operations, Giving the Railway a Purpose

I use JMRI, mainly as the **operating brain behind the railway**, rather than simply as a way of controlling locomotives. I've set up the layout in JMRI with the stations, sidings, industries, rolling stock and train services, so it can generate realistic workings for me. Passenger trains have their normal formations and diagrams, while freight is treated more like a real railway: wagons have particular origins and destinations, and JMRI decides what needs to be moved by each train. That means I'm not just choosing my favourite wagons and running them around - the traffic has a reason for being there.

JMRI allows you to set schedules per location, depending on their needs - it also dynamically generates the wagons used and the loads they carry, within the limits that you define. I ensure certain traffic

runs only on particular days, or as they are needed: for example, milk workings, cattle traffic and parcels/CCT exchanges have their own patterns, while the ordinary passenger service continues around them. JMRI therefore gives me the *work to do*, but I still have to operate the railway myself - make up trains, shunt the correct wagons, place them in the right sidings and later collect them. For me, that is the attraction: it turns the layout from a collection of trains into a small railway with a purpose, where what happens today can depend on what happened earlier in the week, or affect what is needed tomorrow!

The timetable is also built around a **seven-day operating week**, so each day has its own character, rather than every operating session being identical. The core passenger service remains broadly consistent, but individual trains can be added, removed or strengthened (automatically!) depending on the day. That gives scope for things like **extra market-day trains, strengthened school services, additional Saturday or holiday traffic,**

excursions, and day-specific freight workings such as milk, cattle or parcels traffic. In practice, I simply start operations on a "virtual" Monday and run through the timetable as far as I wish. When I start up again the state of the railway is saved and ready for me to continue.

The same idea can then be extended into **seasonal timetables**. A summer schedule could have more holiday and weekend traffic, excursions and strengthened passenger trains, while a winter timetable might be quieter and have different freight requirements. Agricultural or other seasonal traffic could also appear only at the appropriate time of year. The aim is that the layout develops both a **weekly and seasonal rhythm**, so operating a "virtual" Tuesday in a "virtual" winter, could feel noticeably different from a Saturday in the summer, while still using the same underlying railway.

A typical Monday on the railway:

Time	Working	What happens at Otter Vale
06:55	Early Passenger and Parcels	Regular branch passenger arrivals and departures + PMV. Early parcels arrive
08:20	Morning Commuter and School Service	Arrives strengthened to 4 coaches
09:50	Shopping and Main-Line Connection Service	Regular branch passenger with through coach to London
10:35	Weekday Branch Goods	Wagons for Provender Store, Goods Shed, Coal Yard as required. For private sidings, a pair of CCT's with VW Vans to drop off for conversion and a couple of wagons filled with materials for the local industries
11:05	Local Passenger Service	Regular branch passenger arrivals and departures.
12:20	DMU Light Midday Service	Regular branch passenger arrivals and departures.
14:20	Returning Shoppers and Local Passengers	Regular branch passenger arrivals and departures
15:50	Return Schools Service and Afternoon Parcels	Arrives strengthened to 4 coaches + PMV
17:20	Return Commuter Service	Regular branch passenger arrivals and departures.
18:50	Evening City Connection and Outward Mail	Regular branch passenger arrivals and departures. 1-2 unloaded goods wagons to be shunted to reception siding for tomorrow.
20:50	Late Local Service	Regular branch passenger arrivals and departures.
22:05	Last Arrival	Regular branch passenger arrivals and departs empty.

CCT Exchange - On Monday, Wednesday and Friday, a pair of CCT vans is exchanged at the private siding. The arriving pair drops off fresh VW Caravans, the other pair leaves with converted Caravanettes, similar to the JP White Devon Caravanette factory in Sidmouth.

Milk Rotation - On Tuesdays and Thursdays, an empty milk tanker arrives on the morning goods and is shunted into position for loading. It remains there for around 1½–2 hours, while it is filled, before being collected and loaded by an afternoon passenger working. Keeping the milk traffic to Tuesday and Thursday, keeps space for the CCT's to exchange and reflects local milk production levels.

Will Tregurtha

Wensleydale Railway

Well, at the third attempt, I have managed to ride the rails of the Wensleydale Railway on 30th June 2026. I say third attempt, as my previous visits have coincided with non-operational days, so I was unable to take in anything beyond a pure cursory look.

For those not familiar with the line, it has a mainline connection at Northallerton, facing in the down, Newcastle-upon-Tyne direction, and runs some 22 miles westwards towards Redmire. However, due to the condition of the track and infrastructure, the Railway Inspectorate has prohibited public use of the section between Leyburn and Redmire, until considerable track and infrastructure replacement has taken place. To illustrate, overgrowth of vegetation and poor drainage, have caused the line to deteriorate which has been exacerbated by a track slippage at Akebar. Due to a lack of available funds, the decision was taken to truncate services at Leyburn.

Progress towards reinstatement of the truncated section of line is slow and can only take place when funds allow. That said, the P.Way team have now nearly reached Wensley and in 2027, it is hoped that services will return to this station, with the remainder to follow, as and when funds allow.

History

The line from Garsdale to Hawes was built by the Midland Railway and the line from Northallerton to Hawes was built by the North Eastern Railway, with a joint end-on station at Hawes, with both lines completed in 1878. The line was closed to through passenger traffic in 1954, but freight continued, with quarry traffic from Redmire being the prime reason for retention of the track between Redmire and Hawes Junction (name changed to Garsdale in 1932), on the Settle & Carlisle Line, with the track being finally lifted in 1965, with several bridges being demolished. Quarry traffic from Redmire, via Northallerton direction, ceased completely in December 1992, when British Steel stopped using the line and switched its limestone source to Hardendale in Cumbria.

Following the cessation of freight traffic, the line was temporarily mothballed, which enabled the formation of the present day Wensleydale Railway as a heritage railway to take place.

Stations

The line currently has five stations, namely Scruton, Leeming Bar, Bedale, Finghall Lane and Leyburn.

Scruton is not generally used, other than for special events, due to its isolation and lack of car parking. When I visited, I was fortunate to catch the Station Master who gave me a tour of the station; due to the height of the original North Eastern Railway platform and the fact that it sits almost upon a level crossing, it has been necessary to construct a modern wooden platform adjoining the original, in the North Eastern Railway style, which when services run, is sufficient for a two-car DMU. Upon closure of passenger traffic, the buildings were scheduled to be demolished, but by a quirk of fate, the demolition contractor never turned up, leaving nature to reclaim the station buildings. By the time that preservationists had turned up, there was no sign of the building as it was heavily covered by ivy. Over several



months, volunteers cleared the station ticket office building, and it is now presented today in the early Edwardian period, with scene dressing to enable an ambience of around 1902.

Leeming Bar is the main operational base of the railway and is presented in the 1920s style, with parcels office and ticket office appearing as it might have done during that period. The engineering facility is of course out of bounds, but it is possible to walk to the end of the platform and view some of the rolling stock.

Bedale station is located within the Georgian market town and is unique in that the single platform is set on a sharp curve in the track formation.

Finghall Lane is a countryside halt that can be accessed by notifying the train Guard or by signalling to the train driver. It is an example of a small rural station and featured in the original "All Creatures Great and Small" television series screened by the BBC and is themed as a wartime 1940s station.

Lastly, **Leyburn** is the main market town of mid-Wensleydale and current terminus of the truncated railway. There is a small display of railwayana in the ticket hall and there is a small tea room and shop, where the usual preservation purchases can be made. It is worth mentioning there is a Gin distillery in the building next door to the ticket office. Also, a short walk along the main road, in the Bedale direction, will bring you to a small industrial unit which is home to a delightful artesian chocolate factory, where it is possible to taste a small sample before purchase.

Rolling Stock

As a "new" generation line, the Wensleydale Railway does not own any steam engines. However, there are a number of ex-BR era diesels, and at the time of my visit, I saw and photographed a class 47, 37, 33, 14, 03 and several two and three car Pacer units, which provide the bulk of passenger services, along with a class 121 Bubble Car DMU. In addition, I saw a Sentinel 0-6-0 shunter in excellent condition.

Coaching stock is a mix of Mk1, Mk2 and Mk3, with those in service looking in excellent condition. As is inevitable on heritage lines, there are quite a few vehicles stored outside of the public glare in sidings, which have seen better days and await their day in the workshop.

Having said that, there was no steam. I did spot the rolling chassis of an ex-industrial 0-6-0 tank engine, but although it is said to be a powerful engine, it is privately owned and the only work that takes place on it, is when the owner can spare the time. It does not therefore feature in the railway's medium to long term operational plans and will therefore be a purely diesel operational railway for a long time to come.



Paul Egerton

A Useful Resource

It may seem odd that the National Library of Scotland has an extensive library of old ordnance survey maps, which are a useful resource for railway modellers. In recent years, they have added maps from England and Wales to their extensive portfolio.

How can I find out more?

To assist you through the complexities of the system, I have constructed a simple to use guide (it has to be simple, for someone not so competent with technology as me). Here is how to find out what you are looking for.

Go to <https://maps.nls.uk/os/25inch-england-and-wales/>

These are the best ones for finding out track plans etc. for railway modelling purposes. These maps are now out of copyright (which lasted for 50 years under the old 1956 Copyright Act. More modern versions of the law (1988 with later alterations), it becomes far more legal and complicated. To clarify the situation, the maps that appear on the NLS site are copyright free, as it is past the 50 year rule, in place before 1988. Scotland has its own section not surprisingly, as it was created by the National Library of Scotland!



National Library of Scotland
Leabharlann Nàiseanta na h-Alba

Map images

Maps home > Ordnance Survey > OS 25 inch England and Wales, 1841-1952

Ordnance Survey Maps - 25 inch England and Wales, 1841-1952

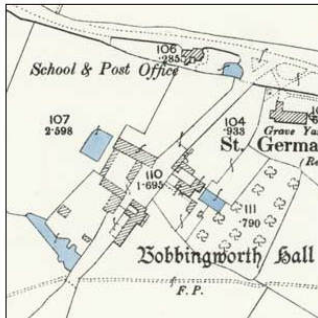
The most detailed topographic mapping covering most parts of England and Wales from the 1840s to the 1950s.

Browse the maps:

- As [As individual sheets](#) in our *Map Finder* viewer
- As a [seamless layer \(1890s-1920s\)](#) in our *Georeferenced Maps* viewer
- As a [seamless layer \(1890s-1920s\)](#) in our *Side by side* viewer
- By [County Map lists](#) (eg. Anglesey XVII.9)

See also:

- [Guide to abbreviations](#) – alphabetical list of standard OS abbreviations



Then select: '[As individual sheets](#)'

Insert your STATION NAME in the box

A choice of area will appear for ___CITY, TOWN OR VILLAGE___ then click on the part you want. NOTE: If your location is a bit obscure, you may need to search a bigger town.

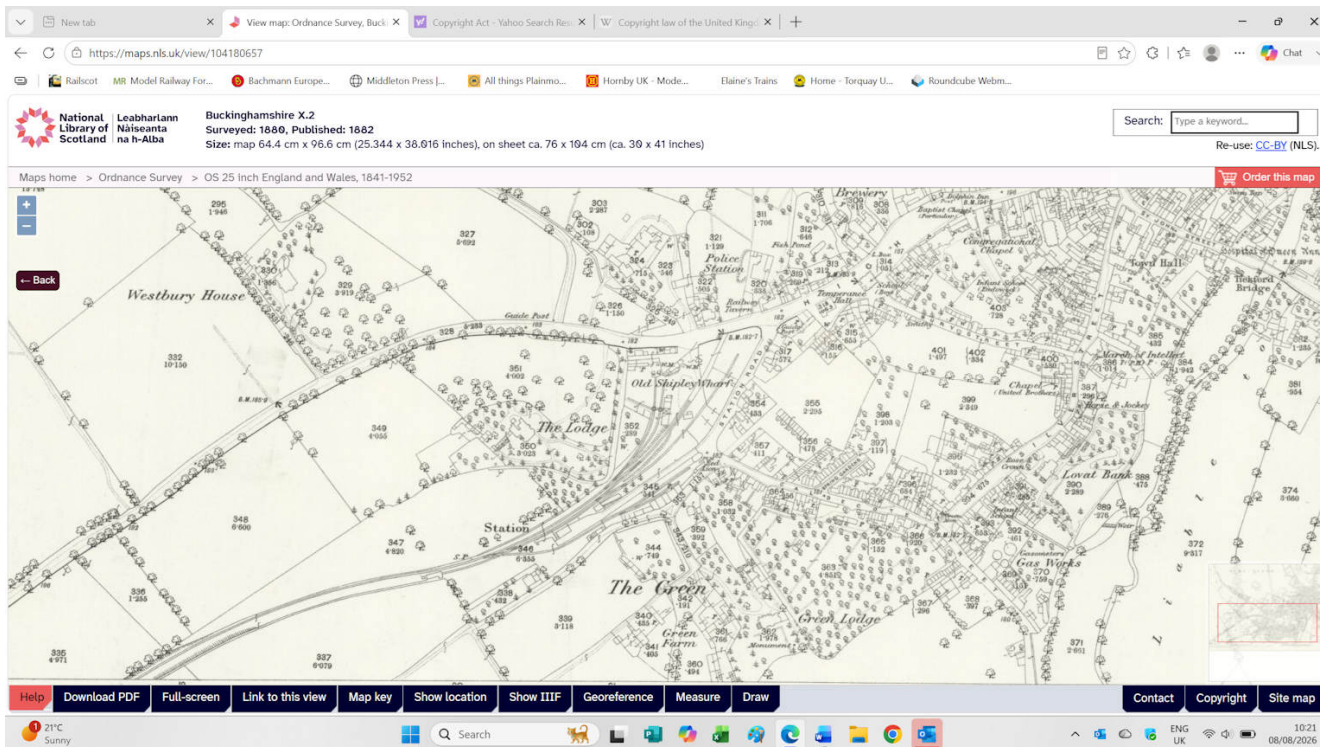
Once you have found what you are looking for, click on the area of map you are interested in, and on the right hand side will show the available maps by year. Click on the relevant year, and the map sheet will be shown.

NOTE: If you want to roam along the tracks, then select '[seamless layer \(1890s-1920s\)](#)', then after your name search, the map appears and you can wander around the whole of England and Wales to your hearts content. Great for following the route of a specific line, or just looking for inspiration for a station location.

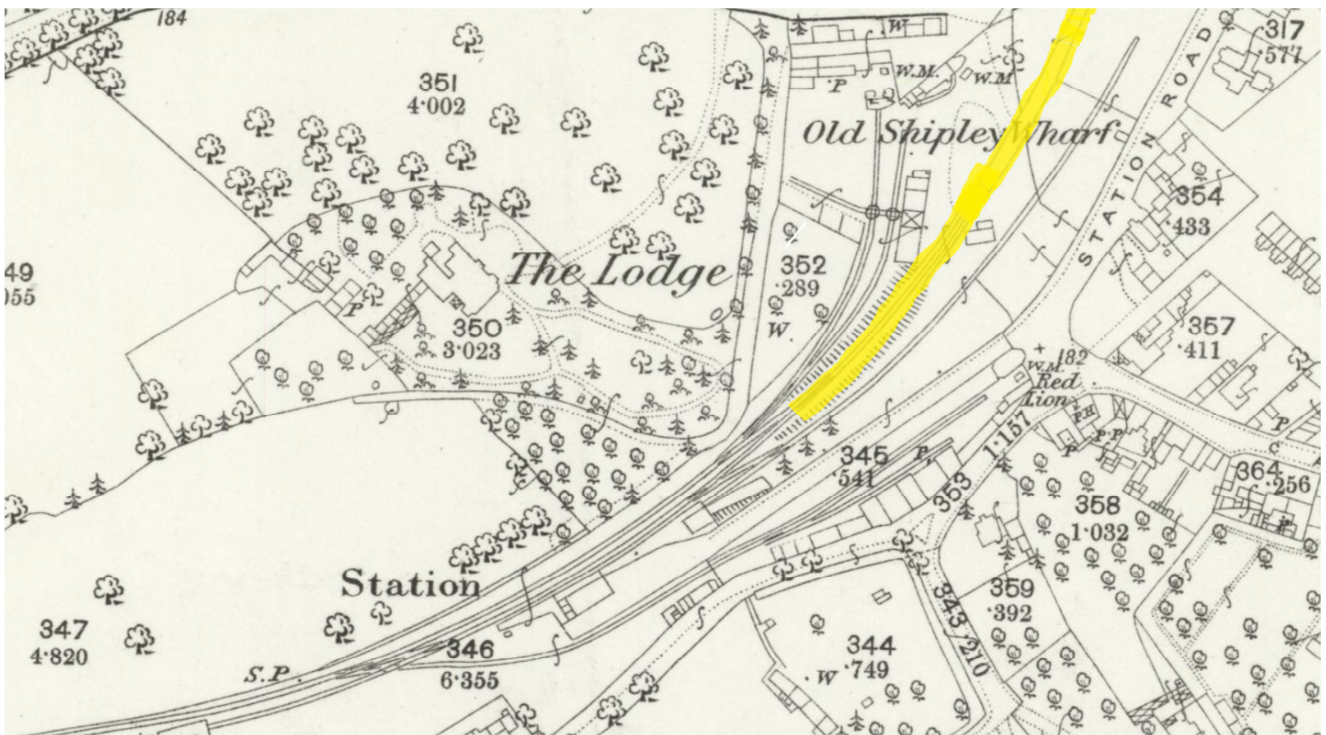
To save (several options to use):

'Windows Key + Shift + S' or *'Fn + Windows Key + Space Bar'* or *'Print Scrn'* buttons

This will allow you to copy and paste into another document (I use paint). You can then crop and edit as required.



Screen grab of the 1882 map of the terminus at Newport Pagnell, before editing.



Cropped version, with the proposed and abandoned extension to Olney highlighted.

This would have crossed the main Wolverton to Newport Pagnell road, by the old Police Station. Some earthworks around Sherington were constructed, before it was abandoned.

The site of Newport Pagnell station is now a car park accessed off Station Road!

You can of course walk much of the old track bed which today forms part of the Redway network. The platforms at New Bradwell (picture below) and Great Linford are still in situ.



New Bradwell 1881

A word of warning – once you start searching, it can become contagious!!

Good hunting

Dennis Lovett

New Club OO Layout

All the copperclad board-to-board joins have been done for the fiddle yard. Creating the wiring plugs, that go between the boards, has reached the half way mark. With a change around in the room, and a slight move for Barton Crossing (lifted and shifted by about 10 members), the scenic boards were brought in and have now been connected up to the fiddle yard boards, so we now have a complete loop. We have a track plan printed out for the scenic boards, so we can start to think about what scenery we want, and more importantly, how much room between things there is. First thing was the cutting of the corner boards at each end, to give a height difference. At clubnights, members have been doing the cutting of the Peco track lengths, to get the sleeper spacing to scale, nearly there with that.



A Layout Name Required

If you have any ideas for a name for the new layout, please place it in the suggestions box in the club room (*or send it to the Editor*) and the committee will then discuss those submitted over future committee meetings to decide on the best one. The one option we don't want to use please, is one which has 'Bond' in the name.

Get Involved

With the aim of these new builds to be ways of showing/helping members how to do all aspects of layout building, it would be nice if more of you came along at clubnights to chat and offer to get involved. None of the work is scale specific, so what you can learn here, can be applied to any scale of layout you want to build. No previous experience necessary and you can either just watch to see how it's done or you can have a go yourself, or practice on a test piece. The more you do, the better you get, so that when you come to do it on your own layout, there are no fears about mucking it up.

Stock Options

If the layout is to go out to exhibitions, which is what it's being built to be able to do, we will need people to go to the shows to exhibit it and also for some of those to supply stock. What we would like people to do, is let us know if they are interested in exhibiting the layout (absolutely no commitment at this time) and to run their stock at shows. Ideally, we also need to understand what stock people have available to run, so we can plan specific time periods to match what people have. We can't have 1930's steam and modern image say, running at the same time, that's just for clubnights!

The Committee

Royal Connections At Bedford Vintage Trains Group



Ashley and Peter in charge of the Royal Train hauled by ScotRail Class 47 'The Duke of Edinburgh'

Since it was formed some years ago, Milton Keynes MRS members have supported the BVTG, which meets every two months at Houghton Conquest village hall, on the outskirts of Bedford. At the 12th August meeting, Ashley Goodall, Peter Hoare and Dennis Lovett represented MKMRS, with a running display to coincide with the theme of "Royal Connections".

22 different locomotives were on display, representing those carrying the names of Kings, Duchesses, Dukes, Princesses and Princes. Deltic Class 55 'The Kings Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, was a dubious connection. We even managed to find three wagons with royal connections, one was a Peco Wonderful Wagon (kit) produced to celebrate the marriage of Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer in 1981.

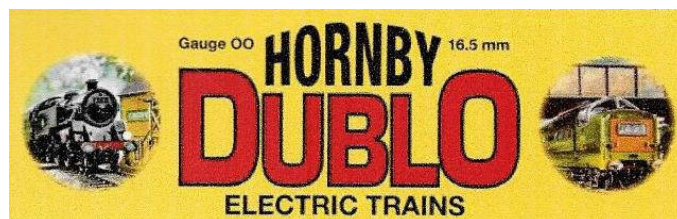
The joint organisers, Roger White and Roger Mills, are well known in MKMRS circles. Anyone interested in old OO or O gauge trains, there are test tracks and even tracks running live steam trains, many of them dating back to the earliest days of the hobby. For further information, please see Ashley or Dennis regarding future dates.



The MKMRS display in close up



It was good to see MKMRS member Roger White back up and running, after a visit to Works for a new boiler (major heart operation). Here Ashley points out that despite the blue box, the contents are definitely 2 rail and Roger is a long-standing devotee of Hornby Dublo 3 rail operation.



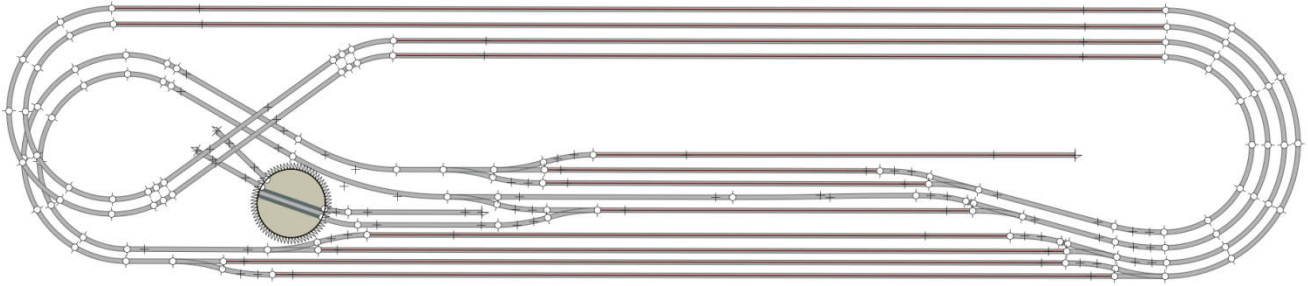
Dennis Lovett

Chance To Buy An N Gauge Layout

The Club has ownership of a layout to sell. It is just under 11 feet long and 2 feet wide and was originally in one piece, but has been carefully split in half.

It is a double track layout (see quickly knocked-up AnyRail schematic below) and comes with all the buildings (most are removable), controllers, people and vehicles. It has Fleischmann points (with integral motor) and a Peco turntable. No rolling stock included.

If interested, please let us know, and we can give you more information and viewing is available. Any sensible offers accepted.



Mike Biss

2027 Club Annual Diorama Competition

The model railway challenge is open to all club members; it will run from June until the club AGM in January and will be judged on that evening to see which is the best. The winner will be awarded a Trophy.

The rules are:

- The model must be railway or tram related diorama.
- The model can be anything from a signal box to just a wagon etc. on any scale you want to build in.
- The baseboard size **MUST** be 500 mm X 200 mm this can be cardboard, ply, foam board, polystyrene, etc.
- You cannot exceed the length or width of the board but it can be any height, as long as you can get it through the door!

This is a great way to test your skills at scenics and model building.

Hopefully, this will show Milton Keynes Model Railway club can model and not just be a box opening club.

Good Luck.

Wayne Webb

Club Open Day

The second club Open Day of 2026 will be held on Saturday 24th October, so please make a note in your diary. Open days are a great way to welcome potential new members and show people what we do, although successful open days rely on club members getting involved! So why not ask your friends, neighbours or work colleagues about having a look at what we do and see if they will like to join in with the activities we do.



Therefore, we will soon have a sign-up sheet on the notice board in the club room, so we have an idea of how many members will be able to help out on the day! If you can't get to the club room to add your name to the sign-up sheet, then please contact Martin at secretary@mkMrs.org.uk and he will add your details.

WhatsApp Group For The Club - Update



WhatsApp

The WhatsApp group for the Club is up and running, and has been used to good effect to answer some questions and also to see if something can be looked at on a clubnight. Join up and have a look, it can become a useful tool for the Club.

WhatsApp is available to download from your usual mobile phone App store.

To get access to the group (**which must be adults only due to legal reasons**), there is a QR-Code image on the Club notice board. Open WhatsApp and then click on the camera symbol and point it at the QR-Code. It will then allow you to join the 'MK Model Railway Club' group.



Alternatively, you can use this link <https://chat.whatsapp.com/JWo9Pc1ynRU3vhxYm8Smvj> on your phone's browser to gain access. Any questions, just ask someone who uses their phone a lot!

NOTE: Younger members can have their questions asked via their parent/guardian, using the group.

We now have several separate subject themes on the WhatsApp group:

- General Chat
- Raffle '27
- New OO Layout Discussion
- TT Layout Discussion
- 009 Layout Discussion
- Club Trips
- Sales
- Exhibitions



The MKMRC Newsletter will only survive with your help,
we need you to provide articles please –

- These can be write-ups on exhibitions attended, modelling titbits, trips out, holidays, modelling updates on your layout or anything else.
- Members will find a variety of subjects interesting.
- Articles can be sent either as an attached file or with the words in the email. Pictures that you want in the article can either be in the attachment or sent separately.
- No need to spend time making it look nice, that's the Editor's job!
- Please email articles to newsletter@mkmrs.org.uk

Deadline for the Winter Edition is:-

22nd November 2026

**With the Newsletter being published
in the first week of December**



*Mike Biss
Newsletter Editor*