

BRADFIELD

GLOUCESTER SQUARE

The layout was inspired by the Midland Railway's terminus in Bradford (Forster Square) with links via Leeds to London, Sheffield, Nottingham, Birmingham and Devon and links via Settle to Carlisle and Morecambe. It is not a replica of the station, but reflects its architectural style and the atmosphere of a jaded West Riding mainline terminus in the final decade of steam. The trains are run to a working timetable (WTT), which is based on a simplified BR summer timetable from the early 1960's, with movements controlled by working semaphore signals. There is a wide variety of passenger and parcels trains, but goods traffic is restricted to vacuum fitted vans reflecting operations at Bradford in that period.

The layout uses 4mm fine-scale "00" gauge hand-built track-work, with points operated by tortoise motors and working signals operated by Servos. It is controlled by Digitrax DCC equipment providing an opportunity for members to operate their DCC equipped locos, which are often sound equipped. The layout measures 4.6 M long by 0.6 M wide with operating space behind. It is built on three lightweight baseboards and is lit by overhead lights. We can operate in two time periods, either late 1950's with steam locos (BR standard, ex-LMS and occasional visits by ex-LNER locos) or early 1960's with mainly diesel locos using the same WTT.

The terminal station at Bradfield G.S. has three platforms, a central siding and a head-shunt which used to be a fish dock, all once covered by an overall roof. The station can accommodate trains of up to five coaches. It stands at the end of double track branch that joins the midland main line between Leeds and Skipton. Immediately outside the station the double tracks plunge into a short tunnel to head in a northerly direction towards the main line for Leeds and London or Carlisle. Loco servicing facilities and extensive goods yards are on the far side of the tunnel. Just prior to the tunnel entrance, there is a junction, which once provided access to a branch line, but now gives access to the carriage sidings laid on the old town goods yard. These sidings provide stabling for the stock of southbound expresses that originate and terminate here. Local DMU and inter-regional services are also provided from the station. In future, we plan to add further details to the layout, such as additional passenger and workmen figures and some more road vehicles as well as modifying our stock for auto-uncoupling using the magnets under the baseboards.

This layout was exhibited by the original owner in the Midlands and the North over the last two years. We became the new owners late last year and have recently exhibited it at our own local show in Tring. We plan to honour all previous commitments and start to exhibit the layout at various venues in the Home Counties, the South and East.

