

BR 0-6-0 DIESEL ELECTRIC SHUNTER 08476

This loco was built at BR Crewe in December 1958 and was first allocated to 26A Newton Heath depot in Manchester numbered D3591.

The BR Class 08 diesel shunter was based on the 1944 LMS design, but fitted with 4ft 6in diameter wheels as previously used on a similar SR design. The British Transport Commission (BTC) required the general arrangement to be the same as several previous types with the design conforming to the L1 loading gauge restriction. This permitted use in virtually all locations except where prohibited by axle load or wheelbase.

The loco height was 12 ft 8½ in and 8 ft 6 in wide. In working order it weighed 47 tons and had a maximum speed of 20 mph. Most locos were fitted with a 6-cylinder engine providing 400 hp and GEC electric transmission giving a tractive effort of 35,000 lb.

The structural design was based on an underframe frame 29 ft 3 in long over buffers. A full width driving cab (at one end) was fitted with two driving positions, both facing forward, looking down the sides of the slightly narrower bonnet section. The equipment compartments were accessed by outside doors from running plates. Forward from the cab these were electrical equipment, power unit bay and a cooler group at the front. By today's standards the cabs were very basic, noisy and extremely draughty.

A number of items were manually operated, including the fuel transfer pump, taking gas oil from the main tank to the header (service) tank for distribution to fuel injectors. One of the driver's jobs was to use this pump to maintain 'his' supply. One speedometer and ammeter was provided, on a hinged central column, and had to be turned around depending from which side the driver was working. Cab heating was very poor as, when the first examples entered service, the only provision for heat was a radiator water pipe running through the cab. This was later supplemented by electric heaters.

At the design stage it was agreed to install the established English Electric (EE) six-cylinder 6K power unit, set to deliver 350-400hp. An EE supplied the type EE801 generator which powered two EE nose suspended traction motors driving the outer wheelsets through double reduction gears. BTC orders for the first batch of standard shunters was placed in 1949 with the construction contract being awarded to BR Derby works. The first loco, number 13000, emerged on 3rd October 1952 and was allocated 'on paper' to Tyseley but actually worked for several weeks at Toton near Nottingham.

Over the next few years numerous follow-on orders were placed and, due to the volume of these orders, Derby was not able to cope with the demand so BR Works at Darlington, Crewe, Doncaster and Horwich, all assisted with the build. Construction continued until the final loco, D4192, emerged from Darlington in September 1962. When the construction was underway it was decided that some locos, to be allocated to Southern Region, would be fitted with revised gearing giving a higher maximum speed of 27 mph as well as waist height air connections to couple to post-1951 multiple units. These were classified under TOPS in 1973 as Class 09.

When built originally these shunters were fitted with air operated loco brakes and vacuum brakes for train working although dual brakes were installed on later builds. Subsequently,

most of the original vacuum only locos were modified for dual brake operation and a large number had their vacuum equipment removed leaving them air brake only. Some standard Class 08s were also modified with SR style high level air connections.

A large number of early withdrawals passed to industrial use while a handful were exported. Withdrawals continued through the 1980s and 1990s with the preservation movement purchasing a sizeable number. Few heritage railways do not now have at least one operational Class 08. Although the need for large-scale shunting work on the main network has long since gone it is expected that some Class 08 and 09s will remain in operation for many years to come. No realistic replacement design has been on the drawing board.

D3591 was re-allocated to 9A Longsight depot in week ending 6th July 1968. Just three years later it moved to 66A Polmadie depot in Scotland in week ending 27th November 1971 but stayed there less than 5 months before going to 65A Eastfield depot during the 5 week period ended 1st April 1972. A further move to 67C Ayr depot occurred in the 5 week period 30th December 1972 and, whilst there, D3591 was renumbered under the TOPS system in June 1974 to 08476. It was transferred to Dunfermline Townhill depot in 1983 and was withdrawn from Capital Stock on 9th September 1985.

By June 1987 it carried all over plain Green BR livery during it's early new life at Swanage. D3591 left Swanage for the Shackerstone Railway on 23rd July 2009 for a contracted engine overhaul. On 17th July 2011 the exterior was, by then, in green undercoat and the engine was freshly painted grey. It was completed in the latter half of 2011 and returned to Swanage.

Over the weekend of 24th/25th March 2012, the railway held a "Railway At Work Weekend" which included an added bonus for members of the Swanage Railway Trust. D3591 (08476) was coupled a Queen Mary bogie brake van and worked a shuttle service between Norden and the ground frame near Motala kennels.

On Wednesday 27th February 2019 both 08476 and 08436 were used in top and tail mode on a train of two Queen Mary bogie brake vans on a tour of the lines and sidings of the entire Swanage Railway. It was chartered by the Branch Line Society for it's members.

GW Railwayana Auctions sale, in March 2020, had an interesting item as Lot No. 148. An oval cast iron works plate "Built Crewe 1958", measuring 10½ in x 6 ins had 08476 chalked on the back. It was sold for £220.