

BR CLASS 33 Bo-Bo DIESEL 33 053

(Ex-D6571)

D6571 was built by Birmingham Railway Carriage & Wagon Co Ltd (BRCW) at their works in Smethwick [works number DEL 175] and entered service on 14th October 1961 being allocated to Hither Green depot and numbered D6515. It was one of a fleet of 98 delivered to British Railways Southern Region in the early 1960s which, in due course, earned an enviable reputation for reliability and capability across many of BR's regions.

The loco was air braked and had vacuum and air train braking equipment. It was also fitted with an electric train heating system at 750v DC so that it matched third rail voltage on Southern Region. It left the BRCW works in BR Green with white window surrounds as well a white waistline band along both body sides.

By July 1970 it was noted as having been repainted in all-over BR Blue livery with full yellow ends. On 31st December 1973 it was allocated to the Class 33 fleet and renumbered 33053 under BR's Total Operating Processing System (TOPS).

It was photographed on 4th April 1985, in reasonably clean condition, accelerating up the bank out of Fareham with a five coach Portsmouth-Cardiff service. On 31st July 1985 it was pictured at Shrewsbury hauling a Crewe to Cardiff Central train. In November 1985, 33053 was re-allocated to Stewarts Lane depot.

On 10th April 1988, 33053 was on display during an Open Day at Stewarts Lane depot. The theme was "Stewarts Lane goes Inter City" as it became officially a depot of the InterCity Business Sector. Four 33s, plus 73004 "The Bluebell Railway" electro diesel in NSE livery, were available for inspection along with other exhibits. Three years later 33053 went into Eastleigh Works for an overhaul being released during October 1988.

At some stage it was allocated to the Trainload Freight Construction sector. It was in their grey livery when 33053 was pictured working an empty engineers train from Hoo Junction passing Paddock Wood on the 4th September 1993.

33053 was condemned officially on 13th February 1997 at Stewarts Lane depot. The following month saw it purchased by the Harry Needle Railroad Company (HNRC) at Barrow Hill. HNRC then moved it to Crewe in April 1998 for further storage. In May 2000 the loco was moved to HNRC's base at Barrow Hill.

In December 2000, 33053 was sold by HNRC to Direct Rail Services (DRS) and moved to MoD Smalmstown for a short period. It was then moved to the DRS base at Carlisle Kingmoor for overhaul. It re-entered main line service for DRS in June 2001 and used on their nuclear flask and other trains.

33053 was used by DRS for just over three years before being sold back to HNRC in November 2004. It was moved to Barrow Hill in July 2004 but, six months later, it was sold to the D5581 Group also at Barrow Hill. In April 2006 it was moved to the Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway followed by the Battlefield Line at Shackerstone in March 2007.

It's travels were not over with 33053 being transported to the Northampton & Lamport Railway at Pitsford. In August 2010 it was loaded onto a lorry again to travel down to the

Mid Hants Railway. There 33053 underwent repairs and returned to service on the Watercress Line, where it has been used for dedicated running days.

May 2024 saw HNRC purchase it again and move it to their new base at Worksop. It arrived on the Swanage Railway by road from their Worksop depot on 7th August 2025. It is on short-term loan for the Summer peak season.

TECHNICAL DETAILS

Length over buffers	50 ft 9 in	Maximum tractive effort	45,000 @ 26% adhesion
Overall wheelbase	39 ft 0 in	Continuous tractive effort	26,000 lbs @ 17.5mph
Bogie wheelbase	10 ft 0 in	Continuous rated rail HP	1215
Bogie centres	29 ft 9 in	Maximum speed	85 mph
Overall height	12 ft 8 in	Fuel capacity	800 gallons
Overall width	9 ft 3 in	Weight in working order	76 tons 9 cwt
Wheel diameter	3 ft 7 in		

Traction equipment:

Diesel engine:

Sulzer 8 cylinder vertical single bank in-line type 8LDA28 of 1,550 bhp @ 750 rpm

Main generator:

Crompton Parkinson type CP CG 391B1

main generator rating: 1,012kW, 575V, 1760A @ 750 rpm

auxiliary generator rating: 57kW, 110V, 518A @ 550 rpm

train heating generator rating: 235kW, 750V, 313A @ 550 rpm

Traction motors (4 per loco):

Crompton Parkinson type CP 171C2, in parallel, rating 305hp, 440A, 580V, gear ratio 62:17

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Various photographic websites

Compiled by Peter Sykes 12th August 2025

