

BR 12T VENTILATED GOODS VAN B 784757

B 784757 was built 1962 at the BR Carriage & Wagon Works in Derby as part of Lot No. 3392 to design diagram 1/217. This batch of almost 900 vans was numbered B 783873 to B 784766. In total, BR built almost 2,000 vehicles to this design.

The 'VANWIDE' ventilated van had been introduced a few years earlier in 1959. They were a later development of the very numerous 'VANFIT' covered van although retained the standard 10 foot wheelbase chassis with pressed steel ventilated fan body ends. They had plywood sides and a novel design of wide sliding door. This permitted easier access of stacking trucks with goods on pallets, etc. Also, they were fitted with vacuum operated 8 shoe clasp brake blocks (i.e. 2 blocks per wheel) when built.

In traffic the doors were almost flush and to open them one used long vertical steel rod handles running the full height of the doors. When pulled outwards, and then sideways, these handles moved the door out on tracks and opened up about half the side of the van. The relevant design committee had recommended originally that hinged doors be provided, rather than sliding types, but the 'VANWIDE' door design was so successful it was continued for use in modern air braked stock.

On withdrawal from revenue earning service it was allocated to Departmental Service with the number ADB 784757. Later it was based at Ferme Park carriage sidings in North London as an Internal User stores van. It had been issued originally with number IU 041885 but, for some unknown reason, this was cancelled. Subsequently it gained the number IU 041971.

This van was purchased from Ferme Park by the Southern Catering Project Group in September 1997 and transported to Norden road/rail siding on 8th February 1998.

Currently it is used as a Carpentry Shop to help in rebuilding other wagons and general woodworking jobs around the railway.

More recently, B 784757 was put up for sale by the owners and it has now been purchased. Currently, it is scheduled to be moving to the new owners who are based on the Gloucestershire & Warwickshire Steam Railway and the Carriage & Wagon Department workshops are located in the goods yard at Winchcombe station.

Information compiled by Peter Sykes 14th October 2021 – Revised 22nd June 2022
and updated by Jeremy Weller 17th April 2022
Further updated on 30th May 2023