

Now is the time to go Large...

Chris Stockdale reveals the potential delights of stretching beyond 16mm scale.



Would you like a 40 per cent increase? Yes? How about 60 per cent? Are you kidding Mr Stockdale? Yes, and no. You see I am talking about size relative to 16mm and not, sadly, a humungous pay rise – those two percentages give a first indication of just how much bigger 7/8ths and 1/12th scale are over 16mm.

And yet, and this is the really good news, these models can be yours, large as life, running on your track (though it may be wise to quickly check clearances) because they are just as happy on 32 or 45mm as your present 16mm or G scale.

So how did these scales arise? It seems likely that, in the 1990s, a few modellers had similar thoughts to those pioneers of 16mm in the 1960s. "Hmm," they said, "rather than use 16mm scale on 32mm track to model two foot gauge why not use 22.5mm scale on 45mm track instead? It would be usefully bigger and easier on the eye and should be easier to get scale live steamers to work a bit more smoothly too." Having sat and thought about this a bit some other bright sparks pitched in with "and that would mean 32mm track nicely represents 18-inch in the real world."

Even before this, however, those who liked their measurements to be of an imperial nature had realised that twelve times the 1.25in (32mm) of O gauge equals 15in gauge. And that is exactly the gauge chosen by Sir Arthur Heywood, baronet and engineer, for his estate railways. And so 1/12th scale, for model railways at least, was born.

But aren't these models expensive, or far too big, or both? Well, no. If anything larger scale models are typically a similar size to their 16mm brethren. How so? Because many people modelling in these scales are attracted by small prototypes. And by using some of the basic steam or battery chassis provided by current 16mm manufacturers, costs need be no greater either.

All this is very well, but why bother? Why not stick with the tried and tested? I'm glad you asked...

BRAVE LITTLE ENGINES

I came to narrow gauge via the Tallylyn Railway. I was 13 and had previously been in thrall to standard gauge and God's Wonderful Railway. Then I discovered LTC Rolt's *Railway Adventure* and nothing would ever be the same again.

The frontispiece to the book has a photograph of track wandering away uphill. It is overgrown and neglected; of proper ballast there is no sign, leaving the impression that only the soil and grass keep the rails in place. On the left is a buckled and broken wooden gate, whilst on the right and behind rises the steep slope of a Welsh hillside. It was about as far from a mainline as one could imagine, yet it was (and still is) a real railway.

It is thanks to these beginnings I have been having my own 'Railway Adventure,' albeit in model form, and often in pursuit of gauges narrower than the Tallylyn's 2ft 3in, ever since.

Above: Kristina is a 7/8ths loco built by Harvey Watkins. Based on a small Bagnall saddle tank she uses Roundhouse running gear.

Above right: Clearly no one on Ferd's line is going thirsty. And just look how those vertical planks fit neatly in their slots. The skip frame was cast in resin from Ferd's own moulds. Both photos: Ferd Mels



Where to go for larger scales

Supplier	Product/service	Contact
Talisman Castings	7/8ths axleboxes, brakes, couplers and other brass detail items.	http://TalismanCastings.net (but use contact here, not on the web). Glynis Coulter, 102 Portland Crescent, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 5NW Tel: 01743 369591, e-mail: glynis@talismancastings.net
Busy Bodies	Wide range of characterful figures in 16mm, 7/8ths or larger by request. Ready-built wagons and coaches. 'With brass knobs on' brass chimney caps, domes etc to add character. ModelEarth wagon kits can be viewed on website.	www.robennett.org . Rob Bennett, 5 Hawkstone Court, Weston under Redcastle, Shropshire, SY4 5XG. Tel: 01939 200634, e-mail: robert.bennett2@virgin.net
ACME Engineering	Repairs, overhaul and modification of live steam and electrically powered engines; design, build and manufacture of rolling stock kits. 7/8ths kits include a Penrhyn quarryman's coach, slate wagons, coal wagons and GVT coaches, also a range of add-on enhancements and a bespoke building service, both from scratch and from kits.	www.acmesteam.co.uk . Mike Ousby, 1, The Coppice, Beardwood, Blackburn, Lancashire BB26 7BQ Tel: 01254 664433, e-mail: steam.tram@btopenworld.com
Back 2 Bay 6	1/12th kits for Lister, Ruston, O&K and a Hudson skip wagon in both 32 and 45mm. Sierra Valley wheels; ModelEarth wagon kits; varied parts, accessories and other useful bits. Products also include 7/8ths and 1/12th figures.	www.back2bay6.com . The Craft Village, Mere Park Garden Centre, Stafford Rd, Newport Shropshire TF10 9BY Tel: 01952 820835, e-mail: steve@back2bay6.com
Modelearth	1/12th scale resin-based kits including wagons, estate coach, various skip chassis, for 32 and 45mm. Accessories and detailing items, batteries, toolboxes and loco coupler pockets. Bespoke model building, painting, and weather service.	Simon Harris Products viewable online at www.7-8ths.info/busybody/modelearth.html . Tel: 01926 490171, e-mail: modelearth@ukonline.co.uk
I P Engineering	7/8ths coach kits and a Hudson skip chassis. A steam loco body kit is in preparation as are a couple of i/c style locos.	www.ipengineering.co.uk . I P Engineering, Winterdyne, Spilsby Road, Eastville, Lincs PE22 8JR. Tel: 01205 270373
Simply 7/8ths	A range of body kits for Accucraft's Edrig, together with a skip wagon.	www.mikes-models.co.uk . 3-5 Brockwell Road, Kingstanding, West Midlands, B44 9PF. Tel: 0121 360 4521
Triassic Model Works	1/12th kits for Heywood coaches and other rolling stock.	140 Islip Manor Road, Northolt, Middx, UB5 5ED, e-mail: alantrainbuff@aol.com
Sierra Valley Enterprises	American supplier: 7/8ths CNC milled scale wheels with a scale tire width of 4 1/2". A Plymouth loco and rolling stock based on American prototypes.	www.sierravalleyenterprises.com . Wheels stocked by Back2Bay6 in the UK
Ozark Miniatures	American supplier: Over 90 detail parts, accessories for 7/8ths.	www.ozarkminiatures.com
7/8" Railways	American supplier: wagon kits, bogies, parts and accessories	www.7-8railways.com
Bommelbahn	German supplier: 7/8ths wagons and detail parts.	www.bommelbahn.de
Bertram Heyn	German supplier: 45mm track (similar to Peco smaller scale 'crazy track') including points, also 7/8ths wagons, accessories.	www.modellbau-heyne.de
The 7/8ths internet Forum	Known as the Lounge with a multitude of threads. Majors on building and running 7/8ths models but has sections for 1/12th scale and larger, some modellers dabbling in 30mm, 36mm and even 2in to the foot. It is necessary to join to view or contribute but membership is free. All are welcome.	www.7-8ths.info



Top: Small wagons but big on details, Ferd' Mels fruit and veg skip chassis put a lot of colour into a small industrial train. Squint hard and you might spot what looks like a rat.

Above: This 7/8ths Lister body was created from Plastikard by Christian Cenac. Just visible is the Accucraft power block that provides motive power. This example is owned by Ferd Mels in Canada who did the vibrant paint job, added the accessories and crafted the driver from resin and epoxy. Photo: Ferd Mels

Above right: This estate style coach is a five-piece resin body kit mounted on a 45mm estate chassis. The chassis kit includes iron filled resin coupler blocks, and resin axleboxes with brass bearing inserts. Both kits are currently available from ModelEarth. Photo: Si Harris

Right: Each year the 7/8ths Lounge runs a secret Santa-style car swap. Si Harris built this Way Car for last year's, in oak and pine over a set of resin test castings for a Western Wheeled Scraper style chassis. Various details include a brake wheel and ratchet, along with lamp irons from Talisman Castings, steps from Ozark and grab handles from Mamod. Photo: Si Harris

Fond, therefore, of brave little engines jolting and rattling at the head of a handful of wagons, or a couple of coaches, I eventually found myself amongst those who dared to go that bit larger than the norm with their modelling. A few things about the first 7/8th models I saw really struck me. One was their delightful chunkiness. They rumbled along the rails, perhaps with a slight waddle to their gait, in a way in which '00' and sometimes 16mm, never does. And then there was the detail, lots of it, easy to see, using real nuts, bolts and rivets. Planks were just that, planks, not scored pieces of wood.

The realism of your new large-scale venture stands out in other ways. Everything from the ballast on which the track sits to the flora through which your train trundles seems to work more effectively.



You are no longer straining so hard to get 'the look'. Extra atmosphere is easily added by purchasing some of the vast range of doll's house products. Indeed, with everything from greenhouses to ornate Victorian loos available what might have been considered add-ons can become the raison d'être for your line. No longer bound by the likes of slate mining, your railway can follow the same practice as Arthur Heywood's estate line did in the late 1890s – and all nicely to scale in 1/12th too.

But enough of the blather, by now you are probably looking at the pictures anyway – and very nice they are too. Don't forget to take a good look at the table of suppliers before you move on – you never know when the larger scale bug might bite...



Top: Evelyn is a Back2bay6 Heywood 'Katie' style body kit on Accucraft 'Edrig' underpinnings, pulling coaches built from IP Engineering kits. Photo: Steph H

Above left: *The Chief* is a glorious mish-mash of what was to hand to build a backwoods loco on the Daisy Beach. The LGB underpinnings are visible underneath.

Above right: A spring day on Adrian Clarke's 1/12th line finds Moss Bay's driver (a Rob Bennett figure) looking pretty pleased with his lot. To get the 'look' simply take one Regner 'Willi', add paint, detail and driver. Photo: Adrian Clarke

Left: This 1/12th train modelled in 15in gauge waits for the adapted Roundhouse 'Millie' to finish running round. The coaches are a mix of Heywood and Wells & Walsingham. Photo: Rob Bennett

Top: A small loco and one wagon – big enough when the railway looks this good in 7/8ths scale. Real water, hand-laid track and rail given a patina by nothing but the weather add to a sylvan scene. Photo: Ferd Mels

Above: The girls chat on, unaware of slow shunting alongside by a leery-eyed driver on Rob Bennett's line. Photo: Rob Bennett

Above right: A G scale skip adorned by rust and dents sits waiting to see if it will be required on the Daisy Beach. Photo: Ferd Mels

Right: Moth and driver idle in the sidings. A worked-over Regner Konrad, Moth has a lot of extra rivet detail, these in 1/16th copper. With the aid of a rivet snap, a cheap pillar drill and some digital callipers a nice tight fitting hole can be drilled to push the rivets in. The tall chimney (with its copper cap) was made by Tony Bird. Photo: Rob Bennett





Above: Adrian is going to have to have a word with his staff. Any excuse, in this case some camera-waving railway enthusiast chappie, and they stop work to pose for a photo. In 1/12th scale that Simplex is about 9in long. Photo: Adrian Clarke

Above right: There isn't much to immediately give away the fact we are looking at a model and not a genuine sylvan scene on Steph H's line in the sunshine. Photo: Steph H

Left: Possibly the most gorgeous live steamer I have ever seen, our cover star, Rob Bennett's *Salopia* is a Simply 7/8ths 'Baldrig' body kit on an Accucraft 'Edrig.' Rob added much extra detail, which is topped off by an impeccable paint job commissioned from Si Harris. Note the DJB working scale resonator whistle on the spectacle plate. Photo: Rob Bennett



Below left: An LGB 'Deutz' received the sharp knife and Plastikard treatment to turn it into this battery beauty on Steph H's 1/12th scale 45mm line in Derbyshire. Photo: Steph H

Right: Betty and Skylark pose prettily on Chris Bird's line. Look out for articles on these locomotive conversions in future issues of *GardenRail*. Photo: Chris Bird

