

Prospectus

What is Scalefour?

Scalefour is simply a concept of railway modelling to the most accurate standards, using a scale of 4 mm to 1 foot (1:76.2). Standard track gauge is therefore 18.83 mm, as compared to the 16.5 mm of OO or the 18.2 mm of EM, although the concept applies equally to narrower and broader gauge prototypes.

The interests of Scalefour Society members cover every facet of railway modelling, and the Society actively promotes excellence and consistency in all of them - from locomotives and rolling stock to buildings and scenery, track and signals, and layout construction and operation. Most of these are not gauge specific, but where Scalefour differs from other 4 mm modelling is in the use of track and wheel parameters as close to the prototype as practicable. A consistent set of dimensions, correctly matching wheel profiles with crossings in turnouts and other pointwork, defines the standards known as P4 to which most (but not all) members work in their pursuit of authenticity. This results in the most realistic trackwork and, together with one of a number of vehicle suspension systems - many developed and promoted by the Society - ensures good contact and reliable running.

No special skills are needed to work to P4 standards. Suspension units, jigs and gauges do all the hard work for you, and there is a wide range of components available to provide whatever level of detail you choose. Many recent kits, thanks to the Society's efforts, are now designed to be constructed in P4 without modification. However, the finer tolerances of P4 often require more care, which can in turn take more time, at least at first.

We believe the results are well worth it.

Aims and Objectives

The Scalefour Society was founded in December 1975. Its aims and objectives are:

- To bring together persons interested in railway modelling to 4 mm finescale standards;
- To promote and encourage the use of efficient modelling techniques and finescale standards among all 4 mm scale modellers;
- To publish information of value to its members and other 4 mm scale modellers;
- To undertake or support the design and development of components and materials for use in 4 mm finescale railway modelling; and
- To trade on behalf of its members for the supply of model railway components, materials and publications. The Scalefour Society is an entirely independent body, unconnected with any particular manufacturer or trade interest. It is run by its members solely for the benefit of its members, who range from absolute beginners to others with the expertise of a lifetime. All are welcome.

The Society is managed by an elected Committee, supported by a number of appointed officers. The Committee are accountable to the general membership at the Annual General Meeting.

Services and Activities

Scalefour News is a high-quality, professionally-printed journal produced for Society members. It contains up-to-date news and information on the Society's and members' activities; feature articles on modelling projects and techniques; letters - sometimes serious, sometimes irreverent; and reports on shows, products and other developments. Scalefour

News is published five times a year. New members also receive any back issues still in print.

The Scalefour Society holds two annual exhibitions. SCALEFORUM, the flagship show and one of the country's leading conventions for 4 mm finescale modellers, is held in Leatherhead on the last weekend of September. Steadily growing in stature, SCALEFOUR NORTH takes place in Wakefield in the latter half of March. Both feature top-quality operating P4 layouts, demonstrations and lectures by the leading names in the hobby, specialist trade stands, and more. In addition, SCALEFOUR SOUTH WEST is held in August in conjunction with Railwells in Somerset.

Scalefour Stores supplies Society members with jigs, gauges, templates and other bits essential to P4 modelling. Products available include track-making components, scale wheels and vehicle compensation or springing equipment. Some are commercial items whilst others are manufactured exclusively for the Society and are not available from other sources. Scalefour Stores operates by mail order and also by fax or telephone for credit card purchases. The Stores also attends both Scaleforum and Scalefour North.

Under the title Scalefour Digest the Society produces monographs on a range of aspects of prototype information and modelling techniques. These constitute a comprehensive reference manual covering most topics of interest to the serious modeller, including vehicle suspension, track construction and much more. New sheets are added when available, and older sheets are reviewed and updated where necessary. New members receive a complete set of all current sections of the Digest, and additions are distributed with Scalefour News. The digest is also available to members for download from this website.

Believing that there is more to railway modelling than just models, the Scalefour Society encourages the formation and activities of Area Groups. These represent the Society at grass roots level. They enable members to come together locally and benefit from guidance and encouragement from more experienced members; they provide the resources that can make P4 projects (layouts etc) more realistically attainable; and they provide a social focus. There are about 45 groups around the United Kingdom (and some overseas). Each Area Group is unique, with its makeup and activities depending entirely on its members and their own preferences.

As you will have already gathered if you are reading this on the internet, a comprehensive website and the principal portal for 4 mm finescale modelling is operated by the Society at www.scalefour.org. There is also a thriving email discussion forum, provided and managed independently of the Societies but available to members of the Scalefour and EM Gauge Societies.

The Scalefour Society liaises with a number of modelling manufacturers in an endeavour to ensure that new products are designed to take account of the needs of finescale modellers. Many manufacturers now incorporate the Society's design concepts in their kits, and some are produced primarily for construction in P4.