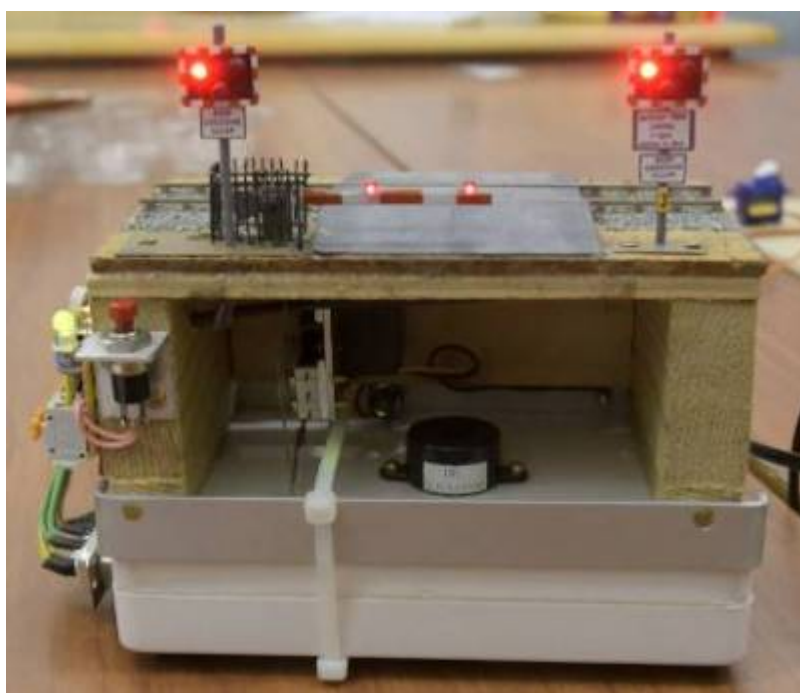


# MERG Merseyside Area Group

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## Welcome to the Merseyside Area Group



The Merseyside Area Group ('MersAG') was formed in early 2024, having spun-out (like some others) from the huge (but then moribund) North West Area Group, which had become too large a geographical area to function.

The objective of 'MersAG' is to ensure that the interests of its members are served by sharing existing knowledge and skills while developing 'hands-on' opportunities so that all can learn together through active and open participation.



The group is particularly interested in using very low-cost, easy-to-use 'off-the-shelf' modules (e.g. [Arduino](#) and peripherals using I<sup>2</sup>C bus) for the controlled elements of layouts (e.g. points, signals, lights, sounds, animations etc.), to widen access for beginners as a gateway into building confidence and familiarity with electronic & computing technology.

Software for such devices (which can also be used with appropriate MERG kits) is being

developed to provide a basic eco-system of hardware and software that members new to technology can choose to deploy as a 'quick start', enabling them to move onward into more complex areas with support from those having greater experience.

Work is also progressing on the testing of software for similar modules that comply with the NMRA's *open standard* for Layout Command Control (LCC, using [OpenLCB](#)), enabling members to deploy a 'near-plug and play' mixture of 'DIY' and commercial units for the controlled elements of their layouts, in much the same way that the NMRA's *open-standard* for DCC can already be universally applied to traction control, irrespective of which manufacturer's decoder is fitted to a loco. (LCC works just as nicely with traditional DC traction, by the way!)



Progress is displayed at the [LAWLOGG Open Days](#) in Bootle, which usually take place on the third Saturday in May and November, as well as in the 'MersAG' section of the Forum, for all MERG members to see.

Presentations covering the development of the group's software for modules, along with basic educational videos ("*Absolute Beginners*") and a series covering the operating techniques of useful electronic products deployed ("*Here's a Gizmo!*") are being built up on the 'MersAG' YouTube channel and KnowledgeBase pages.

## How do you meet?

The group meets on the second Wednesday afternoon of the month at the clubrooms of Liverpool and West Lancs. 'O' Gauge Group ([LAWLOGG](#)) in Bootle, staying on into the evening to run trains on the LAWLOGG layouts, if desired.



There is also a Zoom meeting ("video call") on the fourth Wednesday afternoon of the month, which enables any MERG member to 'attend' (regardless of location) and to participate in the group's activities, developments and learning opportunities.

[How Video Calls Work](#)

## How do I contact the Group

**Please indicate Merseyside Area Group in your message** so we can forward it to the correct group leader.



**PLEASE NOTE:** It appears that your message will not reach us if you are sending it from a Firefox browser which is running the *MalwareBytes Browser Guard* extension (which is a known conflict). Please use a different browser such as Chrome, or temporarily disable the extension in Firefox.



Contact MERG

## Would you like to join today?

Not a MERG member? then

[Join MERG Here](#)



and sign up to this Area Group. If you are already a member

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Select **Merseyside Area Group** from the drop down list in **Other Area Groups** and press the **Subscribe to Area Group** button.

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