

MAUNSELL THIRD OPEN S 1346 S

S 1346 Third Open is similar to S 1381 and S 1323 also based on our Railway with Lancing frames and Eastleigh bodywork/interior fittings. It conforms to design diagram 2005 ['High-Window' stock] and was built by the Southern Railway (SR) as part of Lot no. E706 during 1933. The order for Route Restriction 4 Third Open coaches was authorised on 21st March 1932 (50 coaches numbered 1312 to 1361) with all vehicles being completed between March and May 1933. It is likely, therefore, that S1346 may have been outshopped from Eastleigh around late April 1933 in Maunsell Olive Green livery.

The only slight visible difference with 1381 is that 1323 and 1346 have two louvre vents over the toilet windows whereas 1381 has one vent. It still seats 56 passengers in seven bays subdivided into 3 saloons, one of which was originally designated for non-smokers and separated by a sliding door.

On the night of Saturday/Sunday 7th/8th September 1940, S 1346 was stabled in the cleaning sheds at Clapham Junction when a German high explosive bomb exploded causing varying degrees of damage to fifteen carriages. Thirds 1193, 1199, 1200, **1346** (blown off its bogies and sustaining minor damage to its braking system as well as many panes of broken glass) and 1895; Third Brakes 2782, 3771 and 3788; Firsts 7185, 7216, 7382; First Brake 7751; and Dining Saloons 7863, 7948 and 7956.

All were later repaired for further service except Third Brake 2782 and First 7382 which were deemed too badly damaged and so scrapped after anything useful had been salvaged.

The body of S 1346 was re-attached to its bogies and made fit to be towed away from Clapham Junction for attention at Eastleigh Carriage & Wagon Works. It seems to have been repaired reasonably quickly, despite wartime shortages of materials and manpower, and was outshopped in Southern Olive Green. It was noted as running 'loose' in service for almost 14 years until included in the consist of 10-coach Set no. 269 during 1954.

In the late 1940's/early 1950's it is believed that S1346 was repainted into Bulleid Malachite Green followed by BR Crimson Lake and Cream livery (also known as 'Blood & Custard' by railway enthusiasts). Around 1957, it received a further livery change to BR (Southern Region) Passenger Green. After 5 years service in Set no. 269 it became a 'loose' coach again during 1959.

Withdrawal of S 1346 occurred in November 1961 and this came about because the British Transport Commission had issued a directive, in 1959, to 'retire' all coaches over thirty years old irrespective of condition. Like many other coaches withdrawn around this time, S 1346 was still in good condition so found a new use in Southern Region's 'departmental' fleet.

It was converted to a mobile Office and renumbered DS 70201 (D stands for departmental and S for Southern). Unfortunately, most of the seating and brass fittings were removed and the exterior repainted in drab (matt) olive green. It continued these duties for almost 14 years.

It was further renumbered to 083181 when transferred to Internal User service, from 21st December 1974, and used as a classroom by BR's Chief Mechanical & Electrical Engineers Department at Clapham Junction yard. On the outside was stencilled "RSE Section Instruction Car".

At some stage, 083181 was moved to an isolated area of the site requiring a set of wooden steps to be constructed to allow access/egress. It is possible that it may have been used also at Lancing and Eastleigh although records are not clear on that point. Its final BR 'home' was Stewarts Lane depot in Battersea near London Victoria. For a (non-moving) Internal User vehicle it certainly got around.

After final withdrawal by BR during 1982, 083181 (S1346) was purchased by the Tenterden Rolling Stock Group and arrived at the Kent & East Sussex Railway (K&ESR) on 1st September 1982 after which it was renumbered to No. 78. All partitions and lavatories, as well as some seating, were still in place.

Following the success of a K&ESR "Steaming to Victory" commemoration in 1985 (marking 40 years from the end of World War II), S 1346 was cosmetically restored into the livery of a WW2 Ambulance Coach for the K&ESR 'War on the Line' gala in 1986. It was lettered "Ambulance Car" complete with red crosses on white backgrounds. As it was Restriction 4 vehicle it was marked '*Not to work between Tonbridge and Hastings*'.

Changes at the K&ESR subsequently saw S 1346 relocated to Robertsbridge, during 1999, where the Rother Valley Railway were working to restore the main line connection to the K&ESR. However, with no immediate prospect of restoration to passenger-carrying condition, the coach was sold privately in February 2002 with a view to restoration and use at Swanage.

Restoration proper started in 2011 when the coach was moved to Rampart Engineering Ltd in Derby for an initial assessment of a full structural and mechanical overhaul. In 2013 it was moved to the premises of Moveright International at Wishaw for temporary storage. Around the Summer of 2015 the coach was moved from there to Ramparts' new premises at Barrow Hill Roundhouse Railway Centre where restoration work took place. This included removing steel plating at the carriage ends, installing strengthening pillars and reinstating Pullman-style gangway connections.

During October 2018 the Swanage Railway Trust signed a 99 lease of S1346 from the small owning syndicate of long-time Swanage Railway volunteers. However, they would still cover the cost of restoration to operational condition.

Once the structural overhaul had been completed by Ramparts, S1346 was loaded for return to Swanage for the restoration of the interior. On Friday 1st February 2019, S1346 arrived at Norden using an Allelys heavy haulage lorry.

It then underwent internal fitting out by the Railway's C&W volunteers at their base in Corfe Castle sidings. Work on the upholstery was extensive with cushions being assembled with springs and foam. The seat backs had moquette fitted during July 2022 whilst tables were manufactured to an original SR design. Later the same month it was taken to Swanage Goods Shed so it could receive it's final top coat/varnish after which it was taken back to Corfe on 17th July where internal restoration continued.

Work continued during the Summer with completion of electrical wiring and the fitting of lamps. Upholstery work also continued with cushion covers fitted on the seat squabs whilst the manufacture of 14 new tables was nearly complete. Some time was spent away from S1346 helping paid staff on the refurbishment of Pullman Observation Car 14 which had taken S1346's place in the Goods Shed. By September, S1346 was largely complete except for the remaining new tables.

After over 3½ years hard work it was moved from Corfe Castle to Swanage again on Wednesday 5th October 2022. There the full-time C&W staff checked the electrics, the operation of brakes and carried out a full fitness-to-run exam prior to it entering passenger-carrying service on Saturday 15th October 2022. S1346 was the leading vehicle of the 10:00 departure from Swanage to Norden.

Maunsell Third Open S1346 was then used, coupled with sister coach S1381 and Pullman Observation Car 14, in a seven-coach special train during late October/early November 2022. The rake was assembled to be hauled, in a limited season of runs, by the National Railway Museum's Gresley Pacific 60103 *Flying Scotsman* after it's recent overhaul by Riley & Sons Ltd. The locomotive celebrated it's centenary on 24th February 2023 whereas S1346 celebrated it's 90th anniversary a few weeks later.

The new tables fitted in S 1346 have enabled the railway to introduce 'Prosecco Cream Teas' from 4th June for a limited summer season.

On Saturday 7th October 2023, S1346 plus S1381 and BSOB 9015 formed the first passenger train to be hauled by Adams Class T3 number 563 conveying stakeholders, sponsors and specially invited guests. The following day (Sunday 8th) saw 563 haul a three coach train carrying fare-paying passengers. It comprised Pullman Observation Car 14, S1346 and BSOB 9015.

During certain dates in November and December 2023, S1346 formed part of "The Polar Express" series of special trains from Swanage. The period feel of S 1346 has proved popular with passengers.

After the Autumn Steam Gala [September 2025], 1381 entered Swanage Goods Shed for a full repaint into lined Southern Railway Olive Green livery. Following this, 1346 was then

repainted to match - so we now have two Maunsell coaches in matching liveries and something different for Southern railway enthusiasts to view.

Information collated by Peter Sykes 4th March 2017

Updated by Peter Short on 8th March 2017

Further updated by Peter Sykes on various dates up to 14th December 2025