

**London Borough of Barking and Dagenham
Local Studies Information Sheet No. 10**

THE LONDON, TILBURY AND SOUTHEND RAILWAY



The level crossing on East Street, c.1905

Barking Railway Station opened on 13 April 1854 with the launch of the Forest Gate Junction to Tilbury section of the London, Tilbury & Southend Railway. The LTSR had originated in 1852 with an Act of Parliament for a line, jointly owned by the Eastern Counties Railway and London and Blackwall Railway, to run from Fenchurch Street to Southend via Barking and Tilbury.

Peto & Grissell, the company which constructed the line, carried out many large railway contracts both at home and abroad and built many well-known London buildings, including the Nelson's column. The track reached Tilbury by 1854 and Southend in 1856. In 1858 a more direct line from Fenchurch Street to Barking opened across the marshes through Bromley, Plaistow and East Ham.

The railway quickly became profitable. When it was planned, Tilbury was the embarkation point for steamers to Gravesend, and the railway line was taken to Southend in order to compete with river traffic on the Thames. Excursion trips soon became very popular with people choosing to take the train rather than boats. Next, the opening of Tilbury docks in 1886 boosted small goods traffic and required boat trains for passengers embarking on ocean liners.

Later, under the dynamic and efficient management of its first independent General Manager, the civil engineer Arthur Lewis Stride, the railway was extended to Shoeburyness (1884) and a more direct line between Barking and Pitsea via Upminster was built (1885-8).

The first Barking Station has been described as 'rather a primitive affair, half hidden down a side street', The first stationmaster was William Chalk, who had previously worked in the local fishing industry. A level crossing was built in East Street, with gates to control the road traffic.

There was a pair of 'kissing gates' for pedestrians, and several fatal accidents occurred because of people slipping through the pedestrian gates when the main gates were closed. One victim in 1878 was Edward Maynard, landlord of the nearby Spotted Dog pub, who was deaf and unaware of the train coming. In 1884 a footbridge was built over the track and the pedestrian gates closed.

Lines were developed, through co-operation with the Midland Railway, to enable traffic to run between St. Pancras and Southend so that Midland goods trains could reach Tilbury Docks. The junction was at Barking which also developed as a terminal for suburban services. In 1912, the LTSR merged with larger Midland Railway which, in turn, became part of the London, Midland & Scottish Railway in 1923.

Developments were impaired by the First World War (1914-18) but, in 1932, two additional tracks were added between Barking and Upminster for electric trains on the District Line. These services were transferred to London Transport a year later when new stations at Upney, Heathway, and Elm Park were added.

Again, the Second World War (1939-45) prevented further development until all railways were nationalised into British Railways in 1948. Later significant changes were the electrification of the line in 1961-2, when the new booking hall at Barking was built, and the railway's re-privatisation in 1996. Its new operators initially returned to the familiar name LTS Rail but subsequently chose to call the company c2c.

Primary sources held elsewhere

Because of the privatisation of the railways, the records of the London, Tilbury & Southend Railway 1852-1923 are held at the [National Archives](#), Kew. Their catalogue cites: minutes of board, proprietors' and committee meetings, agreements, register of documents sealed, rate book, letter book etc, register of locomotives and diagram book, staff registers, ledgers, and balance sheets (Their reference: Rail 437).

Primary sources held in the Borough's Archives

Microfilm copies of local newspapers and a selection of maps and photographs are available.

Secondary sources in the Valence House Local Studies Library

The titles listed below represent a small selection of the books and pamphlets available.

Kay, P: *The London, Tilbury and Southend Railway – a history of the Company and line, vol.1 1836-1893* (1996)

Kay, P: *The London, Tilbury and Southend Railway – a history of the Company and line, vol.2 1893-1912* (1997)

Searle, M.V: *Down the line to Southend – a pictorial history of London's holiday line* (1984)

Welch, H.D: *The London, Tilbury and Southend Railway* (1963)