

Factsheet

Merseyrail underground

Trains coming into Liverpool travel part of the journey on railway tracks that are underground.

The underground part of our system includes 6.5 miles (10.5 km) of tunnels, 5 underground stations and the original Mersey railway tunnel which started to be built in 1879.

The railway tunnel was the first tunnel built under the river Mersey. Stations were built underground at Hamilton Square in Birkenhead and James Street in Liverpool.

Three tunnels in fact were cut out by up to 1400 men using explosives and pick axes and later a new cutting machine.

The main tunnel was for the two railway tracks. The other two tunnels were for drainage and ventilation.

The total length of the tunnel was 3 miles (5km) and it was opened in 1886. By 1890 it was carrying 10 million passengers a year and in 1903 it was electrified, becoming the first railway in the world to change from steam to electric power.

