

# Tees-side Railless Traction Board



1919 - 1968

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Cover Illustration: No. 18 (CPY289) was a 1944 Sunbeam W with Roe 65-seat bodywork. (David Mitchell).

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Plans to introduce a tramway to the Teesside towns of North Ormesby, South Bank and Grangetown was first proposed in 1898 by the Imperial Tramways Company, who already operated the Middlesbrough, Stockton & Thornaby system, but an application for a Light Railway Order was refused.

In 1902 a syndicate of local businessmen laid plans to establish a private tramway system to serve the growing towns. Imperial Tramways undertook to provide the overhead equipment and cars and to commence services by 1907, but by 1912, despite the syndicate extending the time limit, Imperial had not even started construction of the tramway.

In 1912 the Bolckow Vaughan Iron Company promoted a private Act of Parliament, which authorised a trolleybus service. The syndicate duly formed a statutory company named the North Ormesby, South Bank, Normanby and Grangetown Railless Traction Company. A depot was constructed at Cargo Fleet and completed in 1915 and by February 1916 most of the overhead was in place, although it was not until after the First World War that Clough, Smith & Co. (on behalf of the RET Company) were able to complete the system.

The main route ran from Smeaton Street in North Ormesby, via Cargo Fleet and South Bank to Market Square in Grangetown, with a branch from High Street in South Bank to Normanby. The contract for the supply of 10 trolleybuses was given to the RET Construction Co. of Leeds, who, because

of wartime difficulties, went into receivership. In 1918 the patents and goodwill of RET Construction passed to Railless Ltd, a new company who took over the contract. The chassis construction was sub-contracted to the Cleveland Car Company of Darlington and the single-deck bodies sub-contracted to the English Electric Company of Preston. The chassis and bodies were delivered separately and assembled at Cargo Fleet.

By this time Middlesbrough Corporation had purchased the Middlesbrough, Stockton & Thornaby tramway from Imperial Tramways and approached the syndicate about the possibility of acquiring their company, which had still not started to trade.

In December 1918, the company was sold, with Middlesbrough Corporation holding a one-third share and Eston Urban District Council two-thirds, which was roughly in proportion to their respective route mileages. A joint board was formed and the company became the Tees-side Railless Traction Board, services commencing on the 8 November 1919.

The first trolleybuses (Nos. 1-10) were delivered in 1919 in a dark green livery, which remained the predominant colour throughout the lifetime of the Board. Until 1944 all vehicles were single-deck, since the Board of Trade refused to sanction double-deck trolleybuses until then. The traction current was drawn from the Bolckow Vaughan steelworks until 1955.

In 1920 a further six (Nos. 11-16) Brush trolleybuses were purchased from Clough, Smith & Co. They had been built in 1914 for the National Electric Construction Company's subsidiary the Rhondda Tramways Company, but were in service for only three months before being withdrawn due to the state of the roads. They had been stored since then.

In 1924, the route to Normanby was extended to serve Eston, although the trolleybus wires were not extended. Instead, a unique vehicle, a Tilling-Stevens petrol-electric chassis, commissioned and patented by the General Manager of the Board (Mr. J. B. Parker) was used. It was capable of operating either as a trolleybus or as a motorbus and ran between North Ormesby and Normanby using the overhead wires, and from there to Eston as a petrol-electric bus. Motorbuses were used to supplement the service from 1926.

The first motorbus (No. 23), a Daimler CM, was purchased in 1926, with others following in the next few years. They were used, initially, to duplicate the main trolleybus service when required and as feeder and contract vehicles.

The first double-deck vehicles arrived in 1941, when two Leyland Titan TD7's (Nos. 26-27), with Roe H31/25R bodywork arrived, although it was not until 1944 that the first double-deck trolleybuses (Nos. 10-13, and 15-18) joined the fleet.

After the Second World War, the expansion of the ICI works at Wilton necessitated an increase in the fleet, and no less than 12 Leyland PD2's were purchased. The last new trolleybuses arrived in 1950, although subsequently a rebuilding programme for the wartime trolleybuses was started. This process became protracted, since the craftsmen only worked on the refurbishing when time allowed. As a result some of the vehicles were partially completed by the local Middlesbrough firm of Edmond & Co. Ultimately, the vehicles were re-bodied by Roe in the 1960's.

The route network remained very much the same until 1951, when the Grangetown route was extended to Kingsley Road. It was further extended to Fabian Road in 1964. In 1966 a proposal for a service from Eston to Normanby, linking with the existing South Bank to Normanby service as a circular route was put forward. United Automobile Services, who already ran services to Eston and Normanby objected, but eventually, on 31 March 1968, the trolleybus system was extended and the route opened. This was to be the last trolleybus extension on public roads in Great Britain.

The following day, 1 April 1968, the Board was merged with the fleets of Middlesbrough and Stockton to form Teesside Municipal Transport and the history of the Tees-side Railless Traction Board was brought to a close after almost 50 years.

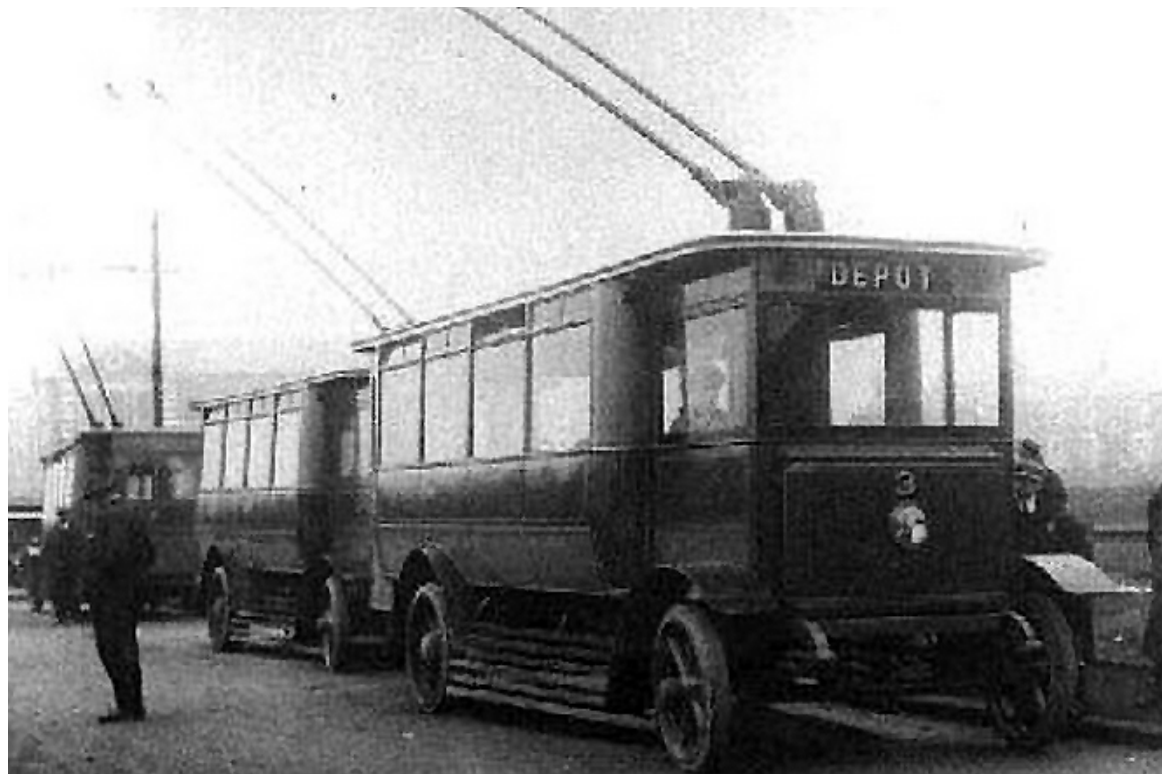
## Trolleybus Fleet List 1919-1968

This listing is in the format- Year into service; Fleet No; Reg. No; Chassis; Chassis No; Body; Seating.

### 1919

1-3	AJ5857-59	Cleveland Car Co	-	English Electric	B28R
4	-	Cleveland Car Co	-	English Electric	B28R
5-10	AJ5860-65	Cleveland Car Co	-	English Electric	B28R

Nos. 1-3, 5-10 registered in 1921 as shown; until then they ran unregistered. Originally contracted to Railless of Leeds but because of failure of that company contract was taken over by Cleveland Car Co. The bodywork is also quoted by some sources as by Lockwood & Clarkson. Withdrawn 1920 (4), 1931 (8), 1932 (1-3, 5-7, 9-10).



A line up of three of the original 1919 trolleybuses, headed by No. 3, when new. Trolleybuses were not required to be registered until 1921 when No. 3 was registered AJ5859. (LTHL collection).



**1920**

**11-16 AJ5866-71 Daimler/Brush - Brush B26R**

Nos. 11-16 ex-Rhondda Tramways Company (Nos. 56-61, new 1914); registered as shown in 1921. Until then they ran unregistered. They were constructed by Brush using Daimler CC chassis frames.

Withdrawn **1926** (13, 15), **1928** (11-12, 14, 16).

**1921**

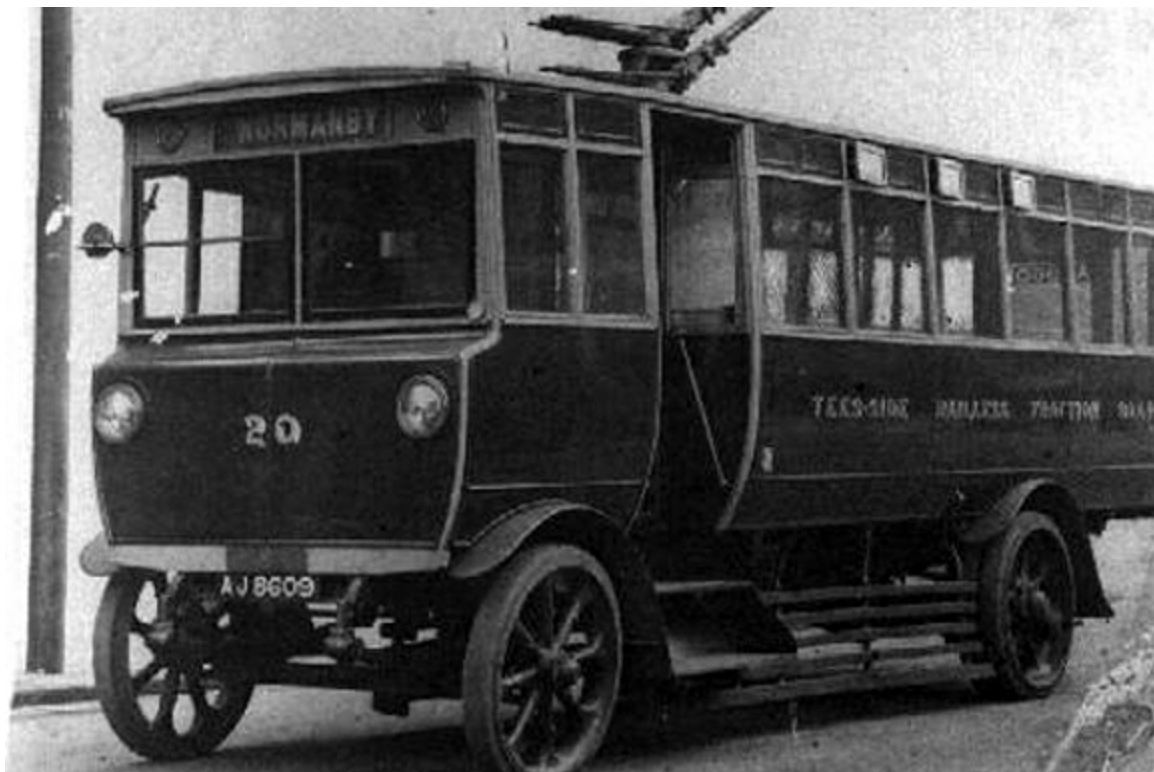
**17 AJ7513 Straker-Clough - Roe B36F**

Withdrawn **1936** (17).

**1922**

**18-21 AJ8607-10 Straker-Clough - Roe B36F**

Withdrawn **1934** (21), **1936** (18-20).



No. 20 (AJ8609) was a 1922 Straker-Clogh with Roe 36-seat bodywork, withdrawn in 1936. (LTHL collection).

**1924**

<b>22</b>	<b>PY1845</b>	<b>Tilling-Stevens</b>				
		<b>PERC1</b>	<b>4601</b>	<b>Roe</b>		<b>B26F</b>

No. 22 rebuilt to forward control and re-seated to B32F at a later date.  
 Withdrawn **1936** (22).

**1932**

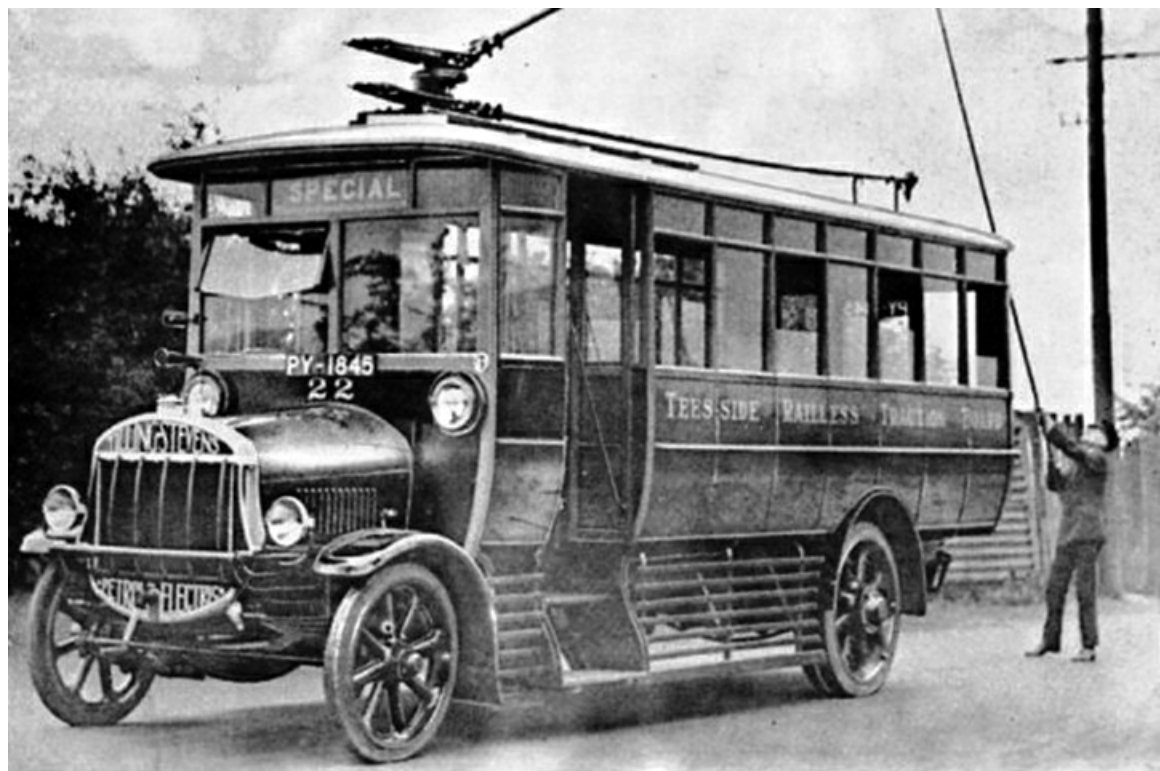
<b>1-8</b>	<b>VN3751-58</b>	<b>Ransomes D</b>	<b>2146-53</b>	<b>Ransomes</b>		<b>B32R</b>
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Withdrawn **1944** (6), **1949** (7), **1950** (1-5, 8).

**1936**

<b>9-11</b>	<b>VN9434-36</b>	<b>Leyland TB3</b>	<b>10774-75/78</b>	<b>Massey</b>		<b>B32R</b>
<b>12-13</b>	<b>VN9437-38</b>	<b>Leyland TB3</b>	<b>10777/76</b>	<b>Massey</b>		<b>B32R</b>

Withdrawn **1944** (9-13).



No. 22 (PY1845) was built by Tilling-Stevens in 1924. It had a petrol driven dynamo which drove the traction motors when power was not available from the overhead wiring. It was bodied by Roe, being withdrawn in 1936. (LTHL collection).

**1942**

<b>14</b>	<b>BVN694</b>	<b>Sunbeam MF2A</b>	<b>13110</b>	<b>East Lancs</b>	<b>B32R</b>
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Withdrawn **1950** (14).

**1944**

<b>11-12</b>	<b>CPY309-10</b>	<b>Sunbeam W</b>	<b>50116-17</b>	<b>Roe</b>	<b>H30/26R</b>
<b>15-17</b>	<b>CPY286-88</b>	<b>Sunbeam W</b>	<b>50091-93</b>	<b>Weymann</b>	<b>H30/26R</b>

No. 11 re-bodied by Roe to H37/28R in 1960; re-seated to H35/26R in 1968; Nos. 12, 15 rebuilt by TRTB c. 1959; Nos. 16-17 rebuilt by TRTB and WG Edmond of Middlesbrough in 1958; Nos. 12, 15-17 re-bodied by Roe to H35/26R in 1962; No. 16 re-bodied by Roe to H35/26R in 1961.

Nos. 11-12, 15-17 to Teesside Municipal Transport 4/68 retaining fleet numbers).

## Tees-side Railless Traction Board 1919-1968

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No. 16 (CPY287), a 1944 Sunbeam W with Weymann utility bodywork, which was rebuilt in 1958 by the Company with local builder Edmond. It was re-bodied by Roe in 1960 and passed to Teesside Municipal Transport in April 1968. (John Heighway courtesy Malcolm Jones).



Another view of No. 16 (CPY287) sporting its 1960 Roe bodywork, creating an altogether more handsome vehicle. (Mike Beamish).

**1945**

<b>10</b>	<b>CPY308</b>	<b>Sunbeam W</b>	<b>50115</b>	<b>Roe</b>	<b>H30/26R</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>CPY311</b>	<b>Sunbeam W</b>	<b>50118</b>	<b>Roe</b>	<b>H30/26R</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>CPY289</b>	<b>Sunbeam W</b>	<b>50094</b>	<b>Weymann</b>	<b>H30/26R</b>

No. 10 rebuilt by TRTB c. 1959; re-bodied by Roe to H35/26R in 1962.

No. 13 rebuilt by TRTB c. 1959; re-bodied by Roe to H35/26R in 1961.

No. 18 rebuilt by TRTB/Edmond in 1957; re-bodied by Roe to H37/28R in 1960; re-seated to H35/36R in 1968.

Nos. 10, 13, 18 to Teesside Municipal Transport 4/68 retaining fleet numbers.

**1950**

<b>1-7</b>	<b>GAJ11-17</b>	<b>Sunbeam F4</b>	<b>50632-38</b>	<b>East Lancs</b>	<b>H30/26R</b>
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Nos. 1-7 re-bodied by Roe to H35/26R in 1963 (4, 7), 1964 (1-3, 6) or 1965 (5); to Teesside Municipal Transport 4/68 retaining fleet numbers.





1950 Sunbeam F4 No. 4 (GAJ14) originally with East Lancs 56-seat bodywork but seen here after being re-bodied by Roe with a 61-seat body was one of the final batch of trolleybuses purchased. (John Kaye).

## Bus Fleet List 1926-1968

This listing is in the format - Year into service; Fleet No; Reg. No;  
Chassis; Chassis No; Body; Seating.

### 1926

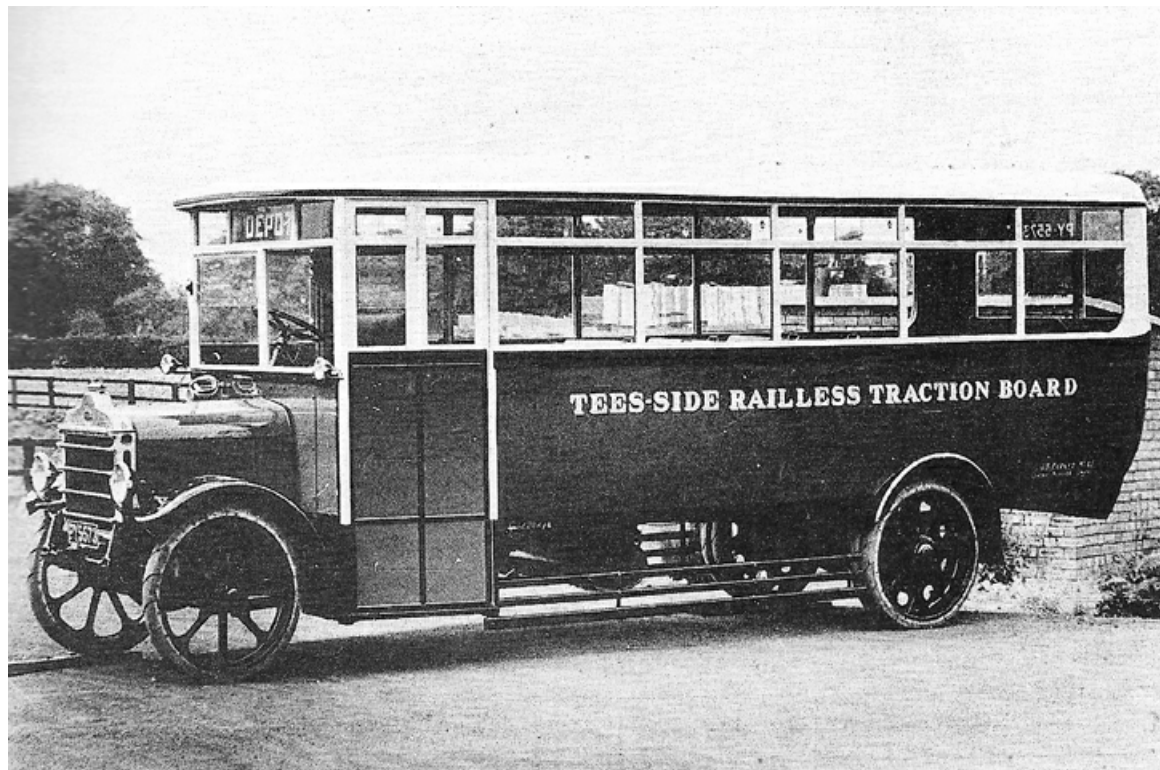
23	PY5573	Daimler CM	4639	Roe	B26F
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No. 23 fitted with pneumatic tyres c. 1928.  
Withdrawn 1936 (23).

### 1927

24	PY7266	ADC 417D	417077	Roe	B26F
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Withdrawn 1938 (24).



The first bus in the Tees-side fleet was No. 23 (PY5573) a solid-tyred Daimler CM with Roe B26F bodywork, later fitted with pneumatic tyres. (LTHL collection).

**1929**

<b>26</b>	<b>VN707</b>	<b>Daimler CP6</b>	<b>72785</b>	<b>Roe</b>	<b>B32F</b>
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Withdrawn **1939** (26).

**1930**

<b>25</b>	<b>VN1962</b>	<b>Leyland LT2</b>	<b>50918</b>	<b>Leyland</b>	<b>B35F</b>
<b>27</b>	<b>VN2151</b>	<b>Leyland TS3</b>	<b>61416</b>	<b>Leyland</b>	<b>B35F</b>

No. 27 re-numbered 21 in 1941; re-seated to B32F at a later date.  
Withdrawn **1941** (25), **1945** (27[21]).

**1936**

<b>22-23</b>	<b>VN9042-43</b>	<b>Leyland LT7</b>	<b>10642-43</b>	<b>Leyland</b>	<b>B35F</b>
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Withdrawn **1947** (22-23).

**1938**

**24 APY557 Leyland LT9 17902 Leyland B35F**

Withdrawn **1958** (24).

**1939**

**26 BAJ846 Leyland TS8 301449 Willowbrook B37F**

No. 26 re-numbered 25 in 1941; re-seated to B32F at a later date.  
 Withdrawn **1957** (26[25]).

**1941**

**26-27 BVN233-34 Leyland TD7 307001-02 Roe H31/25R**

Withdrawn **1958** (26-27).

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Originally No. 26 but re-numbered in 1941, No. 25 (BAJ846) was a 1939 Leyland TS8 with Willowbrook 39-seat bodywork that remained in the fleet until 1957. (John Heighway courtesy Malcolm Jones).



No. 27 (BVN234) was a 1941 Leyland TD7 with Roe H31/25R bodywork, one of a pair which were the first double-deck vehicles owned by Tees-side. (John Heighway courtesy Malcolm Jones).

**1944**

**28-29 CAJ804-05 Daimler CWA6 11670-71 Brush L27/28R**

No. 29 refurbished by Tees-side in 1957.  
 Withdrawn **1958** (28-29).

**1945**

**30-31 CPY531-32 Daimler CWA6 12240/45 Brush H30/26R**

Withdrawn **1958** (30), **1960** (31).

**1947**

**32 DPY568 Leyland PD1A 462504 Massey H30/26R**  
**33 DPY569 Leyland PD1 461587 Massey H30/26R**  
**34-37 DVN631-34 Leyland PD1A 471837/36/39/38 Leyland H30/26R**

Withdrawn **1958** (34), **1960** (33), **1961** (32), **1962** (35), **1963** (36-37).





No. 33 (DPY569), a 1947 Leyland PD1 with Massey 56-seat bodywork. It was withdrawn in 1960. (John Heighway courtesy Malcolm Jones).

**1949**

38-41	FAJ184-87	Leyland PD2/1	490825/60-62	Leyland	H30/26R
42-44	FAJ492-94	Leyland PD2/1	491355/52/56	Leyland	H30/26R
45-47	FAJ495-97	Leyland PD2/1	491354/53/446	Leyland	H30/26R
48-49	FAJ498-99	Leyland PD2/1	491447/45	Leyland	H30/26R

No. 39 re-numbered 52 in 1966.

Nos. 42, 43 re-numbered 54, 53 respectively in 5/67; No. 43[53] to Teesside Municipal Transport 4/68 retaining fleet number.

Withdrawn **1965** (38, 47), **1966** (41, 45-46), **1967** (39[52], 40, 42[54], 48-49), **1968** (44).

**1957**

21-22	PVN21-22	Leyland PD2/20	571586-87	Roe	H33/28R
50-51	PVN50-51	Leyland PSUC1/2T	575512/822	Roe	C41C

Nos. 21-22, 50-51 to Teesside Municipal Transport 4/68 retaining fleet numbers.



1949 all-Leyland PD2/1 No. 53 travels along Marton Road, Middlesbrough in August 1967. Originally No. 43 it was re-numbered in 1967 as shown and survived long enough to pass to Teesside Municipal Transport in April 1968. (Donald Hudson).



No. 50 (PVN50) was a 1957 Leyland PSUC1/2T with Roe 41-seat centre-entrance coachwork. (John Huddleston).

**1958**

**23-24 SVN23-24 Leyland PD2/27 581892-93 Roe H33/28R**

Nos. 23-24 to Teesside Municipal Transport 4/68 retaining fleet numbers.

**1959**

**25-26 SVN25-26 Leyland PD2/27 582857/90 Roe H33/28R**

Nos. 25-26 to Teesside Municipal Transport 4/68 retaining fleet numbers.

**1961**

**27-28 YAJ27-28 Leyland PD2/27 602566-67 Roe H35/28R**

Nos. 27-28 re-seated to H33/28R during 1961; to Teesside Municipal Transport 4/68 retaining fleet numbers.

**1963**

**29-31 329-31DPY Leyland PD2A/27 629237-39 Roe H33/28R**

Nos. 29-31 to Teesside Municipal Transport 4/68 retaining fleet numbers.



No. 31 (331DPY) was a 1963 Leyland PD2A/27 with Roe H33/28R bodywork, alongside 1962 Leyland PD2/27 No. 27 (YAJ27) originally with Roe H35/28R bodywork. (John Heighway courtesy Malcolm Jones).

**1965**

**32-35 CAJ432-35C Leyland L1 L23067-68/92-93 Roe B45F**

Nos. 32-35 to Teesside Municipal Transport 4/68 retaining fleet numbers.

**1966**

**36-39 FVN36-39D Leyland PD2A/27 L44219-20/96-97 Roe H33/28R**

Nos. 36-39 to Teesside Municipal Transport 4/68 retaining fleet numbers.

**1967**

**40-43 JVN40-43E Leyland PD2A/37 700229/392-93/578 Roe H33/28R**

Nos. 40-43 delivered in turquoise livery and carried 'Teesside Transport' as fleetname; to Teesside Municipal Transport 4/68 retaining fleet numbers.



1965 Leyland Leopard No. 34 (CAJ434C) with Roe 45-seat bus bodywork. It passed to Teesside Municipal Transport in 1968. (LTHL collection).



**1968**

44-47	MVN44-47F	Leyland PDR1/3	800559-60/93-94	Roe	H43/32F
48-49	MVN48-49F	Leyland PDR1/3	800834-35	Roe	H43/32F

Nos. 44-49 delivered in turquoise livery but without fleetnames; to Teesside Municipal Transport 4/68 retaining fleet numbers.

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*In producing this booklet reference has been made to the following publications: Municipal Buses in Colour 1959-1974, Reg Wilson, Ian Allan, 1997; Buses, Nos. 179, Feb 1970; Buses No. 195, June 1971; British Trolleybuses 1911-1972, Geoff Lumb, Ian Allan, 1995; PSV Circle Fleet History 2PA12, 2001.*

*Illustrations courtesy Donald Hudson, John Kaye, John Heighway (courtesy Malcolm Jones), John Huddleston and Mike Beamish.*

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