



Moretonhampstead is a small settlement on the eastern edge of Dartmoor approximately 12 miles north of Newton Abbot. The branch line was constructed by the Moretonhampstead and South Devon Railway to broad gauge standards, train services to Moretonhampstead commenced on 4th July 1866.

The branch left the mainline at Newton Abbot East junction, approx 1/2 mile north of Newton Abbot, it was constructed as a single track line with passing loops at intermediate stations, though some of the structures were built wide enough for double track. The ruling gradient on the branch was against trains travelling towards Moretonhampstead and included sections as steep as 1 in 49, mostly in the last 3 miles.

The Teign Valley Branch later joined at Heathfield and via an end on junction with the Exeter Railway, at Christow eventually reached Exeter in 1903. Following track alterations at Heathfield in 1916 through running commenced, making it possible for trains to be diverted from the coastal route at times of bad weather or engineering works, this resulted in named expresses being double headed by small tank engines.

The line was absorbed by the South Devon Railway in 1872 which itself was absorbed by the Great Western Railway in 1877. Conversion to standard gauge took place over the weekend of 20th - 23rd May 1892 as part of the last stage. During its life the only significant alterations made to the station involved the provision of additional covered accommodation within the goods yard initially in 1956 and again at a later date.

The passenger service to Moretonhampstead was withdrawn from 2nd March 1959, the Teign Valley line having closed the previous year. The entire branch however remained open for freight and occasional enthusiast specials until 6th April 1964, when services were withdrawn between Moretonhampstead and Bovey and this section closed completely. The section to Bovey was retained primarily for clay traffic until 1967, when the branch was further shorted to Heathfield where, in 1965 an oil terminal had been established, final closure came following the withdrawal of services to the oil terminal in 1995.

The station site at Moretonhampstead is currently in use as the depot for a road haulage company, fortunately some of the railway buildings still survive.

