

Minutes of the 6th Annual General Meeting of The Friends of Brighouse Station.

The 6th Annual General Meeting of The Friends of Brighouse Station was held at Brighouse Rest Centre on 30th March 2022 at 7pm.

1. 17 members were welcomed by the Chairman and apologies were received from 17 members. Unfortunately due to a family crisis, Richard Isaac, the proposed speaker was unable to attend.
2. Minutes of the last 5th Annual General Meeting held on 10th March 2020 had been circulated following the meeting and were signed as a correct record.

3. Secretary's Report

The Secretary, Anne Cass, gave her report outlining the events over the last twelve months. No AGM was held in 2021 but a report was distributed to members on line. Over the last two years we had been fortunate to have the support of the staff at Manor Heath who have looked after and planted out the plants for the various displays. We owe them a huge 'Thank you'.

It had been a difficult year and normal committee meetings could not be held until the end June 2021 when the group met outside and again in August. By September we were able to meet at David Bedding's home and we thank him for his hospitality and refreshments. Unfortunately we were unable to organise any events to celebrate the re-opening of the new Brighouse station 21 years ago. Photographs and a report of the work carried out at the station appeared in a newsletter on the Grand Central website celebrating Gardening Week in May.

The information board project continued and all those involved and the team who installed them at the station must be thanked for their contributions.

As part of the Brighouse Art Festival in October David Bedding led a walking tour of the station and its surroundings with the assistance of Beulah Shaw and Sue Thorpe. Anne thanked every volunteer for their hard work and said that all should be proud of what had been achieved.

4. Treasurer's Report

Margaret Marshall explained the accounts for the year and reported we were fortunate to have continued support from local businesses and members. We had been awarded a grant of £395 from Northern.

Our expenditure on plants increased in 2021 as additional flowerbeds had been created and a new path had been laid in the area behind Platform 2. Plants are ordered in large quantities 6 months in advance and achieve a good discount on catalogue prices.

The information boards costs had been covered by a grant from the Community Rail Network (formerly ACoRP). A cordless hedge trimmer and leaf blower had been purchased by the group to help with maintenance of the garden areas in the car park. The website fees had increased and the RHS insurance formed the bulk of the administration costs. Margaret reported that we carried forward a healthy balance of £6193 and thanked Derek Ashton for examining the accounts.

5. Chairman's Report

David Bedding gave more information about those involved with the Information Boards Project. Roy Shakespeare and the Rastrick Local Historical group, Paul Thompson, Paul Marshall, Jane Clay, Beulah Shaw, Muriel Sugden and Brighouse Civic Society contributed to the content of the boards. It was suggested that in the summer Platform 1 boards could be moved to Platform 2 and the boards on Platform 2 moved to Platform 1. Many passengers have been seen reading the boards as they wait for their trains to arrive.

Over the last twelve months, despite the difficulties of lockdown and limits to working, a total of 400 hours of work had been carried out at the station. 17 volunteers have worked at the station during 2021 but the recorded hours do not include watering or litter picking and he thanked everyone for their contribution to maintaining a welcoming gateway to Brighouse.

David informed the members that a Calder Valley Line Community Rail Partnership has been established. This is funded by Calderdale and Rochdale Councils and their prime focus seems to be on timetabling. They appear to add nothing to our work and thus, along with Mytholmroyd and Hebden Bridge Stations, Friends of Brighouse Station group is not joining the Organisation.

David reported that we had lost a few sponsors who were no longer trading but 2 new sponsors may join us. As well as the 20 sponsors we currently have 41 members and we are grateful for their support. Member Roger Ellis congratulated and thanked all the working volunteers for all they do to make the station a beautiful place to visit.

6. 'Plants on the Platform'

Paul Marshall gave a review of the work carried out to ensure that the plants in the planters and barrels created a good display throughout the year. He thanked the watering, dead heading teams and the volunteers for assisting on both changeover days. A group worked on a Wednesday to remove two Laurel bushes and many buttercups, planting the area behind Platform 2 to provide colour for most of the year and attract pollinating insects. Lavender in the entrance bed grew so well the flowers heads were used by John Buxton for making shampoo. The working Sundays were resumed in May and Beulah maintained the Bug Hotel area where Keith made wooden planters for the base of the Bug Hotel.

Unfortunately after the Autumn changeover minor vandalism occurred and some plants were removed from the barrels on Platform 2. Authorities were informed and after a few weeks the vandalism stopped and most of the plants were re planted.

Plants in the ramp bed were removed by us before the contractors began to install the new cycle rack provided by the Department for Transport. The area was re -designed and re-planted with the same plants.

During the year the Station was entered into the Yorkshire in Bloom Best of Yorkshire Competition spring and summer categories. This was a new competition introduced due to Covid restrictions. We were very pleased and proud to receive two awards of excellence which are equivalent to gold awards. At a plant committee meeting last year it was decided to order red, white and blue flowering summer bedding plants to celebrate the Queens Platinum Jubilee Year. Weather permitting the plants should be ready for the end of May. 180 perennials plants are ready to be planted and Paul asked for volunteers to assist with this task next week.

We had another highly successful year despite the various difficulties but it would not have happened without the hard work of the volunteers.

7. Election of Officers

Chairman - David Bedding, Treasurer- Margaret Marshall and Secretary - Anne Cass were elected for a further twelve months.

Proposed by: Trevor Greenwood seconded by: Richard Armitage

8. Election of general Committee Members

After 7 years, David James has resigned from the committee but will continue for the moment with the tasks he is currently doing. We thank him for his contribution alongside David Woffinden who both do a brilliant job connecting with the sponsors each year and watering in the summer months. Other members – Richard Armitage, Paul Marshall, Beulah Shaw are willing to continue and were re-elected

Proposed by: Roger Ellis seconded by Ann Crowther

9. Projects in progress

a) Underbridge areas on both Platforms are to have some Art work installed by Calderdale College. Two groups of students had visited Brighouse and the station to plan a design for the mural. An elevated metal framework will house a 24 foot mural on 4' x 8' panels. The design of the mural was shown. Each Platform will have the same picture, but of different colours and the metal work will be installed after Easter 2022. This is to be an on –going project when more murals are produced annually by the College. We were grateful that a grant £1000 towards the cost of the murals has been obtained from The Community Rail Network.

b) In the old bike shed area on Platform 2 it was decided to install a large self - watering planter with a plaque to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022. We are awaiting delivery and plants have been ordered.

c) Sycamore trees and Laurels have been pruned in the area adjacent to Railway Street and some clearing has been carried out. It is proposed to keep this a natural area and in the autumn bulbs will be planted and some ground cover installed in order to have a zero maintenance area.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm and refreshments were served by Beulah and Margaret.

Signed.....

Date.....