

## News from the station – November 2019

A member recently remarked to us that we hadn't been in touch for a while and that they wondered what was happening at the station. Regrettably getting a newsletter out to our members has never *quite* made it to the top of our very full 'to do' list so we must apologise for that – and now here's the news !

First of all some general things:

If you've been to the station recently you'll have noticed that we now have new passenger shelters on both platforms. They're somewhat bigger than the ones they have replaced, have better 'seating' and much better lighting. These have been funded by Grand Central as part of their commitment to improve the station(s) along their 2 routes. We're hoping that there will soon be a small plaque on the shelters acknowledging the funding.

We still only have the 1 ticket machine (on Platform 2) but we have been assured that we will be getting a second one on Platform 1 – although no date yet. There is a problem with the cabling from the control box as this will have to be routed under the tracks and this may be the cause of the delay.

New trains will soon be seen on the Calder Valley – but not through Brighouse for a while yet. The first service is Leeds to Chester via Halifax. The new ones are a great improvement, the biggest noticeable difference on boarding is that they are open right through the whole length and so make more efficient use of the space. There was a 'launch' at Bradford recently and a short video of this can be seen on U-tube at:

<https://youtu.be/vlkjDsp87XM>

On the station winter has now 'officially arrived' and we have gone over to our winter planting scheme. As usual the inserts for the fence mounted planters were prepared by the team off-site and allowed to establish before being brought to the station. The plants for the borders are also 'potted on' and established as well. These 2 tasks alone take the team 2 days to do.

So, the fence mounted planters now look like this:



We think they should give a nice display all winter – if you notice what looks like a piece of felt poked in the watering hole then don't think it's someone 'playing games' and pull it out ! It's there to drain off the excess water as the pansies don't like being too wet.

The barrels have undergone a major change and now look like this:



The most noticeable change is that the green cordylines have all been replaced with brown . The green ones were getting very large , in fact really too large for the platform, so had to go. You may also observe that the barrels are different: for the summer we had 2 of this new type at the Huddersfield end of both platforms so we could assess their performance. We found them very good so decided to replace the whole lot. What's the difference ? First of all these are plastic and so are zero maintenance – the wooden ones they have replaced had to have the holding bands repainted regularly to keep them looking smart – and in several cases were beginning to rot. Secondly, and more importantly, they have an integral water tank (like the fence planters). Watering the barrels has been a major problem during the recent hot summers , needing 200 to 300l per week to keep them in good condition – and this regularly failed as much of the applied water ran straight through. With the integral tank this won't happen and the plants will get steady supply of water which should keep them in peak condition. This will also help reduce our water requirements and ease the job of our watering team. The 'old' plants have gone to Incredibly Edible in Brighouse and to Mytholmroyd and Hebden Bridge stations so they haven't gone to waste.

The area at the top left of the car park behind the Huddersfield end of Platform 1 which was the original site of the 'bug hotel' and which had to be cleared for the platform extension works is now recovering well after it was reinstated and the pampas grass which we planted are, after the failure of the first ones planted, now doing well – best viewed from the platform. Unfortunately HWA who were sponsoring this area have now gone out of business so we will be looking for a new sponsor for this area for next year.

Finally, on our 'to do' list is the production of some display boards for the platforms. Roy Shakespeare and the Rastrick Local History Group have helped with these and we hope to have the first ones on the station before too long (another delayed project !) However a display based on the research done for these is currently in Rastrick library so any members living by there might like to drop in and take a look.

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