

# FRIENDS OF SOWERBY BRIDGE RAILWAY STATION

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

12<sup>th</sup> November 2024

@ The Hollins, Hollins Mill Lane, Sowerby Bridge

Attendees; Jim Milner, Wendy Evans, Richard Adams, Peter Burke, Chris Harvey, James Hennighan, John Myddelton, John Hartley, Chris Webster (acting President), Charles Adams.

Apologies; Stuart Town, David Horsman, Mike Payne, Joy Edwards, Kathryn Reynolds, David Harriott.

Opening Comments; JMil wished to pass on best wishes from the group to JE, KR & DH who are currently recuperating. Also that CW would be acting in the Presidents role for the evening.

2023 Minutes; Approved, JHen & JMil.

Secretarys Report; CA highlighted that the group had had a good year, including gleaning a Gold award at the annual Yorkshire in Bloom. The gardening group were still low on numbers. The general enhancement of the station received frequent positive comments from station users. The recent Remembrance Service had gone well, with 30+ attendees, the article in the Heritage Newspaper seemed to have little effect. There had been good trips to both the Severn Valley Railway and the Lakeside & Haverthwaite Railways. Relationships with Northern Rail and the Calder Valley Railway Partnership were healthy, and recent networking with other groups was good. ISS, the station cleaners had been doing a good job on the station environs. He thanked all the active volunteers for their efforts over the last year.

JMil had announced his retirement from the treasurers role earlier in the year, 2 members had volunteered but unfortunately then withdrawn their interest. JMil would continue in the interim until a suitable candidate could be found. CA highlighted that due to the diligence of JMil, the group's income had generally matched its expenditure. The group would focus on it's plans for 2025, which included improving gravel pathways, implementing YiB recommendations and hopefully commission a feasibility study regarding community use of the compound on platform 2.

Treasurers Report; JMil reiterated his intention to stand down, as soon as a suitable candidate was found. Amongst his additional duties, he had carried out the groups 'annual plan' (a NR requirement) and various grant applications, these could be allocated to other volunteers if possible. JMil then referenced items on the Asset Register (physical items the group has a value for), the return of the WW1 memorial casting was of concern. He identified a small number of items that are currently in the Jubilee Refreshment Rooms which belong to the group.

JMil then gave a rundown of the accounts for the year ending 31/10/24. Generally the Income (grants, sponsorship, membership fees) had covered the Expenditure. The reduced hours of the JRR had had a negative effect on income streams. The coach trips had balanced themselves out, though the increase in coach costs are of concern. There is a small amount

of grant funding that requires using before the year end. Some items which were paid upfront would reappear in the forthcoming accounts period, primarily the website hosting fee. There had been an increase in costs relating to general infrastructure repairs of the group's activities, these should even out over time.

The group would be opening a 'savings' account with the Skipton Building Society, the savings rate had recently dropped from the initial advertised rate. Signatories of this and the Lloyds account would be MP, CA & JMil. Lloyds would be instigating a monthly charge in the new year, JHart indicated this was becoming prevalent over voluntary group accounts.

Some forthcoming expenditure was identified, John & Val Frankland had hosted the recent Remembrance Service, as a token payment, they requested a donation be made to the Forget Me Not Trust. The cost of plants for the Winter changeover and a small expense for MP were due.

The groups recent grant applications to the Transpennine Route Upgrade Community Fund had been refused, no sensible explanation from TRUCF was forthcoming.

The coach hire for the Group's trip to the Beamish Open Air Museum on 18/5/25 is now a confirmed booking. No deposit has yet been requested by the hire company. CW thanked JMil for his hard work at holding the finance activities together

Auditors Report; The Independent Auditor had not as yet verified the groups accounts.

Health & Safety Report; CH was able to advise that the group had been safe in their activities, but unfortunately some members of the public had not. Youths climbing onto surrounding walls and a suicide, which a group member was witness to.

Chairmans Report; MP had not supplied his report for the year.

Membership Report; JMyd was able to attend and indicated that membership had remained steady at around 62/72 members/sponsors, though this was still below pandemic levels.

Election of Officers; All the current officers were happy to continue in situ, though a replacement for JMil needed identifying. JE submitted a letter indicating that she is unable to continue her present level of involvement with the practical demands of the Group's gardening activities. There were no other volunteers for any posts.

A.O.B. Christmas card, 2 samples were considered, the Postbox would be printed for this year's card. The xmas lunch would be held at the Navigation, SB, on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> December. The Christmas Carol Service would be held in the Bronte Garden on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> December at 4pm.

The next open meeting is Tuesday, 10<sup>th</sup> December at The Hollins.

The next AGM will be 11<sup>th</sup> November 2025.

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