

Friends of Sowerby Bridge Railway Station
Open Meeting 12th August 2025
@ The Hollins, Hollins Mill Lane, Sowerby Bridge

Attendees; Richard Adams, Jim Milner, Mike Payne, Charles Adams, James Hennighan, Peter Burke, Joy Edwards, David Harriott, Chris Webster & Chris Harvey

Apologies; Julia White, Sylvia Kelly, Stuart Town.

Minutes of July Meeting; Accepted.

Chairman's Report; Nothing specific, will add as the meeting goes.

Health & Safety; CH advised that all the gardening volunteers had had their H&S briefings. The issue of gravel/pebbles being thrown around the station by local youth had been reported to British Transport Police.

Secretary's Report; CA advised that he, JH and MP would be attending the Calder Valley Rail Partnership get together in Hebden Bridge on 1/9/25. The invite to Smithy Bridge's 40th anniversary had drawn little interest.

War Memorial Fund; JM felt this could be removed from the agenda, CA advised we were still awaiting monies for the work recently done on the Memorial plaques. When this was received, JM's suggestion could be actioned.

Projects & Grants; MP had had a negative response from Northern Rail about the groups application for funding towards the platform 2 feasibility study. All grants appear to come from the same 'pot'. Any outstanding work to which grants have been given must be completed as soon as possible. CA would be looking at a further grant from the Community Rail Network for additional replacement ½ barrels.

Treasurers' Report; JM advised of circa £751 received, primarily coach trip bookings. We are awaiting the CRN grant for the Memorial plaques £1650 as referenced in WMF. There had been costs paid to Briggs Priestley for sponsorship plaques and the Sowerby Bridge geese information board £186, bank admin charges and reimbursements to JE. Two large costs would be due soon, the coach hire £875 and circa £600 for the North Yorkshire Moors Railway fares. As referred to in P&G, 4 grants from Northern need completing, 1 relates to the future Winter plant change over. The bank interest rates had dropped again, MP asked if there were other possible current accounts we could transfer to, unfortunately nearly all banks now charge for charity/business accounts.

Gardening Group; JE/JH & others have kept on top of weeding/deadheading, along with adding additional compost to various areas. Due to the dry weather some areas are struggling, Bronte garden certainly. The Yorkshire in Bloom judging took place on 9/7/25. The results presentation is to be held in Tadcaster in September. JE advised she had seen some reasonably priced bird boxes which could replace some existing ones which have seen better times. JM asked the Group to consider planting a section of hedge to delineate the eastern boundary of the Bronte Garden extension.

Infrastructure; A large planter was due 14/8/25 and all the information boards from the Calderdale Culturedale grant had been erected.

Membership; John Myddelton was not available, but had sent the latest update through which had 66 general members, 1 corporate & 7 life members.

Sponsorship; JW was not available, but had advised she was chasing 2 new sponsors. Also she awaits sponsorship photos to send to the current sponsors, DH will provide these. A new plaque would be needed for the 'in memory of Mary Crabtree', as the incorrect station had been entered.

John Hartley Book; A fund raiser on behalf of John took place on 1/8/25 which raised £3-400.

Coach Trip; PB advised that the numbers were sufficient for the trip to run, he awaits a few travellers to pay their fares to get correct figures for the NYMR train. He advised that a lot of the smaller coach companies that do day trips are being bought out by larger companies focussing on holiday trips.

Social Media; CA advised all upto date.

Remembrance Service; JM had advised CA of a discrepancy on the order of service, CA has rectified this.

Christmas Carols; CA & MP need to co-ordinate on this subject.

SBRS 150; JM had written up information for a notice board and totems for the stations 150 anniversary in 2026. CA suggested 1 of each per platform, this was generally approved.

A.O.B. JE had done a short piece for entry to the 'Rail200' promotion. JM advised his recent retirement gift from the group would be used towards a trip to Bolton Abbey/Embsay railway. JH advised that Andrew Wright was now out of hospital and recovering at home.

Next Open Meeting 9th September at the Hollins Mill, 19.30hrs

Next Gardening Session 16th August, SBRS, 09.30hrs