

Friends of Sowerby Bridge Railway Station
Committee Meeting 13th October 2026
held at The Hollins Mill public house

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

Apologies; Stuart Town, Sylvia Kelly & Julia White.

Minutes of September's meeting were approved.

Chairman's Report; MP had had negative comments in relation to female representation on the group's information boards, this was being looked into. There had also been near misses between vehicles not observing the mini-roundabout in front of the car park. Signage does not exist to forewarn drivers. (Post meeting MP/CA received a response from Northern Rail regarding this situation, which NR had looked into and supplied a proposal).

Health & Safety; CH was not aware of any issues. JH indicated that stone throwing was still occurring, also he had been subject to verbal abuse from pupils of Ryburn Valley High. British Transport Police & RVH had been advised, though a response from either was still awaited. CA had conversed with NR about cameras overseeing the actual station, he also awaits a response.

Secretary's Report; CA had attended the NR conference on 6th October, the emphasis had been on the introduction of Great British Railways and Community Rail. The proposed Community Rail meeting on 14th October had been postponed. His meeting with Eva Zeg of the Calder Valley Rail Partnership had gone ahead in September, there had been nothing published so far in relation to the subject matter (station of the month). There is to be a CVRP meeting at Hebden Bridge (Town Hall!) on 27th October, CA will advise CVRP of any interested attendees. A CVP media survey needs to be completed which CA will undertake. There is also the CRP AGM coming up on 4th November, CA has signed up, are there any others interested..

Projects & Grants 2025; CA advised there is a need to complete outstanding grant work, ie bronte garden path. He will also order the new geese statuettes, and the replacement banner that NR sponsored needs putting up. JM had drawn up a proposed Blue Plaque motif for Branwell Bronte to be put up at the remaining station building that BB had worked in Sowerby Street. Identifying the buildings owners, and what future plans for the buildings required sourcing, MP would look into this.

Treasurer's Report; MP indicated there had been income of £216.50 within the previous month. Made up of final trip payments £104, new and renewed memberships £19, donations £29, sales of books/pens and Sweep takings on the coach trip £43 and adhoc sales £11.50. Expenses included the final payment for the hire of the coach £920, North Yorkshire Moors rail fare returns £44, bank charges and sundry expenses to JH £168.58.

Gardening Team; JE had ordered the plants for the Winter plant changeover, these were expected to be delivered on 23rd October, volunteers to unload & possibly plant required. JH highlighted the group had gained a Gold Award at the recent Yorkshire in Bloom presentation day, he and Pam Street had represented the group. It was noted that the judges look out for new innovations on their visits. JH, PS & Sylvia Walker had planted some random bulbs in the planters outside the Jubilee Refreshment Rooms.

Infrastructure; There were no major issues to resolve. Ideas for future works to be looked into.

Membership; John Myddelton was unavailable and had not supplied an update. It was noted that 6 new members had signed up whilst on the NYMR/Whitby trip and 1 had renewed.

Sponsorship; JW was unavailable, but had advised of no recent activity to declare.

John Hartley Book; There had been 2 sales recently.

Information Boards; Following on from concerns about female representation on the groups station information boards, JM had identified 5 possible subjects. He did identify that all the suggestions would need further investigation, which previously was John Hartleys forte, CH offered to look into this. JM wondered whether contacting Roger Beasley and/or Ruth Beasley who wrote books on local subjects might be worth considering, if they could assist at all. People to be researched were May Haley, Elizabeth Bryan, Roma Andrew, Maureen Moore and Jean Muir. CA had drawn up templates for 2 of the 3 subjects suggested at the 150th anniversary event, Ernest Hall and William Halstead. The 3rd subject, Siddal & Hilton, the group are awaiting a response from the nominee. Gordon Bell who suggested William Halstead was willing to sponsor the cost of the board and the group agreed to proceed on this basis. The new canal board has been collected from Briggs Priestley.

Northern Rail/Transpennine Funding; No activity at the moment.

Coach Trip; The recent trip to NYMR/Whitby had been very successful. 49 people made the trip, 40 took advantage of the railway part of the trip. Llangollen has been suggested for the next trip, possibly in May 2027. The coach company the group have been using may not be available for future trips due to gaining a large national contract, Yorkshire Rose coaches may be a suitable alternative.

Station; Nothing to report.

Website/Social Media; These were up to date with details of the YiB result and notification of the AGM and Remembrance service.

WW1 template/Generator; MP requires James Wards address to arrange for the generator to be returned to him.

Rail Passes; No issues.

Remembrance Service; CA indicated Richard Isaac of NR would be attending, as would Chris Harris, deputy lord lieutenant. John & Val Frankland would officiate, their fee to be donated to the 'Forget Me Not Hospice'. The group would purchase 2 wreaths, 1 for the Bronte garden and 1 for platform 2. The service sheets had been printed.

Christmas Events; Cards and Carol service were in hand. 3 venues were suggested for the groups christmas lunch, the Navigation, Salts Bar and the Wainhouse Tavern. Salts Bar was nominated, CA would look at booking the group in for 17th December.

A.O.B. CA advised the FoSBRS pen stock was low and needed restocking, this was approved. JH advised a further parcel collection/delivery point was being proposed at the far end of the carpark.

Next Gardening Session; Saturday 17th October, 9.30am
Assistance required 23rd October for unloading of winter changeover plants.

Next Meeting is the Annual General Meeting, 10th November, 7.30pm, Hollins Mill

Next Committee Meeting; 8th December, 7.30pm, Hollins Mill.

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