

# Friends of Brighouse Station

## **Minutes of 10<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of Friends of Brighouse Station.**

The 10<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of Friends of Brighouse Station was held at St John's Church Conference Centre on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at 7pm.

Anne Cass, Secretary, opened the meeting and welcomed 24 members and one guest, the Environment and Sustainability Manager of the North East Region, Richard Isaac.

Apologies were received from 26 members.

1. The Minutes of the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting had been circulated and were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### **3. Secretary's report**

It is with sadness I have to announce the death of Derek Ashton who has known the group since it began in 2015 and checked over the accounts annually.

On a happier note, Mr Roger Ellis has taken over the roll in January and has checked and signed last year's accounts. Roger is a long-standing member of FoBS and is more than qualified to do the job. Many thanks Roger.

2025 was an extremely busy but successful year at Brighouse Station. The TPE Upgrade meant there were contractors on site redesigning the carpark entrance areas and installing a shelter for bus and train passengers and new electronic signs.

During September the car park was out of use and passengers had to find alternative spaces in Brighouse. A toilet and a water tap were installed on Platform 1. The large water tank can be filled from here using a hosepipe although the hosepipe ban in July challenged the watering team but water was brought from home in containers and added to the tanks as necessary. The plants survived the hot conditions thanks to their efforts.

The Committee met for 6 meetings but sadly Pam Sharp had to relinquish her role on the committee due to personal circumstances, we thank her for her contributions to the meetings. We also thank Paul and Margaret Marshall for their hospitality and providing refreshments for the meetings.

We thank David Thorpe, Diane Armitage and Paul who continue to update the Facebook page. We also thank David James for maintaining the FoBS website and the work visiting sponsors throughout the year along with David Woffindin. Another team who visits sponsors now includes Anne Cass, David Mallinson, Margaret Marshall and we thank Jane Hills who obtained new sponsors for next year.

This year David Mallinson designed the Christmas card and these were printed by Vistaprint. He also produced the posters, postcards and flyers advertising the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and the members and sponsors received a pen to celebrate this event. The Community Rail Network Partnership joined forces with the Committee to arrange an afternoon tea at the Railway pub to celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the opening of Brighouse station in 2000.. A cake was cut and Karen Hornby and Darren Allsop distributed certificates to the working volunteers in recognition of all the hard work carried out at the station during the last 10 years of the Friends of Brighouse Station group. We also thank Trevor and Sue for hosting the event.

We now have a new young plant supplier with an expanded range which should give stunning displays later in the year. Paul is intending to spread some of the work out between volunteers to lighten his work load. This year David Mallinson and Paul have ordered the summer bedding as well as the winter bedding for next October.

We thank the staff at Manor Heath for their support and they have agreed to grow the plants on for us and to plant them at the appropriate times. .

Although Richard Isaac offered a group ticket for working members the disruption of rail services at the station meant that it was not practical to make a trip this year.

The work of FoBS continues and we thank all the volunteers and members who work in various ways to maintain a welcoming environment at the station. Your time and support are much appreciated. Thank you,

#### **4. Treasurers report.**

Margaret reported that FoBS started 2025 with a healthy balance and we have a total of 46 members and 24 business sponsors. The committee agreed to keep the membership and sponsor fees unchanged as in previous years.

As you are all aware there was quite a lot of upheaval at the station during the year especially in the car park which resulted in the two entrance beds being more or less demolished for a while Colt Construction who were the main contractors worked closely with us and generously gave a grant towards reinstating the left entrance bed. They also arrived one morning with five new wooden planters and some gravel and promptly arranged the right entrance are. This obviously saved us a lot of time and expense.

The Committee decided that the work involved in reinstating the left bed would be too arduous for our working team so we used the grant from Colt to engage professional landscapers who redesigned and replanted the bed.

We received grants from Grand Central and Northern which were used for plants and compost. Our usual plant supplier has ceased production and a new company based at Thirsk has been chosen as our new supplier. Prices are comparable and we purchased some plants from a local garden centre to replace any that had become damaged during the challenging weather and hosepipe ban.

We ended the year with a healthy balance which will lead us hopefully into a successful 2026. Margaret thanked our long standing member Roger Ellis who kindly agreed to inspect the accounts and verify them

#### **5 Chairman's report**

##### **Anne Cass presented Paul's report.**

2025 was a transformative year for Brighouse Station. Every part of the station has been changed for the better. A thorough repaint of the ramps, railings and platform edges has brought new life to the station along with a new toilet block, tap, CCTV and improved lighting. Steps have been built from platform 1 to the car park from & to aid passenger flow to and from the car park. New improved shelters with lighting have been installed on both platforms and platform 2 has been widened again to aid passenger flow for the increased volume of people using the station when trains are diverted through Brighouse. There is also a new bus shelter in the car park for rail replacement buses which now use the station frequently.

The contractors were asked to make a path from the car park to the pavement on Birds Royd but they were unsure what to do with the garden area when they had finished. I had a discussion with the project Manager who asked if FoBS could tidy up the area. They said there would be a small

grant from them if we could sort out the area. They also supplied us with the five wooden planters and gravel on the opposite entrance bed.

As the task was too big for us to cope with we agreed a price with a local landscape company who I am sure you will all agree they did a wonderful job, bang on price. We paid a small amount extra for the trees and shrubs opposite to be thinned out so everyone could have clear views inside and outside the car park. The soil was levelled and all pruning's were recycled and used as mulch on other jobs. The garden has been designed to minimise the amount of watering needed.

Unfortunately there was a small amount of vandalism to the new planters but we have hopefully rectified the damage and are trying to save the grasses that were planted there. There has not been a recurrence thankfully.

The Climate Change Garden has lived up to its name and produced lovely displays of flowers and grasses whilst not needing a drop of water all summer. Minimal amounts of maintenance have been needed but the flowers from 100 Lavender plants and wild flower turf have attracted bees, butterflies and insects, all summer.

We could not have done all this without our dedicated band of volunteers who spent approximately 1,200 hours of their valuable time for the benefit of station users. Our volunteers have worked exceptionally hard to keep the station plants watered and in good conditions throughout the hosepipe ban and very hot weather.

A crop of long lasting orange metal flower structures was installed opposite Platform 1 in the Climate Change Garden which should last for many years.

Margaret and Paul attended the Community Rail Awards 2026 in Derby last Thursday as my photo had been shortlisted in the photographic competition

There were around 600 people there from all over the country who had entered the different categories.

Our picture was 1 of 9 shortlisted from the whole country. The competition is free to enter by station adopters.

The ceremony lasted several hours and then it came to the photographic section.

I named our photograph Brighouse Busy Lizzies which pictured members of the Wednesday team working in the Climate Change Garden.

The result came up as Brighouse Busy Lizzies Friends of Brighouse Station WINNER. There were a lot of Northern people there so a huge cheer went up and we now have another trophy.

Very well done to everyone.

We are looking out for someone to take on the task of entering Community Rail competitions and possibly Yorkshire in Bloom. If you look at our website you will see the number of awards we have earned during the past ten years. It's a rewarding task but needs an enthusiastic person to take on the work. Supervision and advice could be given.

I would also like to thank all the behind-the-scenes volunteers who are not seen so much on the station. Their work is equally important and valued. Thanks to Richard Isaac and the Northern team for all their support and information updates.

We are always looking out for working volunteers who would be able to spend up to two hours a week on the station to help keep FoBS thriving.

## 6. Election of Officers & Committee

The Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer are eligible for re-election and the appointments were taken 'en bloc'.

Chairman – Paul Marshall	Secretary - Anne Cass	Treasurer - Margaret Marshall
Proposed Roger Ellis	Seconded Alan Whittel	All in favour.

Richard Armitage and David Mallison are willing to continue on the Committee.

Proposed Alan Whittel	Seconded David Woofinden	All in favour.
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Howard Blagborough gave a vote of thanks to all the Friends of Brighouse Station volunteers who work tirelessly to keep the station looking beautiful and a welcoming place for passengers travelling to and from Brighouse.

The members were shown the new posters which included the winning photograph of the Climate Change Garden which will replace the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary ones.

The meeting closed at 7.25 pm and refreshments were served.

Following the refreshments Richard Isaac also praised the hard work to keep the station tidy and a welcoming place for passengers and Northern staff and he outlined the job opportunities for young people to work in the rail industry. He explained that the TPE Upgrade would continue for a few more years'

He was thanked for attending the AGM.

David James showed how the Friends of Brighouse website had been developed and the various items which may be viewed and encouraged members to visit the site. He conclude by playing Paul's recent radio interview explaining about the latest award and had included photographs of the station throughout the year.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm

Signed.....

Date.....