



Since 2006

Our station has gone from this...



To THIS!



Thanks to the support of the village volunteers and community together with



**Fr John Gott & the Church
Of the Good Shepherd**

and our other sponsors.

In 2006 we 'inherited' a derelict station



So we made a start!

Station improvements started with Matt Gibson, the **Northern Rail** station manager, installing flower tubs on the platforms. There was an immediate positive reaction from regular station users that something was about to improve.



Then in 2007, with the support of Hebden Royd Town Council, we re-furbished the **Ironman murals** which had been produced by local schools with the help of the Churches, businesses and residents.

This was followed in 2008 by the **Northern Mosaic** produced by students from Calder High School. Northern Rail sponsored special classroom sessions during the school holidays, Calderdale Safer Communities made an invaluable contribution and local Pennine Signs made the magnificent display for the youngsters.



The Mytholmroyd Station Partnership has a dedicated 'gardening team' who have toiled on an average 30 hours per month since the group started 2006.



The Partnership has 29 station members, 11 sponsors and 12 professional supporters (local councils and police etc.).



In addition, we have residents from the local area participating.

We receive valuable assistance from Northern Rail, the local Town Council and Fr John Gott who kindly allows us to store our equipment and hold our meetings at his church.

Attendance at our monthly meetings and station gardening is usually 8-14 people. We do not normally discuss trains, leaving that to the professionals; we plan and decide future improvements to the village station.

For special occasions – such as the annual Spring Clean – nearly all the members turn up.

The Northern Rail cleaning contractors (ISS) has allocated a superb team for our station. John and Phil keep the station in a good condition and save our volunteers a lot of time clearing the debris from occasional unsocial behaviour.



Regularly seen doing the odd bit of weeding, pruning and watering in and around the station with train passengers often stopping to discuss gardening and **express their appreciation** for the transformation of their village station. Quite often we welcome 'expert' gardeners' advice as to whether a particular plant is a weed (or not) – we have the enthusiasm if not the expertise!

We have met many new friends in the village – and we (generally) enjoy ourselves.

Whilst our voluntary effort since 2006 has improved the station environment, the railway station can be a focus of **unsocial behaviour**.



We have built a good relationship with the management of Northern Rail, the British Transport and West Yorkshire Police.



With our combined information and surveillance, problems have been much reduced over the years.

Nevertheless, such wanton damage causes us **unnecessary expenditure and time repairing** – not only graffiti, but destroyed plants and flower displays.

Our main aim is to have a maintenance-free garden area which will be attractive to residents and visitors – giving a **favourable impression** of this part of the Calder Valley.



Safer for all



The steep banking needs the experience of **professionals** to cut the grass..... Funding for this important work has come from Royd Regeneration and latterly, Hebden Royd Town Council.



Mytholmoyd is 'blessed' with a disused **station building** which is an eyesore to everyone on the main street. Members suggested inserting artwork into the redundant **window spaces** and the Partnership received permission from the station landlord, Network Rail to brighten the station approach.

The Green Business Network has kindly made donations for the artwork for the schools and local community. The Association of Community Rail Partnerships and Calderdale Council have also made a valuable contribution to this project.



Our three **Junior Schools** students have proudly presented their works which have been unveiled by the Mayor of Hebden Royd Town Council.

In addition we have **Community Art and History** displays.



next generation – Ownership



We try to include the youngsters in our project (as far as we can, bearing in mind the safety aspect of working near railways).

We believe this, in the long-term, will be beneficial to everyone as they will identify with 'their' village station and become responsible rail users. |

We have held an **Annual Station Carols** each December which has become very popular – especially the pop and crisps party afterwards together with a 'goody-bag' provided by Northern Rail. .



In December 2010 a trip to Wakefield had been organised with our friends at the Cathedral, for children from our three junior schools to sing in the Chantry Chapel on Wakefield Bridge.

Northern Rail and the new Grand Central Trains kindly provided the travel arrangements – however.....

Extreme weather started that very day – with all the local trains being cancelled.

Hopefully we can rearrange the outing for December 2011.

Disabled Access

Mytholmroyd station is the only place those with mobility problems can access trains without having to negotiate steps.

We noticed an increasing number of people using these facilities, but there were difficulties due to the poor condition of the Network Rail access road.

In March 2010 the Station Partnership asked their contacts in the management of Network Rail for some small improvements.

Network Rail responded with a major improvement for access and setting down/picking up of passengers at Mytholmroyd in a matter of weeks.



Volunteers

Mytholmroyd Station Partnership is principally a **community group** which has the railway station as its focal point. Members are usually very interested in railways but we do not spend our meetings discussing trains or services.

We have an **open membership** policy – people sometimes may have gardening or administrative skills – everyone is very welcome.

Our Constitution includes the involvement of the local community in addition to our Aims of encouraging travel by rail.



The Station Partnership has entered the Neighbourhood section of **Yorkshire in Bloom** and has always received favourable and very useful comments – not only for the floral displays, but for the community spirit engendered between the station group, the churches, the village green and local

residents and businesses – both Town and District Councils, West Yorkshire and British Transport police officers.



Local residents, churches, businesses and the Village Green = the Partnership



Truly a Community effort!

Summary

What we thought in 2006 would be a 'simple' station adoption group planting a few flowers has developed into quite a substantial (and time consuming) community organisation.

This has been due to the enthusiasm and support of our volunteers, sponsors and always available in the background for advice, Northern Rail – who give us the necessary permissions for the various projects.

We have had our frustrations and setbacks.

Frustrations, such as the mindless vandalism, we deal with as quickly as possible so their 'handiwork' is not on display for longer than necessary.

Setbacks occur such as the theft of our water butts and compost bins.



We have overcome the compost question with a compound made by our members from recycled pallets from a local company. The water still needs to be taken up to the platform tubs by hand.



We have always to be aware that we are working on an operational railway station. All volunteers receive a **Safety Briefing**.

We have also to be aware that station adoption can be low down on the railway priorities which, at times, can cause us problems.

During 2011 we have had to remove our artwork and plaques whilst railway contractors undertook painting and repair work. Again this diverted our attention (and time) away from our planned gardening projects for 2011.

In mid-June, we arrived for our Summer tub-replanting session to find that a huge trough had been dug through the grass area



all the way up on the Manchester side - and a large part of the flower and shrub bed demolished to make way for a new cycle rack and CCTV camera.



We welcome the opportunities that these additional facilities offer; the shrubs were certainly 'taking over' the area and becoming time consuming.



We see this as a new challenge to make this a pleasant safe and manageable area for all to enjoy. Local residents have already offered to donate plants to replace the ones we have lost – our station improvement work is obviously noted and appreciated.

Members and the general community will be invited to suggest practical projects for the new areas we plan to make available once the contractors have left – modular garden, sculpture, more community/school artwork?

We have established a good relationship with the local media, who regularly publish articles on the work of the volunteers and Partnership generally. The local Mytholmroyd.Net regularly includes photos and features and we collate information on mytholmroydstation@wordpress.com for the public interest

For the last two years we have had help from various corporate community groups who have spent one or two days helping with the gardening. 2011 will see teams from Royal Sun Alliance preparing the overgrown area next to the new cycle rack cleared in preparation for the next project.

Finally, down to the nitty-gritty!

We are tackling the problem of dog mess (left in plastic bags by walkers on the adjacent footpath) –the local Environmental Officer has been asked to contact Northern Rail with regard to the provision of a bin.

So different from the initial few flower tubs – but well worth it!

