

Held at:

7.30 pm, Walkden British Legion Club

Attendees:

Peter Aust (PA - Chair)
Cllr Les Turner (LT)
Cllr Nicky Turner (NT)
Angela Critchley (AC)
Michael Carney (MC)
Barbara Carney (BC)
Cllr Iain Lindley (IL)
Neil Stapleton (NS - Minutes)
Harry Merrick (HM)
Jennifer Reynolds (JR)
Dennis Reynolds (DR)
Frank Bridge (FB)
Keith Ingram (KI)
Graham Spencer (GS)
Shaun Brown (SB)
Preva Crossley (PC, Friends of Hindley Station)
Pam Williams (PW, Northern Rail)
PC Maxine Southwell (MS, BTP)

Apologies:

Chris Tucker (CT)
Andrew Behan (ABe)
Steve Magner (SM, GMPTE)
Andy Barlow (AB)
Peter Hope (PH)
Keith Lumley (KL, Network Rail)
Tony Williams (TW)
Barbara Keeley MP (BK)
Cllr Ian Macdonald (IM)
Tracy Jacobs (TJ, Salford City Council)
Natasha Wilding (NW, Northern Rail)

Agenda

Item	Subject
1	Chair's Welcome & Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apologies for Absence <i>Apologies received from the people listed above.</i> <i>A special welcome to first-time visitors and special guests PW and MS.</i>
2	Chair's Keynote <i>PA thanked individual FOWS members for their contributions this year.</i> <i>PA made a tongue-in-cheek suggestion that Walkden station was a suitable setting for the 1970's drama Life On Mars, illustrating the serious point that when FOWS</i>

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	<i>was founded in 2007 the station had been over-looked and fallen a long way behind the standards of the time.</i>
3	<p>Secretary's Review of the Year</p> <p><i>NS gave a month-by-month review of the activities of FOWS over the previous year and reflected on three significant steps forward that have been achieved:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Sunday service</i> <i>• Installation of tannoy</i> <i>• Positioning at top of GMPTE's Station Improvement Strategy list for 2010/11</i> <p><i>NS reminded meeting of numerous problems remaining, including disabled access, platform gap, CCTV, car parking, pedestrian crossing etc</i></p> <p><i>NS said he would like to see more members actively involved in FOWS activities, and encouraged members to look for opportunities to extend FOWS awareness and influence in the local community.</i></p>
4	<p>Treasurer's Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Statement of Accounts March 2009 to date</i> <i>• Membership Subscriptions for 2010</i> <p><i>AC provided a summary of the financial position and confirmed the accounts for the previous year have been audited by JR.</i></p> <p><i>The bank balance is £49.31</i></p> <p><i>Total expenditure and income in 2009 were £153.42 and £119.72 respectively.</i></p> <p><i>AC proposed raising membership fee to £2 to help cover incidental costs currently paid by members (replacement plants, postage & photocopying etc). PC advised Friends of Hindley Station charge £2.50. The proposal was unanimously accepted in a vote.</i></p>
5	<p>Webmaster's Report</p> <p><i>NS reported FOWS blog has no running costs and average visits per day have increased by 12% from the previous year to 16 per day in 2009.</i></p> <p><i>NS reported website hosting costs approx £56 p.a. and he is happy to pay for this himself again. The website has an average 63 visitors per day with no significant downtime in 2009. The most visited pages are "Along The Line" (1637 visits in 2009), "Signal Box History" (1403), "Walkden Today" (1072) and "About the Trains" (898).</i></p>
6	<p>Gardening Projects Report</p> <p><i>AC reported that winter plants had been installed in November. A refresh is planned prior to the station gala in May.</i></p>
7	<p>Election of Officers: Chair/Secretary/Treasurer.</p> <p>The following people are willing to stand for re-appointment to the Committee of Officers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Peter Aust (Chair)</i> <i>• Neil Stapleton (Secretary)</i> <i>• Angela Critchley (Treasurer)</i> <p>The following new post is proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Service Improvement Officer (Andy Barlow)</i> <p><i>The current serving officers were all re-elected unopposed.</i></p> <p><i>NS explained the rationale for creating a Service Improvement Officer post,</i></p>

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	<p><i>responsible for formulating and co-ordinating FOWS responses to surveys and consultation exercises.</i></p> <p><i>Andy Barlow was elected unopposed to the post.</i></p>
8	<p>Planning for Sunday Service Launch Gala (May 23rd)</p> <p><i>NS outlined the plans for a gala at the station on Sunday 23rd May, from 11am to 1pm featuring a brass band and various stalls. PA has arranged for the services of a Toast Master and Photographer free of charge.</i></p> <p><i>NS asked for anyone who knows of community groups (uniformed organisations, etc) who might like to have a stall at the gala to contact him.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>MS agreed to arrange a BTP presence at the gala with "goodies" to give out to visitors.</i> • <i>PC advised that Friends of Hindley Station are also planning a gala to mark the launch (the new service will increase the frequency of Sunday trains from Hindley, which are already over-crowded). FOWS and FOHS agreed to cross-promote each other's galas and look for other ways to collaborate on promoting the service and route in general.</i> <p><i>NS asked members to think of ways to promote the service through the trial period, quoting PB's suggestion that shops in Manchester could be approached to provide discount vouchers.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>IL suggested "Days Out" leaflets like those produced by FRECCLES.</i> • <i>FB suggested announcing the gala the evening before in the Legion club.</i> • <i>PA advised the Salford Advertiser intend to cover the gala. NS advised Channel M have also been approached.</i> <p><i>HM suggested a later start and finish on Wigan to Manchester trains would have offered greater potential for days out at Southport, but IL advised the most effective thing for FOWS to do is concentrate on making the timetable that has been provided as successful as possible. IL advised the service patronage will effectively be scrutinised "from day 1".</i></p>
9	<p>Planning for 2010 – Setting Objectives and Priorities</p> <p><i>PA suggested FOWS produce a strategic action plan of Short, Medium and Long Term objectives.</i></p> <p><i>PA suggested priorities for 2010 should include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Indoor Waiting Room</i> • <i>CCTV</i> • <i>Platform Gap</i> • <i>Recruitment of more members</i> • <i>Community outreach</i>
10	<p>Questions & Answers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>PB asked what happened about the stair rail that Chris Ingham had offered to look into last year. NS advised Chris was obtaining quotes but nothing had been heard for several months. PW offered to look into what has been done.</i> • <i>PB: why has the trackside litter, and litter in the fenced off area to the left of the station entrance, not been cleared by Network Rail ? NS advised Salford's Environment Officer Wayne Priestley has been chasing Network Rail for a couple of months but they have not committed to any timescale for litter clearing. NS to email KL at Network Rail to ask if anything else can be done.</i> • <i>PB noted one train in particularly poor condition on a journey to Southport. PW advised PB in future to note the unit number (or its journey date and time) and</i>

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	<p><i>report it to Northern's Customer Service team.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• KI: why are not all doors are opened to let passengers out at Walkden ? PW advised the platform is not certified for 4-carriage trains and their use is at the discretion of the guard. The guard may choose to keep the rear doors closed for safety, especially whilst the damaged coping stones on the down platform have reduced its operational length further than usual.</i> <i>• HM suggested the failure to repair the damaged coping stones on platform 2 within a few days was "disgraceful". PW agreed they should be repaired more quickly but said Network Rail did not categorise the job as a priority because they suppose the station should only be used by 2-carriage trains and therefore believe sufficient undamaged platform length remains.</i>
10	<p>Any Other Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• MS reported crime figures for the period Jan 2009 to date: 20 reported crimes including 1 assault and 1 affray. PA remarked the actual number of crimes is usually higher than the reported numbers.</i> <i>• PW advised she has received quotes for installation of pigeon netting under the platform canopy and is currently in discussion with Network Rail about when the work can be scheduled.</i>

Summary of Actions

Who	Action
All	Suggest ways to promote the Sunday service.
All	Suggest community groups or local organisations who may wish to participate in the station gala.
PW	Look into what has been done by Chris Ingham about installing a central handrail on the station stairs.
NS	Email KL at Network Rail to ask what can be done to get the litter around the station on Network Rail land cleared up.