

Parish meeting, 26 October, 2002, 10am, Pluckley Station Waiting Room, to discuss the setting up of a 'Friends of Pluckley Station.'

Present: Cllr Eileen English, ABC; Trevor Skelton, KRCC Rural Officer/Countryside Agency; Paul Salveson, Association of Community Rail Partnerships (ACoRP); Jo Barnes, ACoRP; Wendy Toms, Rail Passengers Committee Southern Area; Paula Sturtivant, Performance Delivery Manager – Connex; Alison Drabwell, Station Manager – Ashford Area; Fiona, Manager Pluckley Station; Cllr Geoff English, ABC; parish councillors: Trevor Oliver, Rosemary Davies, Ann Murray, Jackie Grebby; Members of the public: Cynthia Linzey, Karen Thomas, Nick Mengham, Jennifer Mengham, Ron Stainton, Brian Crouch, Joan Sexton, Frances Fisher, Freddie Smith.

The Clerk to Pluckley Parish Council – Jackie Grebby

Apologies: Janet Gwillim, Bruce MacDonald, Derek Church.

Mrs English chaired the meeting.

Pluckley Station is a very historic building, having been built in 1842 and retains original features.

Paul Salveson, representing ACoRP, reported that there are grants available to help stations and Trevor Skelton said that there was currently £10,000 grants available from the Countryside Agency over the next three years. This grant would have to be 25% match-funded.

Other 'Friends of Stations' groups were:

- Encouraging people to use the railway more,
- Creating a pride in the community
- Making station gardens
- Installing welcome signs, etc. including local maps
- Local children were doing artwork
- Supplying additional furniture
- Nearly all were volunteers with their parish councils also involved.
- The stations were nearly all small
- Staff became involved
- Safety issues must be taken into account and the proper insurances set up

Suggestions for Pluckley Station included:

- Tidy up grassed areas and keep cut [Alison Drabwell said Connex could do this at least twice a year, Karen Thomas said she was involved with the Community Service Offenders Group (CSO) who could also be asked to trim, tidy, etc. They could not be relied on to plant flowers]
- The triangle of land between the car park and The Grove was owned partly by Rail Track and partly by the residents of Stone Lodge. It has been used recently as a dumping ground. It could become an attractive piece of woodland if properly managed.
- Information board showing taxis, where phone box is, etc.
- Move telephone box?
- Number the platforms – it's not clear which are the Up or Down sides.
- Paint the lampposts in the car park – silver is not in keeping with a country area
- Paint the Up shelter – the ceiling was neglected when it was last done [Connex is already in dispute with Rail Track over the last repainting]
- Historic display [Derek Church has already offered to do this]
- Planters
- Tactile paving in waiting room, & disabled access
- Cycle racks/lockers/office
- Redecorate inside
- Keep locals updated with what is going on.

Heritage Board & Information Board:

Karen Thomas and Wendy Toms have some old pictures; Eileen English has some quotes of £1,000 and £896 (plus vat) for boards. Paula Sturtivant has a contact who is reasonably priced.

Two estimates would be all right for ACoRP who will fund the Heritage Board (it would have to be 20% match funded)

The Countryside Agency Transport Initiative will fund the information board – this would need to be near the gate, in a weatherproof box and lit. Again it will need to be 20% match funded, although in this instance it can be matched with ‘payment in kind’ if possible. Again, two estimates are adequate.

Put heritage board in the Up Shelter.

Send all information and pictures to Jackie Grebby (Giles Farm, Pluckley, TN27 0SY, 01233 840575, email – clerk@pluckley.net) who will liase with Derek Church.

There was a book in print that included information on the station.

Redecoration:

Inside: more plants, bookcase, repaint.

It was suggested that the station, both inside and out would be could be painted in its original South Eastern colours. This would need to be researched.

Cycles:

Connex have cycle lockers at Ashford that will have to be replaced to comply with regulations for larger stations. Alison Drabwell offered Pluckley 12. This was accepted. She will liase with Jackie Grebby.

Planters

These would have to be maintained and could be sponsored:

Car Park:

From 1 November, the car parking is being taken over by CPS. Connex have entered into an agreement whereby CPS will remove dumped cars, litter pick, white line, etc. This may be on a daily/weekly basis. Vehicle without parking tickets will be clamped after two weeks. At present there is no residents’ agreements, but it may be possible to issue residents with a disc allowing visitors to park without having to pay. It has been agreed that parking charges will not go up for the first 12 months. They will also manage CCTV, fencing, and lighting where these are required.

Action Plan:

- Tidy the triangle and wood. Connex will strim. Eileen English will contact Stone Lodge and ask if someone there will tidy their area.
- Keep Ashford Borough Council informed with plans – Geoff English will liase.
- Clear rubbish – Karen Thomas and CSO, & Nick Mengham. Skip to be provided by Connex who need approximately 2 days advance notice – liase with Alison Drabwell
- Planters – Paula Sturtivant offered to find sponsors. Ann Murray will ask the Gardening Society, Eileen English will ask Trevor Heathcote. Nick Mengham offered. If the station were to be painted in its original colours, then these would have to be in keeping.
- Redecoration - Alison Drabwell would put in an application for this to be done in the South Eastern Railway colours.
- Get Cycle Lockers
- Keep other villages informed – Jackie Grebby will send out information after it is received from Alison Drabwell.

Next meeting 14 December, 10am Pluckley Station.