



FRECCLES Members and Supporters Newsletter **September 2021**

Hello once again to all our Members, Friends and Supporters. We hope you are all well as autumn approaches.

FRECCLES is slowly trying to resume a normal pattern of activity but this is still subject to difficulty due to the ongoing effects of the pandemic. We recently held a Committee meeting via Zoom at which we reviewed our current position and activities. The Gardening Group has continued to maintain the gardens very effectively (more later) while the Heritage Group has plans for the poster cases and for a mural on the Manchester Platform. We are looking to hold our AGM later in the autumn and hope that this could be an open meeting but this will depend on the state of the Covid situation and on finding a venue that would enable some form of social distancing.

Regarding the station gardens, Northern have now removed the restrictions on who can work on the station so that we can welcome more people to our Sunday garden and clear-up sessions. If you would like to join us, our next session is this Sunday 5th September at 11am (always the first Sunday of the month, weather-permitting!). If you have not been to a garden session before, just come down to the station and introduce yourself to one of our regular gardeners who will talk you through the activities of the Garden Group. (If you wish to join in future work on the station, you would need to collect a high visibility vest on arrival, and have a safety briefing). However, even if you are not a budding gardener, do come down and join us if you can, as it will be an opportunity for members and supporters who have not got together for some time, to meet again and maybe share ideas about the future of the group. It would also be an opportunity to see the gardens and the forecourt planters which are still looking really good as we approach the end of summer!

Since the last Newsletter, Northern and Network Rail volunteer staff joined us for a day to clear up fly-tipping behind the Liverpool platform, removing a considerable amount of material. FRECCLES was very grateful for their assistance and it is hoped that the City Council will further help with measures to deter fly-tipping.

On the service development front, the Leeds to Chester service which has been suspended over the summer is to be restored from Monday 6th September. If you remember, this gives us stopping trains to Leeds and Chester in the morning and afternoon peaks (more information on our website -www.freccles.org.uk - under 'disruptions'). The last train to Chester in a morning is the 9.15am departure getting in Chester at 10.15am with trains back to Eccles from 15.19pm onwards - offering a very comfortable day out in the lovely City of Chester!!

In August, as part of the Trans-Pennine Upgrade to give better services between Manchester and York, Network Rail successfully replaced several bridges in the Manchester area. This affected trains from Manchester Victoria but services have now returned to normal (though some work will continue on Sundays in September and on the weekend of 2nd/3rd October so always check the National Rail Enquiries before travelling).

Finally, our officers are shortly due to attend a preliminary meeting to look into the possibility of the formation of a 'Community Rail Partnership', covering the two Liverpool to Manchester lines (ours and the route via Irlam and Warrington) and possibly involving the Manchester – Wigan route. CRPs are a partnership between local authorities, train operators, Friends groups, businesses and local communities to develop the potential of rail lines and expand community involvement. Discussions are at an early stage but we will keep you informed.

Until the next Newsletter, best wishes to all our Members and Supporters. You can keep in touch via our website or through our Facebook page and do contact me if you have any questions or thoughts about the development of FRECCLES as we look to the future.



Steve Clapham, Membership Secretary,
FRECCLES-Friends of Eccles Station