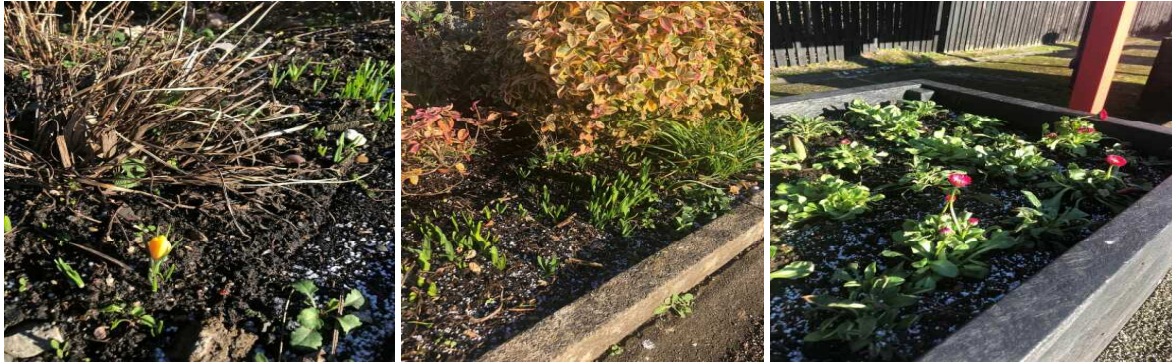


Friends of Ansdell & Fairhaven Station – Team Update (January – April 2024)

This is our third team update which we hope you will find informative.

Our new year started like most volunteers I guess, wet and miserable, but when an opportunity arose, we grabbed it and did some work at the station.

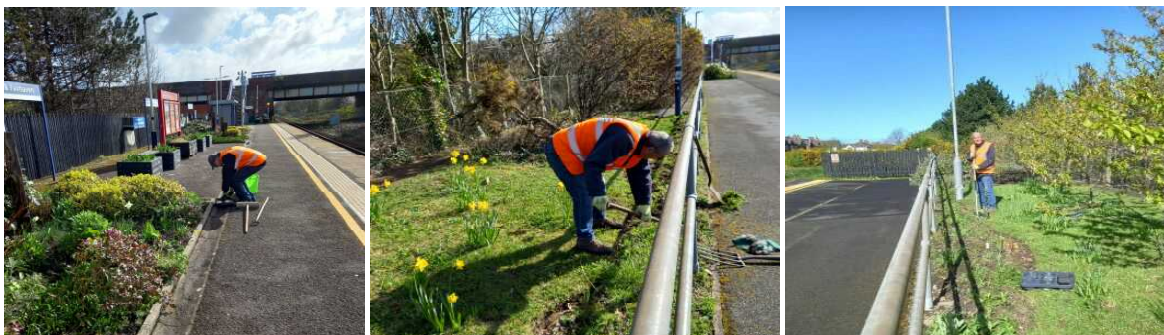
The start of the year saw the first promise of what was to come, even though it was cold, damp and icy. A single yellow crocus said “hi”, my friends will be joining me eventually with some daisies following its example. Even daffodil and tulip bulbs were forcing their way through the surface of the soil. Over the years it is interesting how plants have changed their pattern of growth due, we assume, to the changes in temperatures that have affected the surfaces of the earth. We planted Bellis later in the month and cut up some logs.



As Winter still tugs at February, we planted more bulbs and relocated a waste bin from the ramp pathway onto the platform fence because it was causing an obstruction for rail users using the ramp with trolley bags and luggage. Its now behind the seats as you can see from the picture on the platform and is being utilised by rail users. Don't be deceived by the blue skies, it was cold out. We continued to tend the beds, loosening the surface to allow aeration of the soil and removing weeds of course. We arranged with ISS to remove some waste that had been dumped on the platform in black bags, we placed them inside the ISS bags ready for collection.



The month of March was still rainy, dull with little sign of any changes, but Spring was manifesting itself in every direction with lots of new growth including daffodils. Rob was tidying up and Paul was turning the ground over next to the cherry orchard to loosen the soil so the weeds could be removed to make room for some new wild flower plants in April.



Unfortunately, April seems to have brought out the worst in some of the station visitors with some of the tulips having their heads sliced off with sticks, it's sadly one of the minor irritants we have to suffer. The month seems to be looking slightly better in between the showers/storms and cold winds. We managed to make some room for the wildflowers to be planted in the ground we had previously weeded, though it was quite difficult to dig as the ground beneath is extremely shallow and solid concrete. Some mowing has also been done.



We also cut back a few dead gorse bushes to make way for two donated Rowan trees to be planted, these will provide berries for the wild birds to forage in the Autumn. There is lots of ground ivy which has covered the grassed area where the trees are now planted and we are actively sieving the material to remove rubble and the roots which are a menace, it's tough and tedious work but we will get there.



Paul, Daphne and Karen (sadly Rob has recently decided to step back for the time being, but with no one to fill his shoes we look forward to seeing him again in the future). Barrie assists us when he is available and we try to keep the station looking as good as we can for rail users and visitors with our limited resources.

Karen Cornforth

Friends of Ansdell and Fairhaven Station

(April 2024)