



## Friends of Squires Gate Railway Station (Fylde) - August to October 2025 - Team Update

I think **August** was our lucky month when we managed to get some pictures on our wildlife cameras of our fox cubs, and even one of our trackside residents was able to get some pictures from their home, unfortunately they are difficult to refine at such a distance as you can see from the 2<sup>nd</sup> picture, but definitely good to have residents participating in wildlife watching and to see it doing well, even colourful butterflies.



**August** was mainly watering the beds during the really hot spells, especially the ground beds on Platform 2 not covered by the automatic watering system. The begonias and gazanias on Platform 1 began to sag as if exhausted due to the temperatures which meant we were watering almost every other day to keep on top of the heat, usually early mornings or late evenings. Thankfully Fylde had filled our IBC Tank with a mix of water and feed which certainly began to show in the way the plants were responding after being watered. We also managed to paint the supports we installed for the new sign which looks really magnificent in the evening sunshine.





We are going to have a couple of bat boxes at the bottom end of Platform 2 eventually, someone has offered to make them for us, they have to be high and not have any structures below them just in case any of the bats fall from their roost position and must not be accessible by predators such as cats.

Dealing with the aftermath of Storm Floris which left lots of sand on the steps down to Platform 1 was an ordeal and although ISS do keep them clear, no sooner are they done than more sand gradually accumulates, even on a slight breeze it's amazing how the sand and salt particles float unseen. Step free access can't come soon enough for those unable to negotiate them with heavy luggage, prams or bikes.



After the rain at the end of the month, Carol and Barrie took the opportunity to start collecting early blackberries as the fruit crumble season started in earnest - they were delicious with custard!



Weeds that grow on our station are often removed without much thought in order to clear them away, but some weeds have lots of characteristics, especially the Dandelion loved by bees and by those who like to blow the fluffy seed heads in fun; and Ribwort Plantain whose seeds are attractive to goldfinches. We are going to try to balance beauty, scruffiness and wildlife as we endeavour to make it attractive - no doubt a fine balance.





During early September we tidied up some minor damage from Storm Floris, an IBC cover needed to be replaced which Paul did, whilst I repaired one of the raised beds that had rotten spars. Painting would be done when the ladies were available to do so.



The beds on Platform 1 were looking really good, even with the temperatures we had been experiencing as you can see from these pictures and the recent showers we had, helped them.



Even Platform 2 was looking quite nice as well with lots of berries for the wildlife>



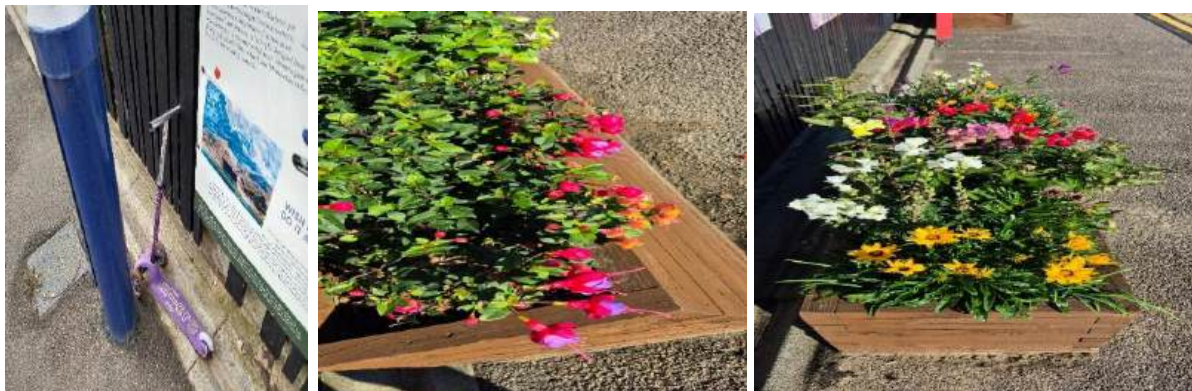
Friends of Squires Gate Railway Station (Fylde Lancashire)



Paul and I also cut back some of the trees between the access gates and the platform because they were obscuring the view of Platform 1 to anyone walking from the Airport side of the bridge. We intend to pollard some of the others as well, that way they will put out new growth lower down and be bushier for wildlife to create safer habitats. We also had to cut back a sycamore that grows adjacent to the water tanks and the local residents, it is an annual problem and we don't want to let it grow to its potential full height of between 115 to 175ft, obviously grown for a seed at some point. There was a minor issue with watering system which required a change of pump and fuse on Platform 2 - it was quickly done by Michael, and we were fully back up and running again.



We also noticed that someone had left an onward travel option on Platform 1 for anyone able to use it. More sparkling plants captured by Shirley in the late sunshine.



Paul and I did some painting of the station sign supports on Platform 2 whilst Shirley carried on painting the fencing on Platform 1, there were butterflies still around and lots of apples from our trees, there may be even more next year when our new trees grow larger. We managed to give some to local churches, also the Friends of Solaris and neighbours.



Friends of Squires Gate Railway Station (Fylde Lancashire)



Paul and I made full use of the fencing along the section from the steps to the bus shelter and inserted some graphical images of the 1930's station plans so that our community could see what it looked like in the day. We also added our original team partnership board, there is one on the platform as well. We are just one poster case missing to finish off the 1930's images but hopefully one might become available at some point in the future. The poster cases add extra support to the fencing by keeping the lats in place and we have used the Rail 200 bunting to advertise the year. (The incorrectly positioned case has been readjusted).



In early **October** the horticultural team removed the Nepeta plants from the sleeper bed, split them and repositioned them at the back of the bed, they tend to take all the glory out of the bed by them being at the front but do attract lots of bees and butterflies so we do not want to lose them. Winter bedding plants added to the sleeper bed along with Alliums and Daffodil bulbs.



Even this late in the year our beds on P1 are still full of colour.



Friends of Squires Gate Railway Station (Fylde Lancashire)



As October brought the autumnal change to our weather it still allowed Shirley and Paul to get to Platform 2 on a mid-month sunny day. Shirley painted the repaired raised bed and Paul finished off the support posts on the station sign we were ready for winter.



We are really pleased with the way the ramp beds turned out this year, mostly thanks to Fylde Council gardeners who made surplus zinnia plants available to us.



And finally, some images of the station footprint from different bridge angles on a cloudy October day.



Barrie Russell/Paul Nettleton

November 2025

Friends of Squires Gate Railway Station (Fylde Lancashire)