ABBAS AND TEMPLECOMBE PARISH COUNCIL
2016/2017
ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE PARISH

Name of organisation/group

FRIENDS OF TEMPLECOMBE STATION

Highlights of the last year for your organisation/group 2016/20017

1. The Station was judged in June, and we were awarded: "THE BEST SMALL STATION" National Award in September 2016. Two members and Anne of SWT went to the Grosvenor House Hotel, Mayfair, London for the awards ceremony, our Volunteer Group was the only one to be shortlisted for any award.

2. Again in September 2016, FOTS won 3rd Prize in the ACORPS "OUTSTANDING TEAMWORK AWARD" for our work on the footbridge in February/March 2016. Two members went to Southport for the ceremony.

3. We started a comments book which is in the waiting room. It makes interesting reading.

4. We painted the fence at the front of the station and have added a "Community Noticeboard" this takes A5 notices to advertise local events.

5. Both SERUG (Salisbury to Exeter Rail Users Group) and BVLCRP (Blackmore Vale Line Community Rail Partnership) have been launched this year, we have members whom are involved in these organisations.
6. We planted 3 plum trees on the old down platform.

7. Mince Pie and Mulled Wine provided for passengers one day in December whilst the ticket office was open, this was extremely well received.

8. Community Project on the old down platform (the grassed area behind the houses on Station Road):
   Discussions with SWT about setting up a Community Project with the Primary School. Closely followed by a visit from the Headmaster, who is delighted on behalf of the school to be asked to join in the project. SWT agreed to fund it, we sourced and have built 4 large split-level raised beds and filled them with topsoil. We have also built a fence and gate at the far end of the site for the safety of the children. We are expecting them to begin upon their return after the Easter Break.

9. The flower bed opposite the shelter, backed by the "Templecombe" sign was cleared in February, as it had become rather untidy, any healthy plants were moved to fill-in gaps elsewhere. This bed has now been planted with ground-cover roses in 2 colours, and they've already doubled in size. We are really looking forward to seeing the results of our hard labour (we have photographic proof of the dedication of several members,

who were found digging out all the weeds and roots on a very wet Thursday afternoon, (these are some of the people who were named "The Secret Weapons of Templecombe Station" in the National Awards!

Main aims of your organisation/group for the next year 2017/2018

1. We are looking forward to working with the new "Train Operation Company" who take over in August this year, we hope to have as good a working relationship with them as we have with SWT over the last few years.

2. Clearing and re-planting other large beds.

3. Help, wherever possible with the Community Project.

4. Paint the inside of the Signal Box and keep it aired to stop any deterioration.

5. We will be re-building the rotted boundary fence (along the back of the "non-operational" area). This is a mammoth task as no gap between the posts are the same as any other, so it has to be hand-built. This is really the responsibility of Network Rail, but to them it is low-priority because the platform is not in use by the public, but we do not wish to take the chance of trespassing and safety issues via this route, SWT have again helped with funding.

6. We have just entered the National Awards again for "The Best Small Station". Please wish us luck!

What long term aims does your organisation/group have

To keep up the improvements and hard work (though actually, we do enjoy it and we have all made lifelong friends).

Keep our relations with both the Rail Industry, the Passengers and the Community working well. The feedback we receive from members of the public makes it all worthwhile.

We are investigating putting the signal box to some use as a 'community amenity' (as Templecombe has none), but this would require considerable outside funding.

What additional support could the Parish Council offer (other than direct funding)

We need more members, our regular person who does the mowing has been offered work elsewhere. Several of us are not well ourselves and are finding access difficult. Others have commitments with relatives who are suffering long-term illnesses.

It would, perhaps be a good idea for the Village to give something to help the Children involved in the "Community Project" at the Station.

Is there a possibility of a colourful leaflet to promote the village, church and surrounds? I already have permission from SWT to have some in the waiting room. I can arrange for it to be put onto the BVLCRP Website which is still in the building stage, their aim is to promote the line and the immediate area. Gartells already have a link on it. See Blackmore Vale Trains.

Point of contact for further information.

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