

Friends of Handforth Station: “A Platform for Art”

The Friends of Handforth Station, formed in 1996, were awarded National Lottery money to create a “Platform for Art”. This has developed over the years, and the station is now well recognised in the area for its range of varied and changing art installations and other enhancements inspired by the local community.

This guide details the current artwork and other enhancements that are visible at the station (in Autumn 2024). They can generally be seen in the sequence given below.

Ticket office

- Cheshire Best Kept Station award, for Best Staffed Station (2023)
- Plaque commemorating the visit of HRH Prince Charles (2010)
- Plaque commemorating the opening of “new” ticket office by Martin Bell MP (2001)
- Best Kept Station award from First North Western Group (2003)
- Display commemorating 180th anniversary of Manchester-Sandbach Railway (2022)
- Handforth Town Map, designed by FoHS and Handforth Town Council (2024)

Station forecourt (approximately East to West)

- Historic BRITISH RAILWAYS HANDFORTH STATION maroon running in board (1950s)
- Millennium Screen - Handforth Youth Club and artist Chris Waygood (2000)
- Three Community Information Boards, displaying various artwork and information
- Flagpoles used to display various national and local flags, all awaiting repairs as part of lift installation
- Plaque commemorating visit of descendants of WW1 prisoners in Handforth camp (2014)
- Three boards commemorating 180th anniversary of Manchester-Sandbach Railway (2022)
- Atop station building: Artistic weathervane by Macemain
- Totem marking twinning of Handforth Station with Malahide Station, Ireland (2018)
- 25th anniversary screen “Our station is a welcoming place ...” - artist Paul Pickford, schools and local community (2021)
- Lectern introducing Handforth Station and the FoHS (2016)
- Two hanging troughs and three planters, maintained by FoHS
- Seven roadside planters, maintained by FoHS and Handforth Town Council

Art in a Box (top of steps to Wilmslow/Crewe-bound platform)

- Used to display a constantly varying selection of local artwork and displays

Wilmslow/Crewe-bound Platform

- Top of steps: Welcome archway “Railway Line DNA” - artist Christine Wilcox-Baker and SK9 Youth Club (2019)
- Halfway down steps: 3 “Handforth totems”, one from SNCF (French Railways) and two from Manchester Metrolink (1995-ongoing)
- Over both ends of waiting shelter “Light At the End of the Tunnel” screens - by artist Tracy Cartledge and local schools, to mark the station’s re-opening following line closure for West Coast line Modernisation works (2004)
- In the greenery: Carved railway sleeper “Lacewing” by Paul Noon (1997)
- Two Community Information Boards, displaying various artwork and information
- In the greenery: 11 “Handforth totems” by various railway companies, ranging from NedRail (the Netherlands) to LUAS (Dublin trams) via London Underground, Hong Kong and more (1995-ongoing)
- Two totems marking twinning of Handforth Station with Malahide Station, Ireland (2018)

- In the greenery: Historic BRITISH RAILWAYS HANDFORTH STATION maroon running in board of the 1950s, designated by the Science Museum Group (2015)
- In front of the above: Herb planting area, maintained by Girl Guides - sleepers provided by Railtrack
- In the greenery: Replica black & white LNWR running in boards, by FoHS and MIND member John Lowe (2016)
- Back of Ticket Office, as seen from platform: Colour palette of panels by Regional Railways and Railtrack (2001)

Stockport/Manchester-bound Platform

- Top of steps: Welcome archway "From the Past to the Future" - artist Christine Wilcox-Baker and SK9 Youth Club (2019)
- Halfway down steps: Regional Railways totem, designated as of historical value – a rare example because it is displayed at the "correct" station
- At bottom of steps: Totem commemorating visit by HRH Prince Charles (2010)
- Over both ends of waiting shelter "Light At the End of the Tunnel" screens - by artist Tracy Cartledge and local schools, to mark the station's re-opening following line closure for West Coast line Modernisation works (2004)
- Behind fence: Rotary Sculpture Garden - see below for details (2002)
- Two Community Information Boards, displaying various artwork and information
- Commemorative seat for Steve Nash RIP, Treasurer of FoHS (2019)
- Behind fence: Two Hedgehog Hotels and a Bug Train (2020)
- Behind fence: Carved sleepers by Paul Noon - animals spelling HANDFORTH (1995)
- Two totems marking twinning of Handforth Station with Malahide Station, Ireland (2018)
- Behind fence: Bird boxes by Girl Guides (2007)
- Behind fence: Bird boxes by Barnies Hub, to commemorate Barry Burkhill, Committee member of FoHS for over 25 years (2023)
- Behind fence: Ceramic tree names by artist Elizabeth Maddock (1998)
- Behind fence: Chinese Handforth calligraphy totem by Jack Chai, Handforth Chinese Restaurant (2014)
- Behind fence: Greek calligraphy totem by Ela, Hellas Taverna (2020)
- Handforth sign in British Sign Language by DSN Macclesfield (2020)
- Behind fence: Four Planters by FoHS and 1st Handforth Scouts (2021)
- Behind fence: Historic HANDFORTH maroon running in board from the 1950s, generously loaned by the Connolly family (2019) - sleepers provided by Railtrack
- Back of Ticket Office, as seen from platform: Colour palette of panels by Regional Railways and Railtrack (2001)

Rotary Sculpture Garden (on Stockport/Manchester-bound platform)

- Garden design by *Handforth in Bloom* and artist Samantha Heap (2002)
- Carved Victorian "passengers" by South Trafford College (2002)
- Contemporary "passengers" by Paul Noon (2003)
- Mushrooms by wood turner John Moreton (2009)
- Design of ceramic animals by Dean Oaks School (2014)
- Carved railway sleeper "Woodpecker" by Paul Noon (1999)
- Time capsule commemorating centenary of Handforth Girl Guiding (2010)
- Collection of Cheshire Best Kept Station signs (various years)
- Sleepers provided by Railtrack