



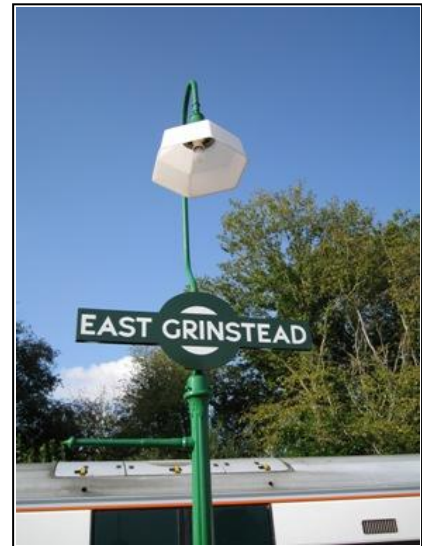
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Hargreaves' period lamp posts just the ticket for heritage steam line

Halifax-based Hargreaves Foundry, one of the UK's oldest traditional cast-iron manufacturers, is helping an award-winning heritage railway line to realise a 50-year dream.

Hargreaves won the contract to supply a full complement of period cast iron lamp posts for the platform of the renowned Bluebell Railway's new terminus station at East Grinstead.

The September opening of the newly built East Grinstead station, which was designed to contribute to the appearance, atmosphere and magic of rail travel before modernization in the 1960s, was the culmination of half a century of restoration work on the steam rail line that puffs through the heart of the Sussex countryside.



It is also the penultimate leg of the Railway's ambitious 50-year quest to reconnect the line with the national rail network.



The Society, which won the Engineering Heritage Award in 2009, constructed the station site in the latest phase of a £4million fund-raising campaign. A specific £100,000 legacy, from Desmond O'Neill, a former Bluebell Railway member, meant the Bluebell Trust could give the green signal to Hargreaves to replicate eleven Victorian cast

iron lamp posts that were once such a feature of platforms along the former London, Brighton & South Coast Railways line.



Just three of the surviving original cast iron lamp post columns were available for the project. The best of the three was shot blasted back to its original condition and used by Hargreaves expert pattern makers to create new patterns.

Using traditional pattern making and casting methods, the new lamp posts were produced over a two-month period from 99 per cent recycled material from locally sourced scrap metal and steel. Each post was given a coat of primer paint before delivery to the Bluebell Railway.

Of the eleven posts, each of which weighs 250kg, nine were destined for East Grinstead and two for Sheffield Park, the heritage station at the other end of the line.

Hargreaves supplied the posts with just one modification: a cast hatch lid to allow access to the electric switch gear junction box. Other than this one necessary modification, the new lamp posts are exact replicas of the ornate originals, complete with a projecting ladder rest (originally used to light the gas lamp) and a cast bracket to connect the swan-neck pipe and lamp head recreated by the Bluebell Railway's own volunteers.



Les Haines, a Bluebell volunteer who co-ordinated the project reports that the Railway is delighted with the result. "Hargreaves Foundry provided the Bluebell Steam Railway in Sussex with a faithful reproduction of our Victorian station lamp posts. The quality of work was to an excellent standard, as was their attention to detail at every stage of the commissioning, manufacturing and delivery process."

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Issued by:

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Notes to editors:

1. Hargreaves Foundry was established in 1896, in Halifax, Yorkshire, and today employs a staff of 65. The iron founders have supplied castings to the engineering and construction industries for more than 100 years. It is best known as a manufacturer of cast iron drainage products.
2. Hargreaves Foundry has retained specialist pattern making and foundry skills and is now just one of a handful still operating in the UK.
3. Hargreaves has a long tradition of supplying architectural and street furniture castings and castings produced at the Halifax foundry can still be seen in around Halifax more than a century later.
4. Hargreaves Foundry has 65 employees. Recent projects include: the multi-million-pound redevelopment of Windrush Square in Brixton, recreating cast iron windows at south Liverpool's "pink" place of worship, the Church of St Michael in the Hamlet and at the Garrison Chapel in Pembroke Dock and supplying over five kilometres of internal cast iron rainwater and drainage systems for Europe's tallest skyscraper, Moscow's Federation Tower. Hargreaves operates a joint venture in China selling drainage pipes into the Russian market.