

The Friends of Honiton Station: Group Plan 2022 – 2023

A) Our Aim shall be:

Working in partnership with our community –

- To celebrate our local history and heritage;
- To support the health and well-being of residents;
- To contribute to a sustainable future for the town.

B) Our key Objectives shall be:

- To continue to work to bring the community and its station closer together;
- To contribute to making Honiton a town where “health matters”;
- To continue to celebrate and share the richness and diversity of our local history;
- To work in practical ways towards a sustainable future for Honiton;
- To work with a range of partners to lobby for vital line improvements west of Honiton.

C) In 2022 -2023, we will seek to achieve these Objectives by:

- 1) We will seek to work in partnership with Honiton Town Council (HTC), to support their children’s art competition if, as believed, they are running one, to mark the Platinum Jubilee providing, with the support of SWR and the Devon and Cornwall Rail Partnership (DCRP), several prizes and a location for the display of some of the winners’ work (perhaps in the form of a platform banner). The competition might include an opportunity for children to draw or paint how the world of 2022 is different from that of 1952, and which could include transport (including trains).
- 2) We will continue to work with South Western Railway (SWR) and local partners to site a defibrillator at Honiton Station, in a location discussed previously with SWR. We will also seek ways to promote and signpost the work of Honiton Health Matters (HHM), both through continuing to link to their website on our own website and through gaining approval for a poster in one of SWR’s poster boards.
- 3) We will work with DCRP to publish a family-friendly town trail booklet, acting as a self-guided walk around the centre of Honiton, starting from the station.
- 4) We will maintain the present planting scheme on platform 1, focusing on sustainable planting, renewing and replacing the planting as required.
- 5) We will work with SWR to seek permission to develop a new planting scheme for platform 2, focusing on part of the area under the steps of the footbridge. This would involve pollinator-friendly ground-level planting of small areas and two new planters made from recycled materials (including reclaimed roof tiles), which would possibly be decorated by local children.

6) We will continue to lobby at all levels, including with our local MP, for the necessary next steps towards the project to reinstate sections of double track west of Honiton. This will create the conditions where the hourly Devon Metro service from Axminster to Exeter, and on to Barnstaple, can be introduced. Regular updates in our own newsletter, and through local press outlets will continue to be vital, in order to gather public support.

D) Funding Implications:

- 1) Additional funding will be sought to support the Platinum Jubilee competition work as required.
- 2) The cost of the defibrillator is being met by the Hospital League of Friends, although some additional costs may need to be met for the installation of the equipment to the exterior wall of the station building. Discussions with the League of Friends and SWR are ongoing.
- 3) There will be a cost implication, yet to be determined, for the design and printing of the town trail booklet.
- 4) Our own funds will be used for the initial stage of updating the platform 1 planting. As this develops further, there may be additional cost implications for the ongoing work.
- 5) We will need to seek additional sources of funding, including local councillors' Locality Budget, DCRP, and the Community Rail Network/SWR Small Grants Funds, for the new platform 2 scheme.
- 6) There are no ongoing budget implications for the campaign to improve the line.

E) Conclusion:

The success of this Group Plan depends, as always, on the support of our members, who have contributed in so many ways to the creation and success of The Friends of Honiton Station. We think, for instance, of members who maintain the community notice board, who created and now tend to the planters, provide material for the newsletter and who help lobby for line improvements. Without everyone's efforts, we would not be where we are today.

This plan builds on the first stage of the development of the Group, and sets an ambitious but achievable agenda for the year ahead, as we attempt to "turbo-charge" the work of Community Rail along the East Devon Line, as part of a wider plan set out by DCRP.

We look forward to working with all our members, Community Rail partners and with SWR, especially its Community Rail Manager, to continue to develop Honiton Station as a place:

- where history is celebrated,
- where health matters,
- and which contributes to Honiton as a sustainable town.