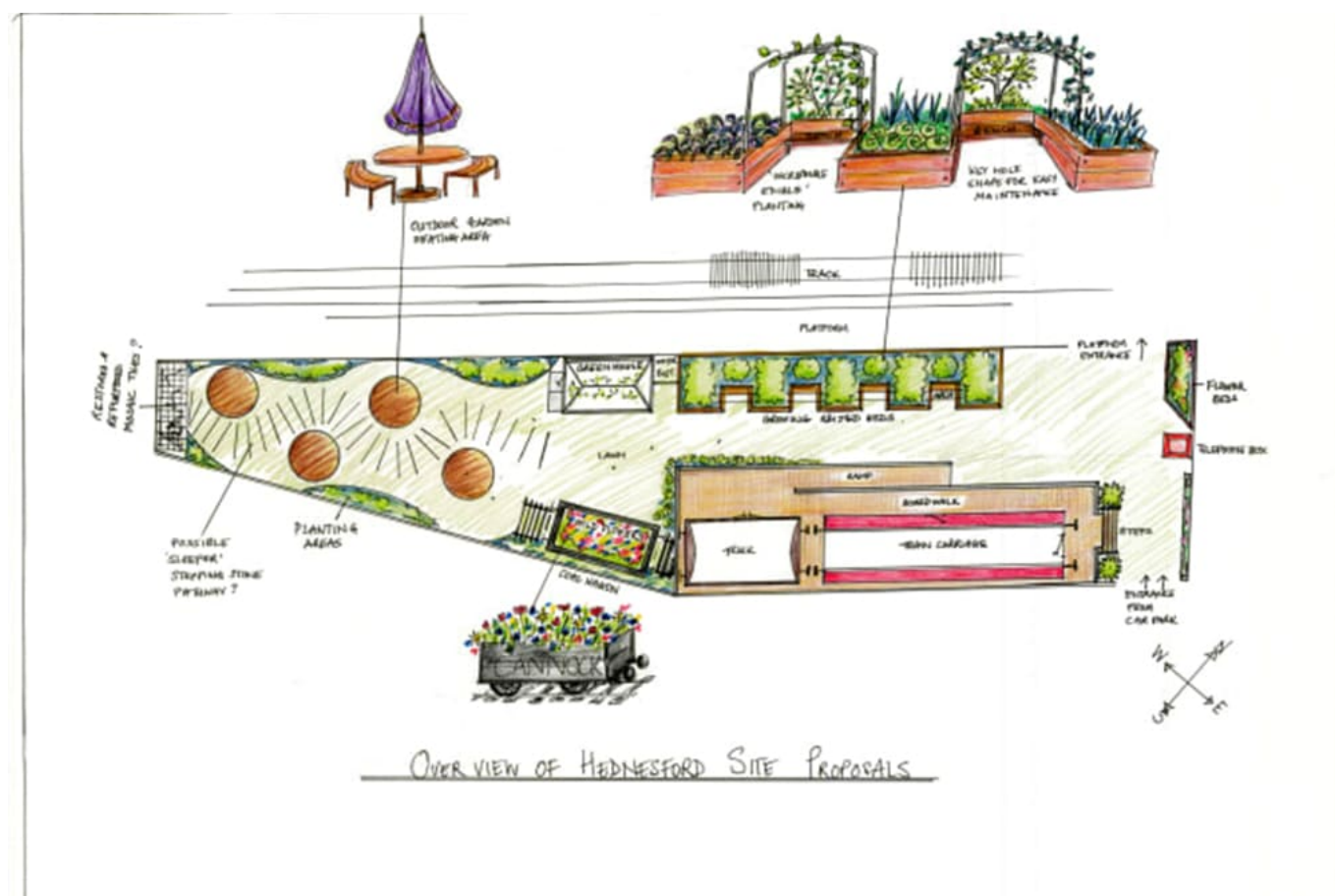


Major community hub for Hednesford station following West Midlands Railway grant

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A major community hub including a meeting room, café and garden is to be built at Hednesford station in Staffordshire following a community grant from West Midlands Railway (WMR).

The ambitious scheme will involve the conversion of a fully-restored railway carriage to form a heritage meeting space as well as planting boxes, outdoor seating and even a greenhouse.

It has been made possible thanks to the dedication of volunteers from the Heart of Hednesford Station Adoption Group and a £105,000 grant from WMR's "Your Community, Your Fund" scheme.

Fay Easton, head of stakeholder and community for WMR, said: "This inspired concept will provide a community hub for the town centre and turn a wasted piece of ground into a striking setting for a vintage railway carriage, attracting visitors from miles around.

"The community group work tirelessly for the benefit of Hednesford and we have been honoured to work with the volunteers over the years as they have enhanced the platforms at the station and we look forward to supporting as the group bring this visionary project to life."

The “Your Community, Your Fund” scheme is funded by the Department for Transport and was previously known as the Customer & Communities Improvement Fund. Under the scheme, West Midlands Railway and sister company London Northwestern Railway will invest a total of £1.7million in dozens of community projects across the network in coming months.

David Wisehall, chairman of the Station Adoption Group, said: “This is an ambitious and unique project for the town centre. The community hub will make productive use of an area of disused space at the edge of the town car park that adjoins the railway station.

“This will be a unique venue and a fantastic place for community groups to meet.”

The project, titled ‘Hednesford Completely Off The Rails’ is seeking volunteers to help bring it to fruition, with possible employed positions available as the project develops. Additional funding from other sources is being secured with the intention that the scheme will be complete by summer 2022.

The environmentally-friendly project will feature renewable energy sources wherever possible and rainwater harvesting mechanisms to keep the flower beds watered. The community hub will be fully accessible with step-free access to the meeting room part of the plans.

For more information, visit the Heart of Hednesford Station Adoption Group on [Facebook](#).

Photo credit: West Midlands Trains