



Social Value Report

2023/2024

Helping to build
the prosperity of
the communities
we serve

MANAGING DIRECTOR'S WELCOME

Welcome to our FY23/24 Social Value Report

As one of the UK's leading train operators, serving nearly 200 stations and spanning 1,300 miles of track across London and the South West, we understand our responsibility extends far beyond delivering our train service. Every journey connects people, strengthens communities, and contributes to the economic and social fabric of the region.

We're proud of the role that we play in bringing people together to get the most out of life. We get people where they need to be, and we work hard to deliver a safe and reliable railway for our customers. We aim to be the heartbeat of the communities we serve. The connections we provide, help local businesses grow, create jobs, improve access to services and create social value, which all support regions, cities, towns and villages to thrive across our network.

Our 'Journey to a better future' sustainability strategy is built around a clear purpose: to serve, safeguard and strengthen our planet, places and people. This report – our third Social Value report – sets out the tangible progress we've made in line with our Strategic Business Plan, showcasing the real difference we're making for our customers, colleagues and communities.

In 2023/2024, we made some incredible progress and delivered **over £141 million in social value** across our network. This achievement reflects the dedication of our 5,000-strong team and the unwavering support of our partners and local communities.

Some standout moments from the year include:

- **Delivering rail safety education to over 44,000 children**
- **Investing over £500,000 on inclusive and accessible stations**
- **Committing £1.5 million to community projects, from tackling youth violence to revitalising disused railway buildings**
- **Donating £42,000 to charities by our colleagues**
- **Awarding 96 apprenticeship opportunities, increasing by 45% from 2022-23**
- **Developing localised air quality and noise improvement plans at key locations**

The initiatives highlighted in this report reflect our ongoing commitment to delivering positive change, not just on the railway, but in the lives of those we serve.

As we look ahead, we remain focused on creating social value and with the continued support of our colleagues, customers, partners and stakeholders, we will keep working towards our journey for a better future.



Stuart Meek
Interim Managing Director



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INTRODUCTION

This is our third year reporting social value – an important opportunity to reflect on the positive impact we’re making across society, the environment, and the economy.

As one of the largest networks in the country, our footprint is wide and the potential for positive influence is significant. This brings both opportunity and responsibility. At South Western Railway (SWR), we know that investing in infrastructure, supporting local projects or educating the next generation can all help drive lasting social and economic prosperity across the South West and beyond.

Measuring social value matters. It ensures we are held to account and enables us to identify areas of improvement and investment. We use the Rail Social Value Tool (RSVT), developed by the Rail Safety Standards Board (RSSB), to quantify the value we create across five key impact areas. This includes:

- **Supporting local communities**
- **Promoting local skills and jobs**
- **Decarbonising and protecting our planet**
- **Promoting skills, employment and wellbeing**
- **Ensuring responsible business practices**

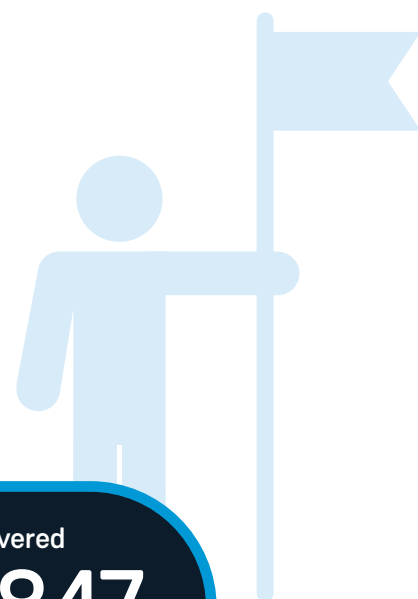
The monetary figures only tell part of the story. Throughout this report, you’ll find examples of projects that demonstrate the power of rail to deliver social impact. Many of these initiatives which we have funded, including those supported by our Customer and Communities Improvement Fund (CCIF), are not yet reflected in our monetised total, but their value is clear. Bringing them into this report will be an important part of how we evolve our approach in future years.

In 2023-2024 – we are proud to have delivered **£141,662,847 in monetised social value**. This achievement is thanks to the dedication of our colleagues, the collaboration of our partners and the shared belief that the railway should work for everyone.

By publishing this report, we aim not only to be transparent, but to invite further collaboration – with charities, local groups, businesses and individuals who share our ambition.

Together, we can ensure that the railway continues to be a force for good – helping our customers and our communities in London and the South West get the most out of life.

We use this report as an opportunity to celebrate all the incredible work of our colleagues, customers and stakeholders across our network in delivering social value, and use it as an opportunity to identify where we need more focus and investment in future years.



We are proud to have delivered
£141,662,847
in monetised social value in 2023/24

WHAT IS SOCIAL VALUE?

At SWR, we believe in making a positive difference in the communities we serve. Our responsibilities go beyond our customers, to the communities we serve, and helping build the economic and social prosperity of the UK.

Social value is the value created by an organisation through its financial and non-financial day-to-day activities. By considering social value, organisations can see how their activities can benefit stakeholders and wider society.

By working to build stronger communities, we build a stronger organisation. Rail provides a significant value to the UK and beyond, and we have embedded social value within our sustainability strategy 'Journey to a Better Future'.

We define 'social value' as the positive impact our actions have on people and society. This includes:



Supporting local communities



Promoting local skills and jobs



Decarbonising and protecting our planet



Promoting skills, employment and wellbeing



Ensuring responsible business practices

SWR was the first train operating company to publicly publish our monetised values delivered by the RSSB's Rail Social Value Tool.

Our approach to measuring Social Value

This report is guided by:

- The Rail Safety and Standard Board's (RSSB) Sustainable Rail Blueprint
- The Rail Social Value Tool (RSVT)
- Our Journey to a Better Future Sustainability Strategy
- The United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals

Regularly reporting on social value provides a way for us to consistently measure our social value impact. We aim to have a transparent reporting methodology that we can use to share our impact with our stakeholders.

This report also includes case studies and other on the ground evidence on top of the monetised social value contributions. This provides a deeper understanding of how our business impacts our communities and wider society.

The Rail Safety and Standard Board's (RSSB) Sustainable Rail Blueprint

The Sustainable Rail Blueprint, developed by the Rail Safety Standards Board (RSSB) is an industry wide strategy to align efforts, inspire change, and realise sustainable rail. The Sustainable Rail Blueprint includes social value considerations when assessing investment in rail projects and activities. The Rail Social Value Tool (RSVT), created by RSSB, allows rail organisations to track and measure social value and promote cooperation by sharing information.



The Rail Social Value Tool (RSVT)






To measure our social impact, we use the Rail Social Value Tool (RSVT) developed by the RSSB in partnership with Loop. This online tool was developed specifically for the rail industry to monitor and measure the social value of projects and day-to-day operations, and guide investment decisions. RSVT is provided through a partnership between RSSB and Loop with support from key stakeholders across the Department for Transport (DfT) and Network Rail.

We've been using RSVT since 2020/21, allowing us to track the long-term impact and stay aligned with industry standards. Transparent and consistent reporting enables all rail companies to communicate their social value performance to customers, stakeholders and investors.

In 2023/24, the RSVT underwent a significant methodology upgrade to improve the accuracy of measurements. While this has

resulted in a lower monetised social value figure due to revised calculations, the volume and scope of our initiatives have developed. We continue to work closely with the RSSB to understand how any future changes will impact our monetised social value. Our approach will evolve as we deepen our understanding of what drives impact and how we can deliver more of it.

The table below shows the areas identified in the RSVT and the associated areas of impact for social value as well as how we define this area within SWR.

DEFINING SOCIAL VALUE CATEGORIES IN SWR			
	SWR AREA	RSVT AREA	RSVT Categories
	Supporting local communities	COMMUNITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Crime• Donations• Homelessness• Perception of the neighbourhood• Volunteering
	Promoting local skills and jobs	EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Apprenticeships• Jobs• Job quality
	Decarbonising and protecting our planet	ENVIRONMENTAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Air quality• Biodiversity• Carbon Dioxide• Water Reuse• Waste
	Promoting skills, employment and wellbeing	HEALTH, TRAINING AND SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Careers advice or guidance• Health• Mentoring• Stakeholder engagement• Training
	Ensuring responsible business practices	SUPPLY CHAIN	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Payments• Small businesses• Supply chain

To calculate monetised social value, we collaborated with teams across the business to gather data on our initiatives. This was entered into the Loop platform, which provides a monetary value based on each initiative's contribution to public well-being and societal outcomes.

How social value fits in with our Journey to a Better Future strategy

Better for our People

- Making sure our workplace environment is inclusive and supportive
- Develop our people and realise a shared sense of purpose
- Fostering a culture of equality, that champions diversity and inclusivity

Better for our Places

- Strengthening local communities by supporting small businesses and charities
- Sharing our spaces and making it easier for people to access rail transport

Better for our Planet

- Conserve resources, and reduce emissions from our operations and supply chain
- Reduce waste and reuse where possible
- Encouraging nature

The United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The 17 United Nations’ Sustainability Development Goals provide a shared blueprint and were adopted by the United Nations in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that, by 2030, all people enjoy peace and prosperity. Aligning with the SDGs reinforces our long-term commitment to building a fairer, more sustainable future.

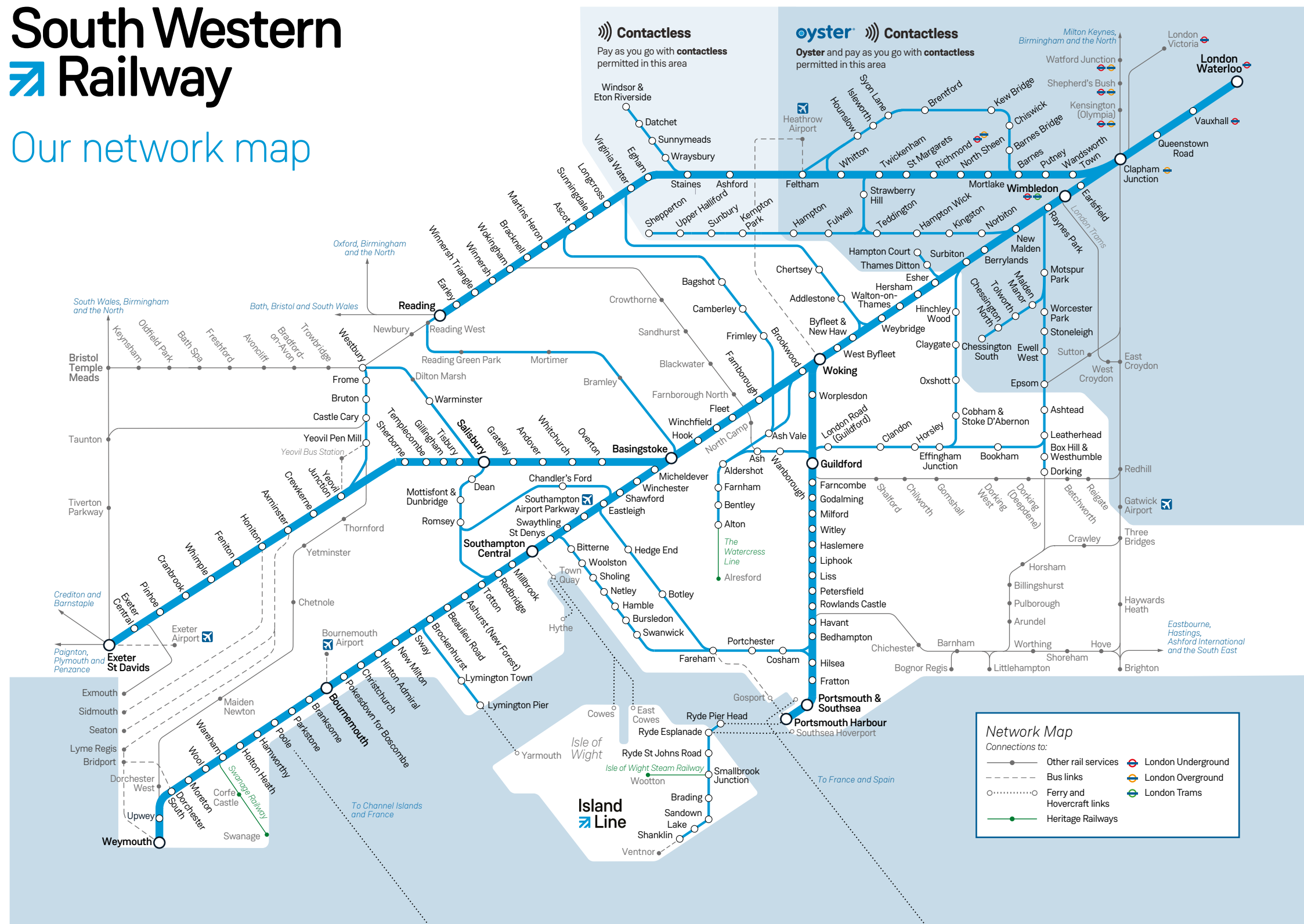
Theme	Supporting a specific United Nations Sustainable Development Goal						
<div>Better for our planet</div>	<div>3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</div>	<div>9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE</div>	<div>11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES</div>	<div>12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION</div>	<div>13 CLIMATE ACTION</div>	<div>14 LIFE BELOW WATER</div>	<div>15 LIFE ON LAND</div>
<div>Better for our places</div>	<div>3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</div>	<div>8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</div>	<div>10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES</div>	<div>11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES</div>	<div>16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS</div>	<div>17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS</div>	
<div>Better for our people</div>	<div>3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</div>	<div>4 QUALITY EDUCATION</div>	<div>5 GENDER EQUALITY</div>	<div>8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</div>	<div>16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS</div>	<div>10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES</div>	



Scan the code to find out more about The United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals.

South Western Railway

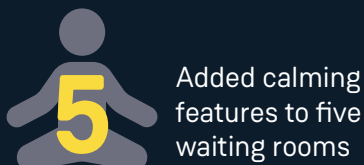
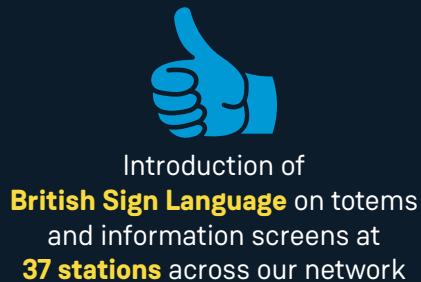
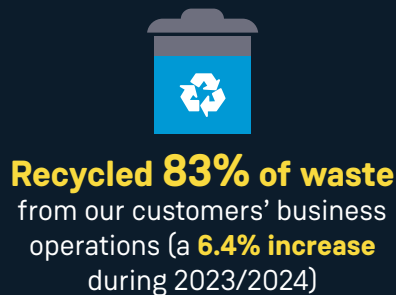
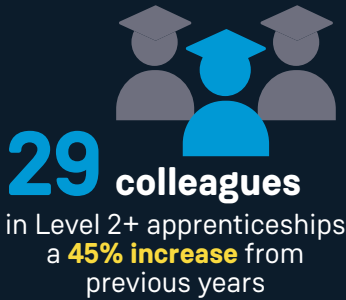
Our network map



Key achievements in 2023/24

The reporting period referenced throughout is from 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024

In 2023/2024 we supported...



SUPPORTING OUR LOCAL COMMUNITIES

At SWR, community is at the heart of everything what we do. We're proud to support cities, towns and villages across the South West and we're committed to enriching the places we serve – making our stations and services more welcoming, inclusive, and supportive for all.

Our work in this space is aligned with the **'Communities'** section of the RSVT and delivered through our 'Better for our Places' sustainability pillar, focused on:

- Community support
- Stations and spaces
- Charity support
- Easy access

Through these focus areas, we drive social value by delivering initiatives that reduce crime, tackle homelessness, encourage volunteering, support local charities and improve public perceptions of local areas. By creating accessible and vibrant spaces we help stations become anchors for community life.

2023/24 at a glance:

- **£1.5 million** invested through our Customer and Communities Improvement Fund (CCIF), supporting 58 local projects across the network
- **£500,000** invested in inclusive station design
- **75%** of employees participated in payroll giving, donating £42,000 to charities
- Continued support for **12 Community Rail Partnerships** (CRPs) and over **100 station adoption groups**

Total monetised social value for Communities:

£3.335 million

Download our Community Rail Report [here](#).

Sustainable Development Goals we're supporting



Stations and spaces

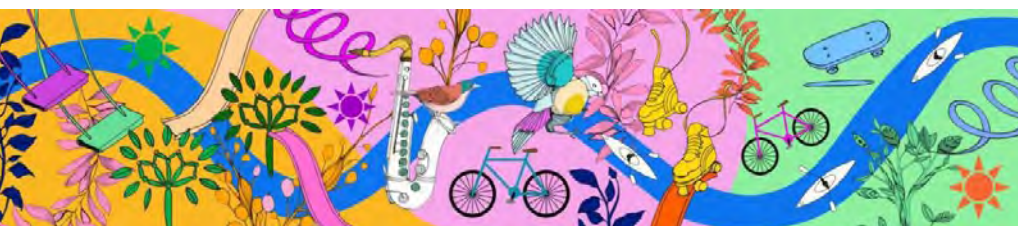
We believe stations can be more than just a gateway to travel – they can be welcoming community hubs. Through design, creativity, and safety initiatives, we are making our stations places that people can feel proud of.

Reducing crime: Safe Space Richmond

A multi-agency initiative led by British Transport Police has transformed Richmond station into a secure space on Friday and Saturday nights. With support from White Ribbon UK, Street Pastors, local councils and the Met Police, the station now offers a trusted safety hub for those in need – particularly in the absence of a local police station.



Safe Space Richmond provides a secure place for those in need or vulnerable



Art mural painted onto the bridge near the Elmsleigh surface car park by artist Saroj Patel



Ten William Blake inspired mosaics have been installed at Surbiton station

Community led station improvements

Art murals – we continue to invest in station art that celebrate community identity and enhance customer experience.

Surbiton Art Trail – 10 William Blake-inspired mosaics added to the footbridge at Surbiton, enhancing public space and station atmosphere.

Spelthorne Iron Bridge Art Project – engaging schools to design ‘Town Centre 2050’ murals, voted by local residents and brought to life at the station.

Basingstoke Art Society x Vyne School – student art showcased in station waiting rooms to brighten spaces and celebrate local talent.

Community support

Our Customer and Communities Improvement Fund (CCIF) funds

Our Customer and Communities Improvement Fund (CCIF) supports projects that deliver clear community benefit or address an area of social need across our network. Since its inception, we have funded over **100 projects** valued at more than **£7 million**, improving lives across our network.

CCIF is intended to support small and medium-sized projects which can be completed over the course of the year.

These initiatives are closely aligned with our sustainability strategy and focus on:

- Social inclusion
- Mental health and wellbeing
- Skills, education and employment
- Accessible transport
- Environmental sustainability

Want to explore these projects in more detail? Scan the QR code or click the link [here](#).



Community Rail Partnerships

We are proud to support over **12 Community Rail Partnerships (CRPs)** and **over 100 station adoption groups**. These volunteer-led partnerships deliver social, economic and environmental benefits, helping to connect our railway to the communities we serve in meaningful and creative ways.

To read more about what we are doing to support our local community, download our community rail report linked [here](#).

Charity support

Each year, we support a group of colleague-nominated charities, providing direct funding and in-kind support including free advertising and digital promotion across our stations and network.

This year we proudly supported:

- The Alex Wardle Foundation
- Scotty's Little Soldiers
- Devon Air Ambulance
- Forget Me Not Fund
- SERV Surrey and London and Young Minds

Alex Wardle Foundation

Through our longstanding partnership with the Alex Wardle Foundation we invested over **£500,000** to install publicly accessible defibrillators at **187** at our staffed stations, helping raise awareness of Sudden Arrhythmic Death Syndrome and making our stations safer for everyone.

Scotty's Little Soldiers

We welcomed a new charity partner, Scotty's Little Soldiers, a charity supporting bereaved military children. We helped launch a campaign to raise awareness and funds, highlighting stories of children who have lost a parent in military service. With posters across our network and QR-enabled donation links, our aim is to help Scotty's reach its goal of supporting over 1,000 children a year by 2030.



Defibrillators installed – Alex Wardle Foundation



Supporting Scotty's Little Soldiers

Easy access

At SWR, we're committed to ensuring that everyone can travel in confidence and comfort. This means designing spaces that support the diverse needs of our customers – particularly those with sensory, physical or emotional accessibility needs.

This year we invested over **£500,000** on the installation of inclusive design features at our stations.

Calming features in waiting rooms

Building on the success of the three calm spaces we delivered in 2022/23, calming features have been added to waiting rooms at a further five stations across our network. These features include:

- Soothing coloured lighting
- Acoustic wall treatments to reduce ambient noise
- Indoor plants and natural materials to promote a sense of wellbeing
- Artwork designed to evoke calm and connection

These improvements are now part of our wider Waiting Room Refresh Programme, embedding inclusive and sensory-aware design into our station environment for the long term.

Accessible toilets

We continued to expand and upgrade accessible toilet facilities across the network as part of our ongoing commitment to inclusive travel.

- New accessible toilets have been created at Bookham and Yeovil Junction stations
- Existing facilities were refreshed at Kingston and Richmond stations
- RoomMate, an innovative audio guidance system for blind and partially sighted customers, was installed at 14 more locations. We are proud to have RoomMate installed in 32 facilities on the network

Case studies

Changing Places toilet facility Lymington

With a CCIF grant we supported the construction of a new Changing Places toilet facility at Lymington Community Centre and an additional upstairs toilet in the same building.

British Sign Language displayed on totems

Following a successful trial at London Waterloo station, British Sign Language (BSL) messages are now displayed on our totems, offering a more inclusive experience for deaf customers. This innovation is part of our drive to improve real-time travel information for all.

Sensory Community Officer – Sight for Surrey

Recognising the unique challenges faced by people with sensory impairments, we funded the appointment of a full-time Sensory Community Officer through our CCIF programme. The officer's mission is to:

- Increase awareness of the needs of blind, visually impaired, deaf and hearing-impaired people
- Champion inclusive access to travel and community spaces
- Combat social isolation and remove barriers to independence



Sensory Community Officer delivering training and awareness in Surrey

PROMOTING LOCAL SKILLS AND JOBS

Our people are the driving force behind everything we do. With over 5,000 colleagues – more than 85% of whom live within the South West, we're proud to be a major local employer.

As part of our commitment to the **'Employment and Economic'** category of the Rail Social Value Tool (RSVT), we focus not just on creating jobs, but on building careers. Through apprenticeships, upskilling and internal development, we're helping individuals across our region gain confidence, skills and support they need to thrive.

Delivering social value through:

- Apprenticeships
- Job creation across the network
- Job quality, retention and career progression

2023/24 highlights:

- **96** apprenticeship opportunities awarded, a 45% increase from 2022/23
- **Female participation** in apprenticeships and development programmes increased, supporting greater diversity in the industry
- **Achieved Silver** in the Armed Forces Covenant Employer Recognition Scheme
- **46% of roles filled through internal promotions**, reflecting our culture of growth from within
- **Employee turnover reduced**, signalling improved job satisfaction and retention

Monetised social value for
Employment and Economic

£100 million

Sustainable Development Goals we're supporting



Apprenticeships: building future rail talent

We're committed to developing the next generation of rail professionals. From engineering and operations to digital innovation and customer service, our apprenticeship programmes offer structured, hands-on learning combined with formal qualifications.

In 2022, the scheme was expanded and SWR became the only train operator to welcome applicants between the ages of 16 and 18, through its Young Talent Apprenticeship (YTA) programme. It immediately proved to be popular as 70 applicants applied for just eight roles and, three years later, six of those initial YTAs are now working in full-time, permanent positions.

Last year, SWR received more than 600 applications for just 24 roles in its apprenticeship programmes, underlining its popularity.



Defence Employers Recognition Scheme Silver Award

2023/24 highlights:

- **29 colleagues enrolled** in Level 2 or above apprenticeships, a significant increase from FY22-23
- **Applications rose to 612**, with 24 new apprentices joining engineering, leadership and young talent programmes
- We saw a **notable increase in female participation** supporting our drive to promote inclusive industry careers

Our growing programme is helping position SWR as a career destination for emerging talent and skilled professionals

Job creation and community employability

Our continued network improvements and internal business growth have supported a **3% increase in job creation** this year.

Case studies

Choose Employability – Shaping Portsmouth

In 2023/24, we partnered with Shaping Portsmouth to deliver the 'Choose Employability' programme, supporting underrepresented groups in accessing meaningful employment. This targeted programme focuses on three key communities:

- Residents of homeless shelters, rebuilding their lives through work
- Young adults leaving foster care, in need of structured pathways and support
- Individuals completing probation, seeking to reintegrate into the workforce

Click here for [more on Choose Employability](#).

Together, we're helping remove barriers to employment and unlock future potential.

Job quality and flexibility

We believe great jobs go beyond the basics – they should offer purpose and progression. In 2023/24, we introduced new flexible working models, giving colleagues more flexibility and building a workplace that values potential and adapts to modern life. Over the year, around 50 full-time roles were adapted to transition to part-time hours to meet personal needs, based on individual needs.

DECARBONISING AND PROTECTING OUR PLANET

From tackling climate change to enhancing biodiversity, we're proud to lead the way in building a greener, more sustainable railway. Through our, 'Journey to a Better Future' sustainability strategy, we're investing in long-term solutions which reduce emissions, cut waste and support nature – all while improving the journey experience for our customers.



Rail is already one of the most sustainable ways to travel – but we believe we can go even further.

Our environmental initiatives are aligned with the 'Environment' section of the RSVT and focuses on three strategic priorities: sustainability strategy focuses on three areas:

- Bring emissions down
- 'Waste not'
- Bloom beautifully

Together, these areas drive environmental and social value through improvements in air quality, carbon reduction, water use, biodiversity and waste management.

2023/24 highlights:

- **5,500 trees** planted through our colleague led 'Move for 30' active competition
- **Two air quality and noise improvement plan** at key locations
- **Building Management Systems (BMS)** installed at two stations and two depots, enabling smart energy control
- **83% recycling rate** achieved, maintaining our position as the UK's leading TOC for waste management

The monetised social value for Environment in FY 23-24 is
— £20 million



Sustainable Development Goals we're supporting



Bringing emissions down

We're on a science-led journey to decarbonise our operations. As the UK's first train operator to develop and publish a cost-effective roadmap, we're committed to achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2040 – a full decade ahead of government targets. Our roadmap is aligned with the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) and supports the goal of limiting global warming to 1.5°C.

While our emissions increased slightly this year due to running more services and changes in grid emissions factors and resulted in a social value disbenefit of -£20 million, we are firmly on track to meet our 4.2% annual reduction target.

Key initiatives:

- **Carbon Challenge:** our internal programme encourages every day energy saving behaviours, from turning down heating and switching off lights. Now in its second year, the programme continues to drive sustainable behaviours within SWR
- **Smarter stations:** A trial Building Management System (BMS) has been implemented at four key sites to centrally control heating, cooling, and lighting, maximising energy efficiency
- **Infrared heating:** installed at gate lines and waiting areas for targeted, efficient warmth in colder months
- **LED rollout:** Energy efficient lighting continues across stations, depots and trains
- **ISO50001 Energy Management:** Our certified system tracks, manages and improves our energy usage across the network



Air Quality and seamless journeys

Cleaner air means healthier lives. In early 2024, we became **the first UK operator to install an air filtration tower** (Pluvo) at Salisbury station. We also published our Air Quality Improvement Plan, demonstrating our partnership with Network Rail to develop a site-specific air quality improvement plan for London Waterloo station – an industry first for the Southern Region.

Seamless journeys

We're also helping customers reduce their carbon footprint with smarter transport links.

The railway is a sustainable, integrated transport system. We aim to help our customers reach their closest station with the lowest carbon footprint by working with our transport partners.

2023/24 highlights:

- **Free rail shuttle buses** helped 23,000 cricket fans travel sustainably to Hampshire Cricket Club matches
- New **cycle parking** added at Hinchley Wood and Woking, supporting greener travel
- Our **Re-cycle** project trained vulnerable residents in bike repair, repurposing abandoned bikes and promoting cycling in local communities. Read more about these initiatives on the next page

Case studies

Hinchley Wood cycle stands

As part of our CCIF funding, a new stand with space for 20 bikes, installed on the 'up'/London-bound side at Hinchley Wood station. The application came from a local Elmbridge councillor and the project is being delivered by SWR's own contractors through business as usual station improvement processes.

Re-cycle

Re-cycle project is about training more vulnerable volunteers, trainees and local residents in bicycle repair and maintenance skills. Repaired bicycles will be sold at low cost in the shop to encourage more local people to cycle. The South Western Railway grant enabled a full transformation of the bicycle workshop and new tools and parts including tyres, chains, handlebar grips, saddles, and more.



28 bicycles were collected from Aldershot and 10 from Basingstoke so far, but we remain in contact with these and hope to continue collecting when they are available. We also remain in contact the other stations in North Hampshire, but as yet they have had no bikes available.

Woking Station secure cycle parking

Our CCIF funding provided 50 secure cycling storage units installed within 50 metres of the station entrance/exit on the town side.



SAL segregator

Waste not

We're proud to be the UK's best performing train operator for recycling. In 2023/24, we improved our waste **recycling rate to 83%**, an increase of almost 7% thanks to our robust segregation programme and dedicated Waste Officers at 11 high-volume sites.

All waste collected is processed at a Materials Recycling Facility (MRF), with non-recyclables diverted to Energy from Waste (EfW) facility, where it is converted into useable energy – ensuring nothing goes to landfill.

Bloom beautifully: supporting biodiversity

Rail networks are more than just transport corridors, they are vital green corridors for wildlife and nature. Our network stretches across 1,300 miles of track in the South West and is home to a diverse range of plant and animal species and we're working hard to ensure our land supports biodiversity, reduces carbon and helps nature thrive. Studies estimate the habitats around rail infrastructure could absorb up to 411,548 tonnes of CO2e over 30 years, generating a benefit to society of between £40.7m to £122m of carbon capturing capacity.

We're proud to be the first UK train operator to sign the Nature Positive Business Pledge, committing to becoming biodiversity net positive by 2030. This means not just preventing biodiversity loss but actively enhancing it to ensure our actions benefit nature.

Over the past year, we have:

- Created biodiversity action plans at 33 locations
- Delivered biodiversity gardens at all our depots
- Invested £250,000 into our biodiversity improvement projects
- Supported volunteer and community planting events
- Contributed to the Save Our Wild Isles campaign and Feltham Marshalling Yard conservation



Find out more about the **Nature Positive Business Pledge** by scanning the QR code



Case studies

Community Allotment and Sensory Gardens @ Holme Farm

A CCIF grant helped create a fully accessible allotment with a sensory garden and wide pathways, making gardening inclusive for all, including those with limited mobility.

PROMOTING SKILLS, EMPLOYMENT AND WELLBEING

At SWR, people are the heartbeat of our business. From drivers and engineers to station teams and customer service representatives, it is their passion and dedication that powers the railway. By investing in their growth and wellbeing and by opening the door for others to join our industry, we create long-term value for individuals, communities and the economy.

Our focus on **'Health, Training and Skills'** directly supports the RSVT's pillar, and has helped us deliver positive social value over the year.

Our priorities include:

- Health and wellbeing
- Mentoring and personal development
- Training and skills
- Careers advice or guidance
- Stakeholder and community engagement

Sustainable Development Goals
we're supporting



2023/24 highlights:

- **211 Mental Health First Aiders** trained to support colleagues
- **15 wellbeing awareness days** hosted, from walk and talks to game cafes
- **44 mentoring relationships** established to guide professional growth
- **44,000 children educated** in rail safety by our trained ambassadors
- **Paramedic teams** deployed at key stations to support emergency response

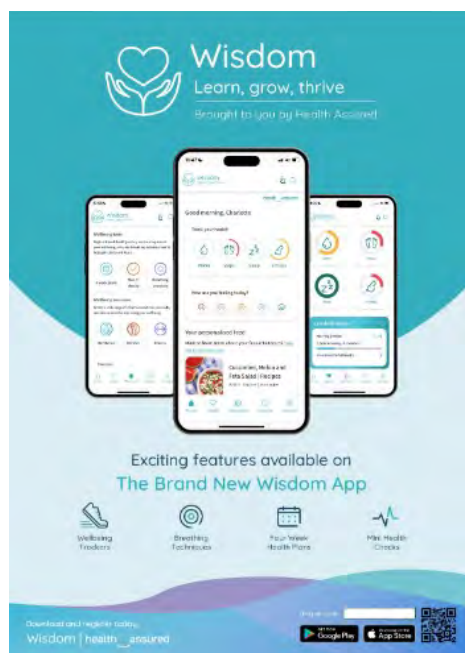
The monetised social value for
Health, Training and Skills is

£51 million

Health and wellbeing

We have embedded wellbeing in to our culture – from mental health support to physical activity and emotional resilience.

This year, we enhanced our wellbeing programme with our employee assistance programme, Wisdom, which continues to provide colleagues and their families with free counselling and wellbeing services, while the Total Active Hub keeps teams moving and fit through group challenges and competitions.



Case studies

Kidscape peer mentoring for mental health

Through our CCIF programme, we helped 14 state schools near Reading launch a peer mentoring scheme. This empowers older pupils to support younger students in one-to-one relationships, building confidence, connection and emotional resilience among young people.



Suicide prevention in SWR communities

In May 2023, we awarded Samaritans a grant of £35,035 to fund community-based suicide prevention across the SWR network. 13 branches used the grant to recruit volunteers and deliver outreach events – bringing listening skills, crisis awareness and support into local communities.



Training, careers and building future talent

We are committed to developing the next generation of rail professionals. A diverse, skilled workforce positively enriches business performance at all levels and is key to delivering a railway service our customer deserve. We serve a diverse region, and we want our workforce to reflect this: not just by gender or culture but by background, skills, beliefs and more.

This year, we held **four large-scale recruitments events** in Woking and Southampton to fill station-based customer service roles. More than **190** applicants were interviewed, and **72 new team members** joined our railway family.

Breaking barriers

We're actively working to make our industry more inclusive. From STEM fairs for young women to immersive tech-based experiences at careers events, we're opening new pathways into rail – especially for underrepresented groups.

With fewer than 1 in 10 drivers identifying as female, we're committed to closing the gender gap in the rail industry. This year, we launched a new recruitment campaign to attract more women into train driver roles and encouraging women to consider a fulfilling career on the railway. By opening doors to more women, we gain a wider talent pool, fresh perspectives and experience to help shape the industry for the future.

We also partner with industry-wide programs including Routes into Rail, inspiring the next generation of rail professionals, and host a Women Drivers Network, providing access to networking opportunities and forums that advocate for the career development of women in the industry.

Case studies

Female Driver - Sally

Sally joined SWR after years driving London buses – and is now one of 11 women train drivers based at Wimbledon depot. She was the first person to drive one of our new Arterio trains in service and recently became a driver instructor, training the next generation of drivers.

She says “It's more than just a job; it's a career with lots of different opportunities. I'm now a Driver Instructor, which has been one of the most memorable accomplishments of my career so far”.



Sally is one of 11 women train drivers based at Wimbledon depot and has recently become a Driver Instructor, training the next generation of drivers

RESPONSIBLE PROCUREMENT: STRENGTHENING OUR SUPPLY CHAIN

Our supply chain doesn't just keep trains running, it is a powerful driver of local economic and social value. Procurement accounts for a large proportion of our business expenditure. By prioritising ethical, sustainable and local procurement, we're helping communities thrive while keeping our standards high.

To deliver social value against our 'Supply Chain' objectives, we focus on these key areas:

- Prompt payments
- Small business partnerships
- Sustainable supplier standards

2023/24 highlights:

- **Expanded our SME supplier network** by 20%, now partnering with 772 small and medium-sized businesses
- **Delivered £3.4 million in social value** through sustainably informed procurement decisions
- **Embedded a sustainability validation process** into supplier contracts to ensure local benefits are delivered

The monetised social value for Supply Chain is
£6.5 million

Sustainable procurement practices

Sustainable procurement considers the environmental, social, and economic impacts of purchasing, supplying, or manufacturing goods and services. Close collaboration between our sustainability and procurement teams ensures that sustainability factors are integrated into all tender evaluations. In FY23-24, this approach influenced spending decisions resulting in £3,423,000 of monetised social value.

This year we maintained our accreditation against ISO20400. ISO20400 is the international standard for Sustainable Procurement aligned to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and achieving sustainability integrated into procurement practices.

Sustainable Development Goals we're supporting



Reducing single use plastic with Ape20

In partnership with Ape20, we've installed eco-friendly, ultra-filtered water stations at major stations including Hampton Court, Vauxhall, Richmond, Wimbledon, Putney, Kingston, Twickenham, Basingstoke and Bournemouth. Customers can refill reusable bottles or purchase stainless steel ones – with 10% of the cost also going towards marine and freshwater conservation and clean ups.

Thanks to this initiative, we've helped prevent over 67,409 single-use plastic bottles from entering landfill and our oceans, saving the equivalent of 2.5 tonnes of crude oil.

SWRs sustainability team – recognised for eliminating unnecessary plastic bottles



LOOKING AHEAD: OUR JOURNEY TO A BETTER FUTURE CONTINUES

Our ‘Journey to a Better Future’ is just getting started. We’re proud of the progress we have made and excited about what comes next. As we look forward, we’re deepening our commitment to delivering lasting social value across our network by investing in people, places and the planet. Together with our partners, colleagues and communities, we’ll continue to build a railway that delivers far beyond the tracks.

Supporting our local communities

From community rail partnerships to station adoption schemes, we remain rooted in the places we serve. Through our Customer and Communities Improvement Fund, we’re backing 15 projects in the year ahead – each one designed to make a meaningful difference to the lives of our customers and communities.

Promoting local skills and jobs

We’re creating high-quality, diverse apprenticeship opportunities that open doors to rail careers for a more inclusive and diverse workforce that reflects the communities we serve. These efforts will foster long-term employment prospects and contribute to the region’s economic growth.

Decarbonising and protecting our planet

We’re focused on cutting emissions, reducing waste, and promoting nature and enhancing biodiversity along our routes. We are committed to creating a greener, more enjoyable travel experience for our customers while contributing to a more sustainable future for all.

Investing in our people

By continuing to invest in our people’s development and wellbeing, we’re building a culture where skills flourish, careers thrive, and colleagues stay with us for the long term.

Responsible business practices

As a responsible business, we’re growing a resilient and sustainable supply chain by prioritising local suppliers, championing SMEs and embedding social value in every contract. This contributes to the well-being and prosperity of the communities we’re part of, while ensuring resilience and sustainability in our operations.



Charity Partner SERV Surrey and London raising awareness

