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A FirstGroup and MTR Company

Stakeholder Report November 2023

We're on a journey to better

South Western
Railway

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Hello and welcome to our fifth stakeholder report. We have taken the decision to alter the format and timing of the report for this edition, releasing it at the same time as our annual stakeholder conference. This means the report covers the last 18 months or so, since our last report was published in May 2022.



Direct to you

Claire Mann
Managing Director

These past 18 months have been extremely busy and challenging ones for the railway, albeit with plenty of positives and successes interspersed.

No write up of this period could start without mention of the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. We along with the rest of the country mourned and paid tribute to her, following a lifetime of service. We also played an active role in supporting the State Funeral plans, helping to transport those who wished to travel to London to pay their respects at the lying-in-state, or to Windsor to witness the procession of the coffin to Windsor Castle.

Later and after months of meticulous planning, it was a privilege to be at London Waterloo as we welcomed thousands of soldiers, sailors, and aviators to the capital aboard SWR trains for the subsequent Coronation of The King and Queen. It was the largest movement of service personnel by train since the State Funeral of Sir Winston Churchill in 1965 and a truly proud day both for the country and SWR. That weekend, we also delivered additional services for the Coronation Concert at Windsor Castle. I would again thank all colleagues who worked so hard to deliver our response.

Another historic occasion we marked this year was the 175th anniversary of London Waterloo itself, our flagship station. At a celebration on Platform 19 we hosted representatives from the industry alongside Network Rail colleagues and were treated to a Waterloo-inspired choral performance. We also looked forward to the future with confidence, as an Arterio train was officially named the Waterloo 175. In 2025, we will be celebrating 200 years of the railway, which will doubtless be another special time for all of us.

Sadly, our customers have continued to face disruption throughout the last year and a half as a result of nationwide industrial action. This has included full strike action as well as action short of strike, a sustained period of which impacted our services throughout December 2022. I was pleased that a deal has been reached between the industry and the TSSA union. Negotiations with the other trade unions involved are ongoing at a national level, and I hope that the dispute will be resolved as soon as possible.

We have faced some major disruption linked to infrastructure failures since mid-last year. The record heatwave the country witnessed in July 2022 led to clay embankments on our West of England route drying out and shrinking, which forced us to run a severely reduced timetable between September and November of that year. Then in November 2022, Barnes Bridge in west London was closed for several weeks in order to allow urgent repairs to be carried out. And most recently in January 2023, a major landslip at Hook meant our Main Line between London and the South Coast has had to operate with only half the number of lines usually available to us. Customer safety is our number one priority in these instances, and we work closely with Network Rail to ensure that the impact to customers is minimised as much as possible. I would however want to take this opportunity to again apologise for any disruption you may have experienced.

Outside of major infrastructure challenges we are also stepping up our ongoing work to enhance performance across the network, to make every journey easy and reliable for our customers. A new Joint Performance Task Force made up of SWR and Network Rail colleagues will drive the changes needed and consolidate progress made.

Travelling by train is already one of the greenest ways you can travel, and a great way to help protect our environment, but at SWR we are determined to make it even greener. We issued our Net Zero roadmap at the end of September 2022 and our broader Sustainability Strategy in mid-December that year. These are thorough, well-researched and practical documents which will guide everything we do over the coming years to reduce our own impact on the environment and help society more broadly with the transition towards a low-carbon future. I'm delighted that our roadmap to net zero by 2040 has been officially approved by independent climate experts at the Science Based Targets initiative.

Our people are the most important resource we have available and I am so passionate about ensuring they are supported and motivated. We have implemented some major campaigns this year with people in mind, whether that's our colleagues or customers. These include our work on Purpose, Vision and Mission as part of We Are SWR, and our All Aboard campaign tackling discrimination and making sure everyone feels welcome on the railway.

We want serving local communities across our region to be at the very heart of what we do and there are many ways that we are making that happen. It is wonderful that over 100 stations, more than half of the stations on our network, have now been adopted by volunteers committed to making their local station even better for all our customers. I was proud that Tolworth station on our network was selected to host the national launch event for Community Rail Week, which championed everything that our adopters and Community Rail Partnerships do to benefit their local areas.

Many of these community groups were also beneficiaries of our Customers and Communities Improvement Fund (CCIF), alongside local authorities and charities among others, meaning that over 100 community-led projects have now benefited from £7million of grants delivered by SWR.

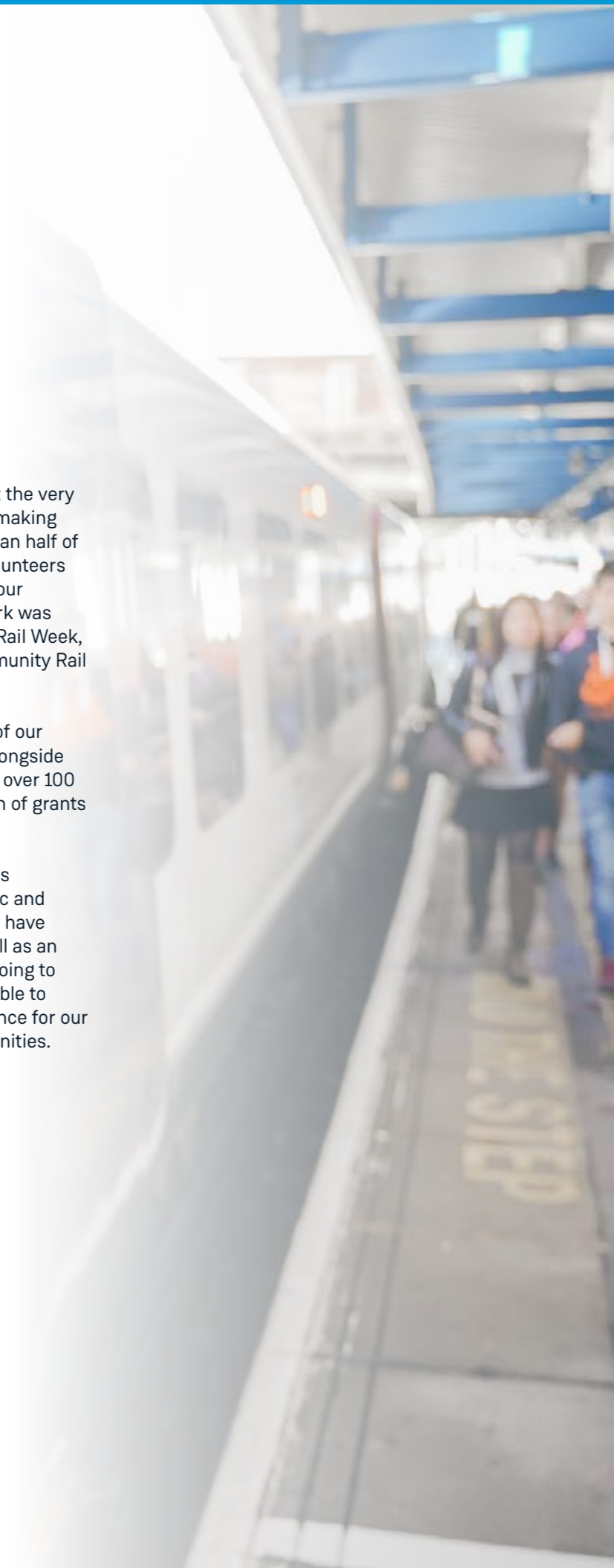
In this report, you will find updates on how our ridership has stabilised and shifted in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic and what this means for our commercial performance. We also have summaries of the performance of our train services, as well as an overview of what our partners at Network Rail have been doing to invest in the infrastructure of the railway. And you will be able to read more about what we are doing to improve the experience for our customers at our stations, on our trains, and in our communities.

I hope you enjoy the report.

Claire Mann

Claire Mann
Managing Director

November 2023



Network Rail



Mark Killick, Route Director, Wessex, Network Rail

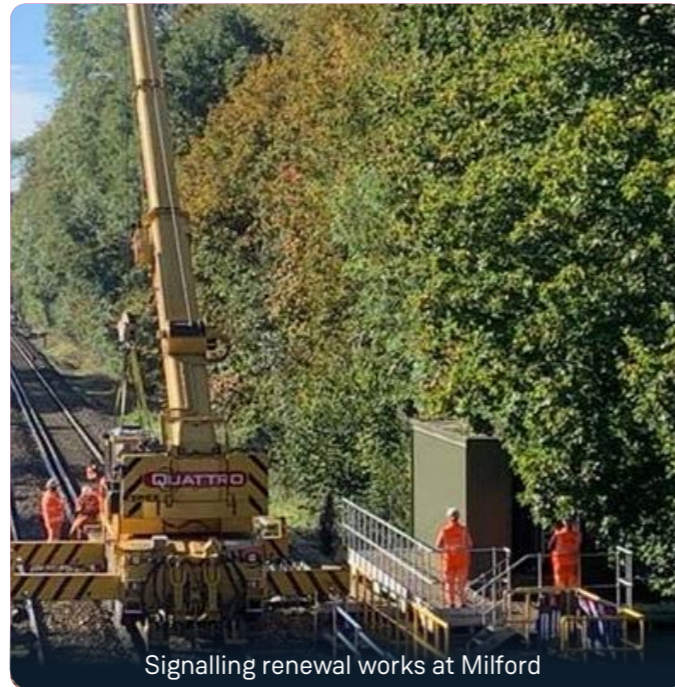
As Route Director for the Wessex Route, I look after around 1,300 miles of railway on some of the busiest lines in the country which make up the majority of SWR's network. The route connects key cities such as Bournemouth, Southampton and Portsmouth to London, passing through a number of major urban centres such as Winchester and Reading, as well as through more rural areas including Devon, Dorset and Hampshire. Our London terminal at Waterloo is the busiest railway station in the country and sees, on average, 230 million passenger journeys each year.

I wanted to spend some time in this section of the SWR stakeholder report to focus on providing an update on how we're working closely together on a number of major infrastructure projects, our weather preparation for the autumn period, and some other successes from the last year.

Major Infrastructure Projects

As we approach the end of 2023, we are nearing the end of our current funding settlement, known as Control Period 6 (CP6) which covers the period from 2019 to 2024. Since the start of CP6, we've used our multi-billion investment in the Wessex route to support the operations, maintenance and renewal of our existing infrastructure such as stations, tracks, bridges and signalling equipment – all to deliver smoother, more reliable journeys for our customers.

As well as this 'Business as Usual' work we've also carried out some further major projects. We're really grateful for our stakeholders' support and understanding while we've done this infrastructure. We recognise there is never an ideal time to close the railway, so often, rather than working over lots of weekends, we carry out our major work in longer line closures or blockades which give us a good opportunity to complete the work efficiently, and minimising disruption to customers as much as possible.



Signalling renewal works at Milford

Portsmouth Direct Upgrade

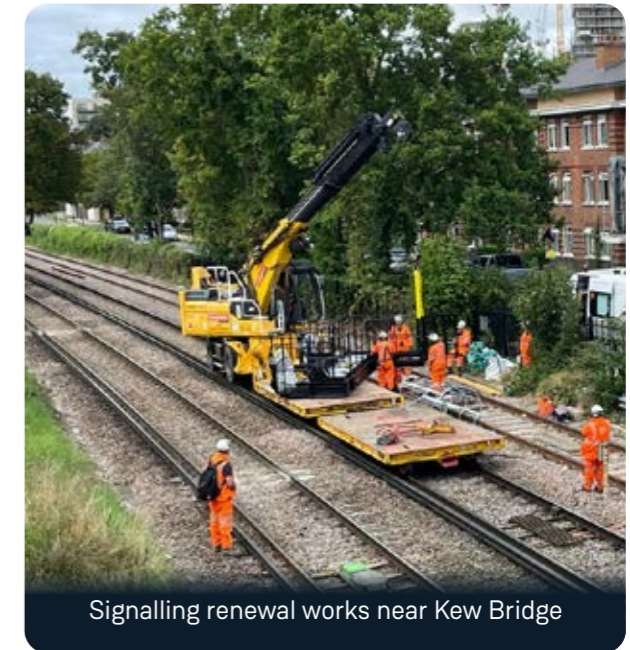
The Portsmouth Direct Upgrade involves upgrading the signalling and track on the line which runs from Woking to Portsmouth Harbour. The majority of the work is part of the Farncombe to Petersfield Resignalling Scheme, where we are upgrading the dated 1970s signalling on the line before moving control from signal boxes at Farncombe, Petersfield and Haslemere to the Rail Operating Centre (ROC) in Basingstoke. We are also renewing and upgrading 12 level crossings. In addition we are renewing key sections of track, switches, and crossings, improving stations, completing essential earthworks and other essential routine railway maintenance.

During our most recent line closure on Saturday 21st to Sunday 29th October between Guildford to Petersfield, extending to Havant on Sunday 29th, we reached an important half way milestone of this project. While the railway was closed, we installed a number of signal piles, signal posts and laid power cables along the route. We also installed a prefabricated signalling equipment building, installed new signal gantries at Haslemere station and upgraded several level crossings. We also completed essential cutting work at Haslemere, Wormley and Hammer Lane, as well as a canopy refurbishment at Farncombe station.

Feltham to Wokingham Resignalling

The Feltham to Wokingham Resignalling programme is a £300 million project to re-signal over 80 miles of some of the most congested tracks in South West London. The current signalling systems date back to 1974 and the equipment has become life-expired which can cause real performance problems on this part of the network.

Having already completed the first two phases of the work in recent years, which covered the areas around Strawberry Hill, Shepperton, Virginia Water and Ascot, over the summer we successfully concluded phases 3 and 4 which includes the lines through Windsor, Staines, Feltham and Kew Bridge. We installed 116 new digital signals, upgraded 7 level crossings, and connected it all up with 11km of new cabling. In doing so, we successfully transferred control of these areas to the Basingstoke ROC and closed the Feltham area signalling centre.



Signalling renewal works near Kew Bridge



Embankment strengthening and draining work at Honiton tunnel

West of England Line

The West of England Line runs west from Basingstoke to Exeter St Davids, providing an important link for customers in Devon, Dorset, Wiltshire and Somerset and surrounding areas, both for leisure and commuting. We are currently investing significant amounts of money to improve journeys for our customers along the West of England Line, with a focus on boosting the railway's reliability and performance and reducing delays caused by infrastructure failures and the unique challenges of the single-track nature of the line in many areas.

Over the course of November and December, a series of engineering line closures will give us the opportunity to stabilise the earthworks around the track and tunnels to help prevent landslips and

the disruptive emergency repairs to fix them. This includes replacing track which means installing brand new rails, sleepers, and ballast. At the same time, we will carry out a programme of work to manage the trees and plants that grow alongside the railway, removing hazardous trees that can stop trains from running on time. While the line is closed, and to maximise the access we have, we will be completing routine maintenance on other key railway infrastructure including bridges, tunnels and level crossings.

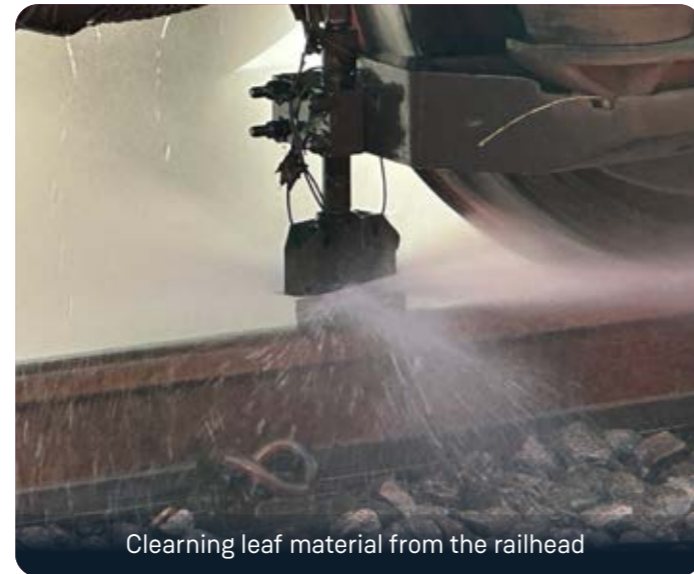
Previous work on the line over recent years has included a £5m scheme to fully strengthen the cutting at Honiton Tunnel – something that's of particular importance as we look ahead to a changing climate and protecting the railway for the future.

Autumn & Winter Preparation

As this report has been written, we are entering the Autumn and Winter months, which make up the most challenging seasons for the railway.

Although we carry out regular work to maintain the vegetation along the lineside, there are millions of trees on or next to the railway, and every autumn thousands of tonnes of leaves fall onto the tracks. The combination of wet weather and passing trains compresses the leaves into a hard slippery layer on the rails. This is the railway's equivalent of black ice on the roads. Slippery rails make it harder for trains to accelerate and brake effectively, so drivers have to move out of stations more slowly and brake much earlier to stop in time. The build-up of leaves can also create a barrier between the train wheels and the electrical parts of the track that let signallers know where the trains are.

Across the Wessex Route, a fleet of 'leaf-busting' trains will be in action over the coming months to keep the railway leaf free and running reliably, working tirelessly to rid the railway of leaves, snow and ice. Trains known as Windhoff Multipurpose Vehicles (MPVs) and RHTTs (Rail Head Treatment Trains) will operate from our seasonal delivery depot in Effingham, near to Effingham Junction station.



Clearing leaf material from the railhead

With climate change blurring the traditional weather conditions expected in each season, we are also preparing to simultaneously tackle ice and colder weather. Across much of the railway in the south of England, including the majority of the Wessex route, trains are powered by the conductor rail (also known as the third rail) which can get covered in ice and snow, stopping power reaching trains. To prevent this from happening MPVs and Snow and Ice Treatment Trains (SITT) both scrape ice off the conductor rail head (the top of the conductor rail) and spray the rails with anti-ice.

All of this work is key to making sure we are able to run a reliable service through the winter period. We work very closely with SWR to keep trains running to time, despite the challenges the weather can pose to the railway, as was the case last year at Hook.

Hook Landslip

One of biggest performance challenges this year occurred in January when part of an embankment near Hook slipped from underneath two of the lines, severely reducing the number of trains that could run. Landslips happen on the railway when soil, rocks and earth fall on to and cover the track. This is often after long periods of heavy rain, when the ground becomes saturated with water. At Hook, the embankment is made up of a mixture of London Clay and other local soils, which became saturated after several consecutive days of very heavy rain.

The landslip was in a remote location meaning that our engineers needed to build a 580-metre-long access road across fields to get materials and machinery to the site. A 60-metre wall, made up of 100 12-metre-long steel beams driven into the ground to stabilise the embankment, was built to protect the railway from future landslips.

Fixing the landslip was an incredibly complex task that took several weeks, but to limit the disruption to passengers, we took the unusual step of slewing the track onto the stable embankment, allowing a much higher volume of trains to run whilst works took place, and vastly improving the service for our passengers. Rapid collaboration with all of our stakeholders and partners, including a dynamic risk assessment of the appropriate railway standard, resulted in a temporary change to the track layout within a couple of days to allow services to run in both directions. This fast thinking avoided a block on the critical line while the embankment was rebuilt and opened ahead of schedule.

As move forward, we continue to invest in equipment and work to minimise the potential of further landslips across the Wessex Route. This includes improving the capability of our remote-condition monitoring that allows us to use technology to pre-emptively take action before a similar event occurs.

Thank you

I'd like to thank all of our stakeholders for your support and engagement this year - we're grateful for the many partnerships we have with organisations and groups across Wessex, and look forward to continuing to work together to connect people to places and goods, driving economic growth and supporting the communities we serve.

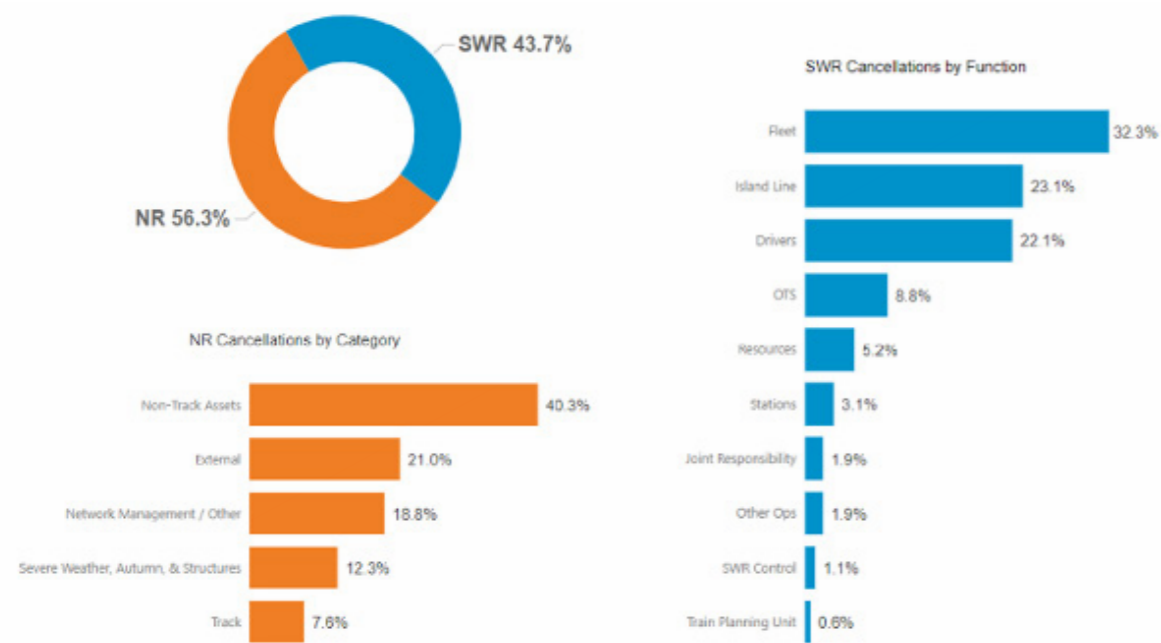


Performance

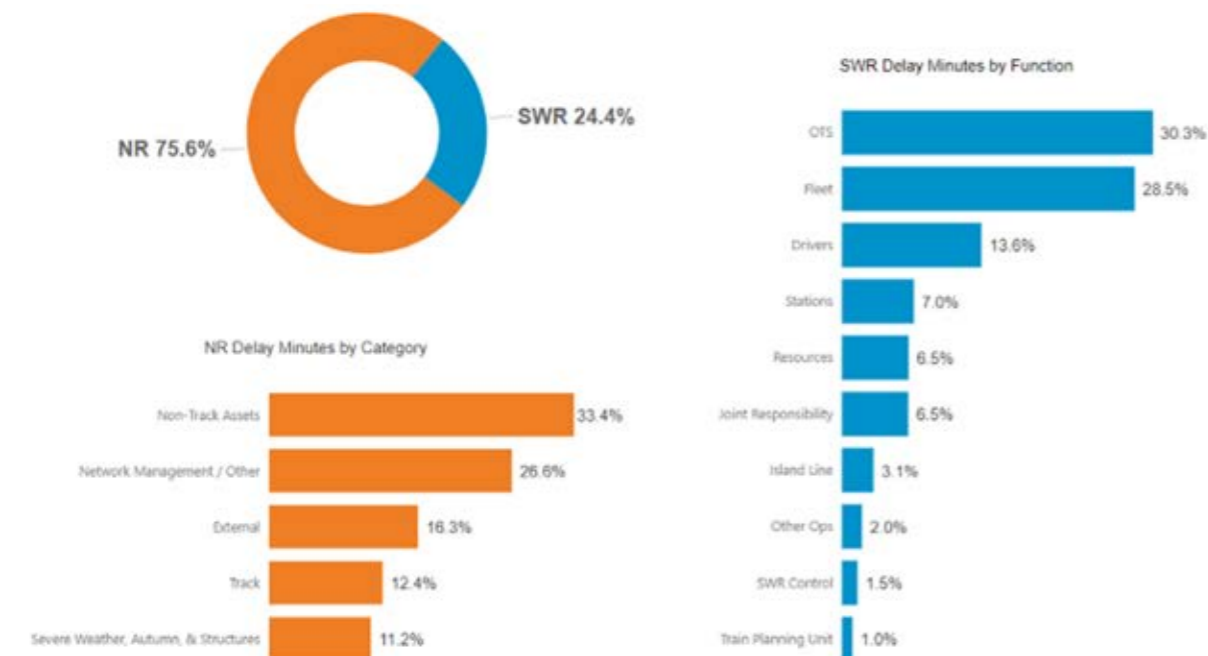
On Time to 3 and Cancellations Data

We know that good performance of our services is one of our top priorities, as it is for customers and stakeholders. In this section we provide an update on the sources of delays and cancellations over the last year alongside a summary of what both SWR and NR are doing to improve performance, building on the previous section in this report.

Cancellations November 2022 to November 2023



Cancellations and Delay Minutes November 2022 to November 2023



On Time to 3 by Rail Year and Period



All Cancellations by Rail Year and Period



SWR Cancellations by Rail Year and Period



Notes on these charts:

- The timeframe for all the bar charts is April 2022 to September 2023. Each period is four weeks and there are 13 in a railway year.
- ‘On Time to 3’ is defined as the percentage of station calls where the train arrived up to 3 minutes late after the timetabled arrival or earlier including early trains.
- ‘All cancellations’ includes those attributed to any source including SWR, NR, other train operators etc.
- SWR cancellations refers to those where they are the responsibility of SWR only.
- More detail on definitions and the breakdown of performance statistics can be found on our website at www.southwesternrailway.com/travelling-with-us/performance

The punctuality and reliability of our services has varied across the past 18 months. Periods of worse performance are linked to major incidents incidents such as unprecedented hot weather, signalling issues, trespass and fatality, as well as periods of industrial action. We have seen customers returning to our network since the pandemic, but behaviours have changed. This includes an increase in leisure and weekend travellers, as well as commuter behaviours shifting to concentrated travel in the middle of the week (Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays). There has always been a strong relationship between performance and the volume of services and customers on our network.

We have had some challenging periods of performance against a backdrop of industrial action which has heavily impacted our network and colleague availability.

In Period 9 (12th November to 9th December 2022) we saw flooding and infrastructure issues including a broken rail between Clapham Junction and Earlsfield. This incurred circa 8,500 delay minutes and 160 cancellations. We also had a flooding incident at Sway which incurred circa 2,800 mins and 122 cancellations.

Periods 10 and 11 (10th December 2022 to 3rd February) felt the impact of 24 out of 26 operating days in December affected by industrial Action, and with the cold weather conditions, there were also infrastructure issues associated with ice on the 3rd rail.

The most significant specific incidents within this time were the landslip at Hook and signalling cabling issues at Rowlands Castle on the Portsmouth Direct line. This meant a sustained impact on the Portsmouth Direct service group’s punctuality which is at 60.8% for On Time to-3 for the past 12 months.

In Period 1 of the new 2023/24 railway year (1st April to 29th April 2023) diesel contamination issues led to stock shortages on the West of England line and colleagues worked tirelessly to repair and put back into service affected units. Although there were 349 cancellations caused by this issue, it was able to be resolved within five days.

This year we launched a performance taskforce between ourselves and Network Rail, with the objective of working together to tackle identified ongoing problem areas. The work of this group has already seen an improvement in performance delivery across the network in recent periods.

Trespass and Fatality

Sadly, our fatality and trespass related incidents have increased from previous years with over 2,730 cancellations and 156,819 delay minutes associated with these incidents over the past 12 months. This unfortunately reflects a broader trend for railways nationally and we are working cross-industry to prevent access to the rail network and support vulnerable individuals who present themselves, over the past 18 months we have worked collaboratively with Network Rail and the British Transport Police to introduce the following initiatives;

- The deployment of Trespass and Welfare Officers at key stations, using intelligence data to best place these members of staff throughout the day. We have also provided additional training to these staff to support individuals who are vulnerable.
- We have seen an exponential increase of people accessing the railway from public bridges and remote locations. We have worked with Network Rail to cage bridges, blank plates for signal gantries and increase security around access points. This includes new fencing, gates and station prevention measures.
- Working with the British Transport Police on joint operations to reduce trespass at key locations, including level crossings, bridges and stations, which is already leading to an increased apprehension of regular offenders.
- Working with mental health support agencies to help vulnerable people who present themselves on the railway. This includes an increased response to calls and training to all SWR staff.
- We have also jointly commissioned a review into our service recovery plans with Network Rail to ensure that the train service is restored as quickly as possible.

Unprecedented Hot Weather

July 2022 was the driest July since 1935 and this was coupled with the hottest rail temperatures ever recorded. This led to planned reductions in the train service and advising our customers to limit journeys to those that were essential on several days.

The West of England line particularly has continued to be hampered by the long-term impacts of soil moisture deficit. Large sections of the railway on the route were built by the Victorians using clay, which is a poor material to use as it flexes and shrinks so much depending on weather conditions. Replacement of these embankments would cost approximately £15 billion to £30 billion across the whole of the Southern Region alone.

Owing to the weather, our service proposition in the West of England saw a heavily reduced timetable during the summer and autumn of 2022 and a severely affected site in Tisbury caused circa 9,000 minutes in delay. As a result we amended our timetable to provide a consistent service to our customers in the West of England, improving the service performance by 80%. Working with Network Rail full service was resumed on 14th November 2022.



Class 159 unit at Salisbury

Industrial Relations

Planned strikes have not only been impactful on the days associated but also impacted colleague availability. The strikes started in June 2022 and are still ongoing. This was particularly significant during December 2022, where all days were either affected by strike days or actions short of a strike.

Disorder Related Events

There has been an increase anti-social related events. In reaction to this, we have:

- Funded for a disorder task-force enabling additional security staff to be placed in incident location hot-spots to prevent disorderly behaviours in our stations and on our trains.
- Briefed colleagues to use the three-way joint disorder call.
- Appointed a Crime Analyst to support the aforementioned joint route crime initiative and align our resource with Network Rail staff to relevant hotspots.
- Appointed new security contractors.
- Worked with BTP at key locations, including additional support over the summer at locations such as Bournemouth and Weymouth.

Hook Landslip

Hook landslip

In January 2023 there was a significant landslip at Hook which heavily impacted train performance. After heavy rainfall the ground became saturated, and the rail embankment collapsed resulting in a single-track railway. Network Rail's response to this has been explained in its earlier section of the report.



Signal Cable Issues

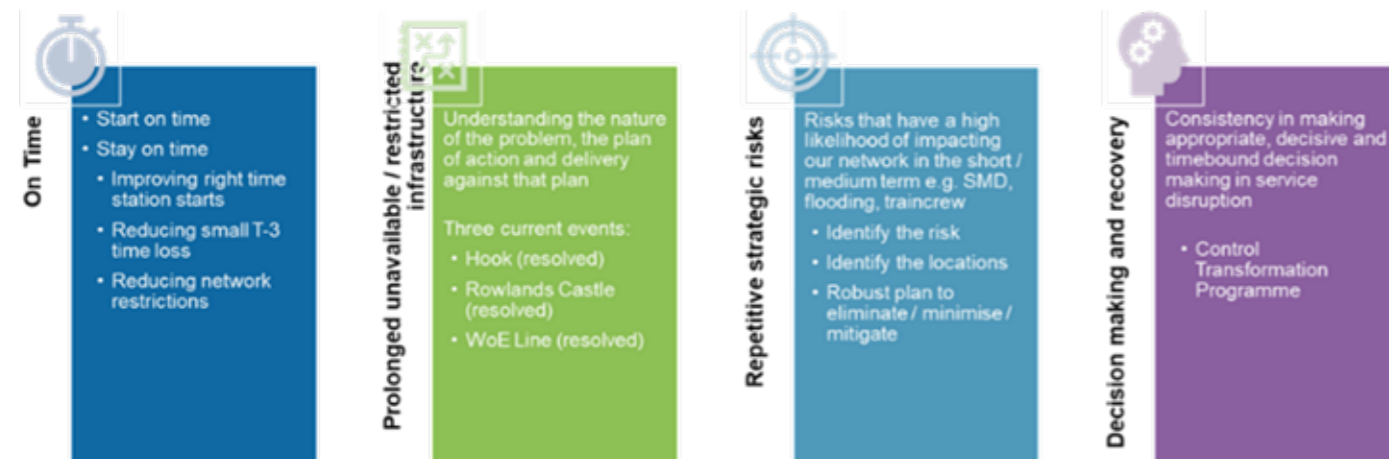
Between January and March the Portsmouth Direct line suffered with poor performance due to a signalling cable issue at Rowlands Castle. This event alone accounted for circa 18.5k delay minutes and 38.5 cancellations. Although this was challenging for our customers Network Rail used every resource available to mitigate the issue.

The signalling upgrade between Woking and Portsmouth Harbour is expected to be completed in 2024 and the maintenance and monitoring of the area has increased to prevent these delays happening.

Performance Taskforce

As a reaction to the poor performance experienced earlier in the year we have launched a taskforce working collaboratively with Network Rail. There are key pillars for the delivery of performance outlined in the diagram below.

The launch in March has seen an improvement in performance and created processes for managing impactful incidents on our network.



Revenue and Marketing

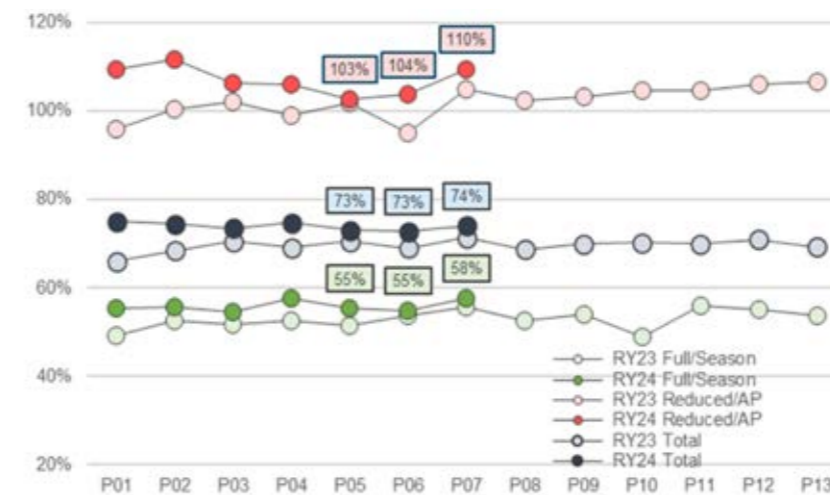
Growing and managing revenue is fundamental to the future of the railway. Whilst costs do need to be reduced and managed, a long term successful railway needs to pursue continued revenue growth which also helps to reduce the net cost to the taxpayer. We know that a successful railway is key to our stakeholders' strategies and plans too, for example linking with buses and shared transport to support new housing and employment growth.



In this section we look at recent revenue trends and the way we are using marketing to help grow it.

Revenue

Chart 1: Underlying Journeys Recovery Rate % 2019 by Period Financial Years 2022/23 and 2023/24



Notes for Chart 1:

- RY = Railway year: RY23 = financial year 22/23 and RY 24 = financial year 23/24
- Full / Season = full price tickets; reduced / AP = reduced price tickets such as off-peak, rail card discounts, advance purchase

Chart 2: Average Footfall at Waterloo by Time and Day of Week (Period 7 September / October 2023)

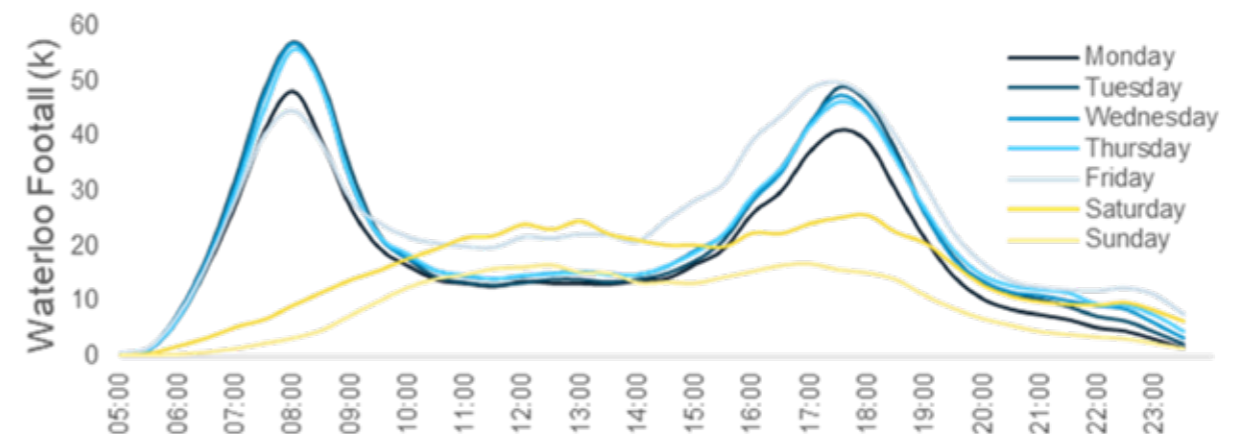
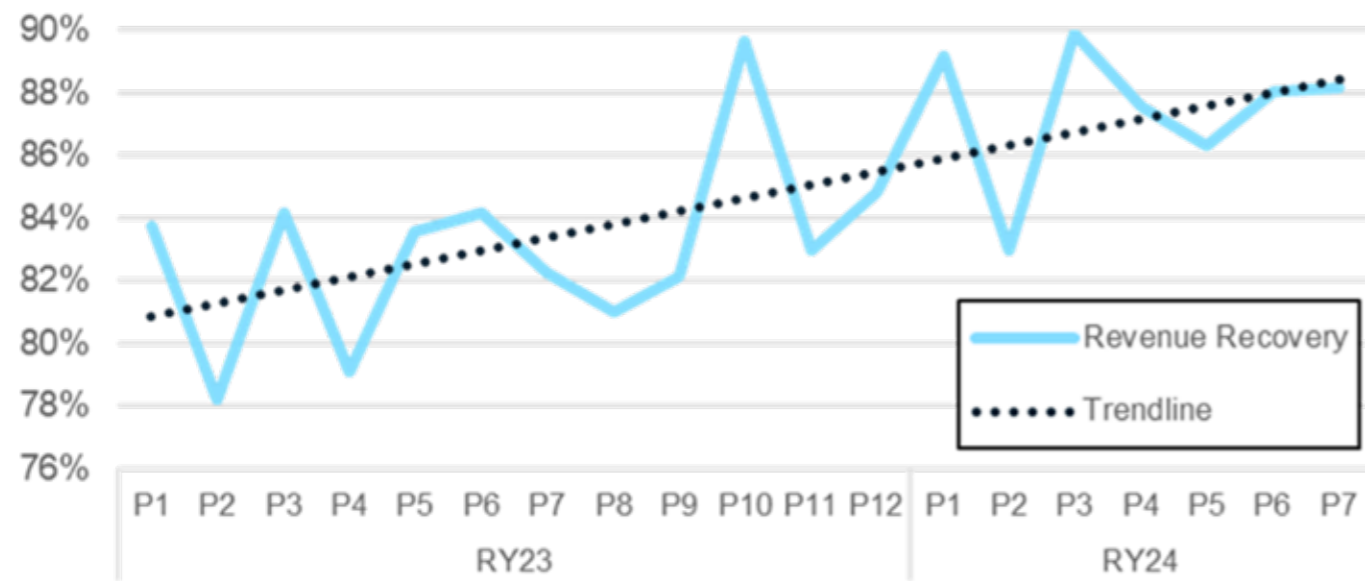


Chart 3: SWR Revenue Recovery after the removal of strikes and the annual 5.9% rail fares increase (financial year 2022/23 and 23/24)



Journeys have continued to increase over the last year, with the recovery compared to pre-Covid throughout increasing, as customers increase the frequency of their journeys. This increase in journeys principally comes from increased commuting compared to last year, whereas off-peak journeys have seen lower year on year growth. When the impact of the annual fares rise (5.9%) and strikes are removed, the recovery rate has increased from c.81% to 88% since April 2023 (as shown in chart 3).

Footfall through London Waterloo by day of the week shows that Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday remain the most popular days of the week, with more demand than Monday and Friday, and Monday being the next most popular day. Demand levels across the mid part of the day are highest on a Saturday, although Saturday demand is much lower overall than any weekday. Sunday sees the lowest level of demand.

Peak travel continues to be much lower compared to pre-covid due to the impact of working at home/hybrid working whereas off-peak travel has recovered since pre-covid (as shown in chart 1).

Marketing

Our marketing strategy has three key elements:

- Encouraging travel along the SWR network
- Strengthening our relationship with customers
- Supporting the reform agenda

The above are underpinned by data from customer and stakeholder insights.

Encouraging travel along the SWR network includes:

- Delivering journey stimulating advertising campaigns targeting leisure, commuter and business travellers
- Working with travel management companies, Rail Delivery Group, Great British Rail Transition Team and other third parties to encourage business travel
- Using partnerships to inspire travel

Strengthening our relationship with customers includes:

- Enhancing our Customer Relationship Management programme to further strengthen our relationship with customers. This is currently focussed on e-mail communications – we can currently send circa 350,000 marketing e-mails.
- Optimising and amplifying the SWR Rewards programme
- Utilising our Customer Data Platform to improve campaign and always on advertising effectiveness. This is a collection of software which creates a persistent, unified customer database that is accessible to other systems. SWR has 11 million ids that we create targeted relevant audiences for social and digital advertising programmes for.

Supporting the reform agenda includes:

- Co-ordinating & maximising national marketing efforts
- Promoting the benefits of smart ticketing
- Continuing to optimise website & digital tools to encourage shift to digital channels
- Continuing to run Journey To Better campaigns to communicate the benefits of service enhancements

Spread Your Wings campaign – flying higher than ever

Our fun and highly recognisable avian ambassadors Wes and Sandy continue to promote the benefits of train travel across the region targeting customers and potential customers.

The campaign has been running across the year, all be it with the occasional pauses for strikes and weather events, promoting primarily travel to and from London reflecting that this is 80% of peak revenue and 70% of off-peak revenue.



Image from the 'Spread Your Wings' campaign

Recognition of Spread Your Wings as an SWR campaign encouraging travel by train continues to grow which enhances advertising effectiveness and has long term benefits for the network.

Independent research into the effectiveness of the Spread Your Wings campaign has revealed that:

- 'Sandy & Wes' is a very powerful distinctive asset for SWR, and its fame & uniqueness continue to increase.
- 82% of respondents recognise the campaign as coming from SWR
- Prompted awareness of current SWR activity is also better than almost all previous campaigns, with high recall amongst all three traveller types.
- 68% of respondents liked the campaign
- Despite a background of strikes 60% of respondents said the campaign made them feel better about rail travel

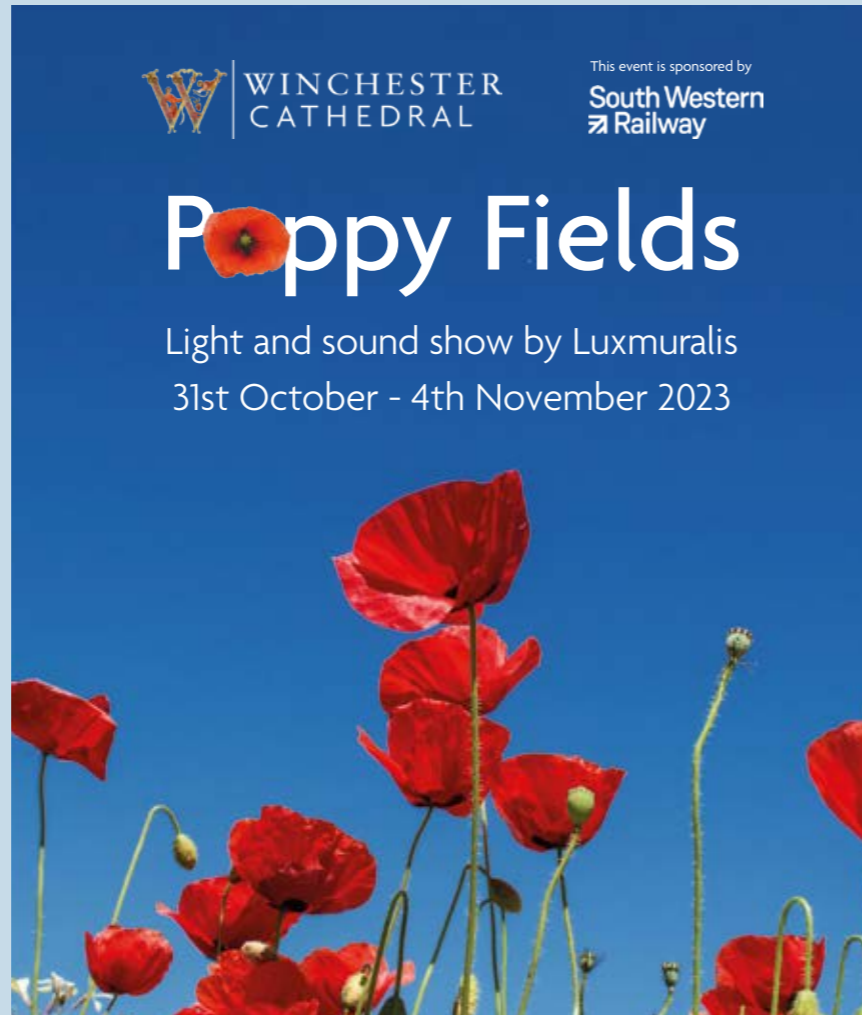


Promoting our regions beyond London

‘We work closely with local partners across the network championing noteworthy events, sports venues, popular attractions, and community projects eg Boat Show, Wisley, Great South Run, Winchester Cathedral.

We work with local and regional organisations including community rail partnerships, local councils, attractions, destination management organisations, bus operators and many more. We also work with other rail operators such as GWR where we both serve locations such as Weymouth.

This year we have particularly focused on getting travellers out of cars by promoting seamless travel options by integrating trains, buses, and bikes with the station experience. eg £2 bus fare, Rail-Air links.



Winchester Poppyfields poster



**WING IT TO EXETER.
ENJOY THE CHRISTMAS
MARKETS BY TRAIN.**

BOOK NOW

**South Western
Railway**
Spread your wings

Exeter Christmas Market social media image

Station Improvements

Our stations are crucial to how the railway is perceived and used by our customers and therefore need to be comfortable, welcoming and effective and efficient. We manage 180 stations with many also providing facilities for other rail operators such as Great Western Railway and Cross Country.

SWR and Network Rail share responsibility for station maintenance with SWR responsible for most customer facing areas. Network Rail manage Waterloo, Clapham Junction and Guildford.

Partnerships with stakeholders such as community rail partnerships, station adoption groups and local councils are key to the continued development and improvement of stations. This applies both to their day to day look and feel and also the larger enhancement schemes to improve both integration but also the ability to serve new and changing communities. Our staff are central to making stations a high quality gateway to the railway.

In this section we look at some of the work being undertaken, from refurbishment to major forecourt enhancements.



Toilet refurbishments

In 2022/23 we refurbished 29 facilities at 16 locations to the value of £918,000. These refurbishments continue to deliver benefits to customer experience, maintainability, sustainability and ease of cleaning.

The schemes completed are as follows:

Basingstoke platform 1 Male & Female	Southampton Central Platform 4 Gender Neutral
Earley Gender Neutral	Surbiton Platform 3/4 Female (Light refurb) & platform 1 Male
Gillingham (Dorset) Male & Female	Winchester Platforms 1 Male & Female and platform 2 Male & Female
Havant Platforms 1 Male & Female (Light refurb) and platform 2 Male & Female	Woking Platform 5 Male
New Malden Male and Female (light refurb)	Wokingham Male & Female (Light refurb)
Raynes Park P1&2 Male and Female & platform 3/4 Female (Light refurb)	Wimbledon Male and Female (light refurb)
Poole Female (light refurb)	Virginia Water Male & Female

In 2023/24 we are in the process of refurbishing 10 facilities at the following 5 locations to the value of £500,000:

- Farnham Male and Female
- Kingston Female
- Richmond Male and Female
- Woking Male and Female P2/3 and Female P5
- Yeovil Junction Male and Female



Refurbished toilets at Southampton Central



Waiting Room refurbishments

In 2022/23 we refurbished 11 facilities at 10 locations to the value of £407,000.

The schemes completed are as follows:

Basingstoke	Horsley
Brockenhurst	Farnham
Brockwood	Southampton Central
Byfleet and New Haw	Sunningdale
Earley	Totton



Refurbished waiting room at Basingstoke

In 2023/24 we are in the process of refurbishing 10 facilities at the following 5 locations to the value of £200,000:

- Aldershot P1 and 2/3
- Kingston P1 and 2/3
- Salisbury P2/3 and 4
- Swanwick P1
- Worcester Park P1

Station Painting

In 2022/23 the following 44 stations were repainted as part of the station painting programme to the

Aldershot	Isleworth
Ashford	Kempton Park
Barnes Bridge	Malden Manor
Bournemouth	New Malden
Bracknell	Poole
Brading	Ryde St Johns
Brentford	Shepperton
Brockenhurst	Smallbrook Junction
Brookwood	St Denys
Byfleet and New Haw	Staines
Chiswick	Sunnymeads
Claygate	Virginia Water
Datchet	Wanborough
Dorchester South	Weybridge
Earlsfield	Weymouth
Feltham	Whitchurch
Gillingham (Dorset)	Whitton
Godalming	Winnersh
Haslemere	Winnersh Triangle
Hinchley Wood	Worcester Park
Horsley	Wraysbury
Hounslow	Yeovil Junction

The following stations are being repainted as part of the 2023/24 programme:

Beaulieu Rd	Sholing
Chandlers Ford	Swaythling
Havant	Syon Lane
Liss	Templecombe
Longcross	Tisbury
Martins Heron	Twickenham
North Sheen	Upper Halliford
Portsmouth Harbour	Vauxhall
Portsmouth and Southsea	Wandsworth
Putney	Wimbledon
Redbridge	Wokingham
Shawford	Woolston
Sherborne	

Waiting Shelters

New waiting shelters are planned to be installed in 2023/24 at the following locations to the value of £100,000:

- Petersfield
- Egham
- Hedge End

Platform Benches

A total of 100 new external platform benches have been installed to replace life expired and non-compliant ones at the following locations:

Andover	Southampton
Ash Vale	Romsey
Christchurch	Southampton Central
Dean	Sway
Fareham	Templecombe
Gillingham	Tisbury
Honiton	Wanborough
Malden Manor	Weymouth
Micheldever	Winchfield
New Milton	Whimple
Pokesdown	Woking
Portsmouth and Southsea	Wool
Redbridge	Yeovil Junction

Forecourt / Interchange Improvements

2023 has seen continued progress in delivering and planning for major improvements to interchange facilities at several of our stations. Many of these would have been possible without the close support and involvement of the stakeholders involved, whether it is through funding and / or delivering the scheme on the ground. These are complex and expensive schemes to deliver and we really appreciate the commitment shown by these partners.



Southampton Central Forecourt (South)



The Southampton Central Station Interchange project is a partnership project with Southampton City Council (under the Transforming Cities Fund Programme) which will deliver a step change in public transport integration that will support high quality, efficient and accessible connections between rail, bus, coach, taxi, walking and cycling. It is being delivered by the council.

This new multi-modal interchange will enable improved pedestrian access, include safer crossing points, additional bus stop provision, disabled parking, along with better access into and out of the station for all vehicles. The high-quality public realm design will draw on the original art deco influences that currently feature at the station.

Key elements:

- New bus facilities – including three dedicated bus stops and improved bus accessibility.
- New Passenger Cruise Lounge (for those making connections with cruise ships at the port) – with real time bus, rail and visitor information screens
- Improved pedestrian access – dedicated crossing points within the forecourt with improved disabled parking and access
- High quality public realm – forecourt to be re-surfaced with high quality materials to match the northern forecourt.
- A dedicated drop off /pick up point will also be included in the upgrade.
- A taxi waiting area will be created for 10 vehicles along Western Esplanade and a taxi rank for 5 vehicles created in a dedicated area of the forecourt.
- The pedestrian crossing on Western Esplanade to the east of the station will be upgraded to enhance connections for those walking and cycling to the International Maritime Promenade and the City Centre

Salisbury Forecourt

Wiltshire Council, SWR and Network Rail have been working together over several years to design this major gateway scheme to the city. It is complemented by the enhancement scheme the council are delivering on Fisherton Street which is the main route into the city centre. Both schemes are primarily funded through the Government's Future High Streets fund but with a contribution from our Customer and Communities Improvement Fund.

We have already completed the first phase of the forecourt scheme, the installation of the new cycle hub and funded by a combination of the Government's Cycle Rail Fund and Wiltshire Council.

The second major phase will be delivered by the council and is expected to be on site in spring 2024. In readiness for this SWR will be delivering a new temporary car park on the East Goods Yard site to free up space for the work. The main forecourt scheme will deliver a much-improved experience for all users but especially pedestrians and bus users with high quality bus stops being constructed at the station for the first time.

Weymouth Forecourt

This scheme was delivered by the Dorset Coastal Forum / Dorset Council, completed in early 2023 and funded by a combination of Dorset Council, Weymouth BID and SWR's CCIF programme. It has been complemented by major Network Rail investment in the platform canopy and South Wessex community rail partnership's installation of local artwork.

Like Salisbury, the scheme has much improved the quality of the forecourt as a pedestrian space but, just as importantly, has enabled local bus routes to the Jurassic Coast, Portland and accommodation parks to call directly at the station for the first time.

The scheme won the Judges Special Award and the Community Award at the recent Institution of Civil Engineers South West 2023 Civil Engineering Awards.

Alton Forecourt

This CCIF project was delivered in partnership with East Hampshire District Council. This project, completed in autumn 2023, delivered an improvement to the current car park, stepped access and access road currently serving Alton train station, with the aim to enhance the public realm and upgrade the car park to suit a more efficient layout.

The work has improved pedestrian and cycle access to and from the station, ensuring traffic flow around the forecourt and car park is clear and uninhibited and car park arrangements are appropriate, resulting in an attractive entry point from the forecourt into the town.

The scheme makes it safer and easier for people to get to and from the station. It will encourage walking and cycling, improve connectivity between communities, and make the area more attractive to businesses and visitors.

Key elements:

- Upgraded station car park.
- New bus stop and clearer signage to the bus service
- Enhanced set of steps to improve connections to the town centre for pedestrians and cyclists.
- New planters to stop vehicles blocking entrances.
- Modern public realm whilst maintaining the heritage feel.
- Promoting active travel to and from the station

Godalming Forecourt

Access to the station at Godalming, along with the layout of the current forecourt, is in the process of being made more user friendly for pedestrians, buses, cars, and taxis. At peak times access to and from the station brings pedestrians and vehicles into conflict as the forecourt is used for commuting drop off and by students exiting the station and walking to Godalming Collage for the start of the day.

We are working in partnership with Surrey County Council to deliver the changes over two distinct phases.

Phase 1, delivered by Surrey County Council, included changing the highway layout to include a new pedestrian footway and a reconfiguration of the bus pickup and drop off through introduction of a one-way system on Station Approach. These works were partly funded by an SWR CCIF grant of £175,000 in 2022.

Phase 2 of the scheme, costing £125,000, will address road safety for pedestrians, by relocating the current taxi rank and access points to the current car park to reduce vehicle speeds and which will be delivered by the spring of 2024. This will then make space to provide a clearly marked walking route for pedestrians exiting the station. The reconfiguration of the forecourt and car park entrance will also formalise motorcycle parking and provides better access to the existing cycle shelter.

Accessibility Improvements

Wessex Access for All Schemes

We are continuing our work with Network Rail across Wessex to improve the accessibility of a number of our stations, through the Department for Transport's Access for All programme. The programme was launched in 2006 to address the issues faced by disabled passengers and passengers facing mobility restraints (such as heavy luggage or pushchairs) when using railway stations in Great Britain.

The funding is used to create an obstacle free, accessible route from the station entrance to the platform. This generally includes providing lifts or ramps, as well as associated works and refurbishment along the route. In our area, Access for All schemes are currently under way at: Teddington, Walton-on-Thames, Barnes, Isleworth, Motpur Park, Stoneleigh & Wandsworth Town.

As we move into 2024, we look forward to seeing these projects being completed for our customers. The latest information on all of the current schemes is available if you scan the QR code:



Find out more

Together with Network Rail we have submitted funding proposals to Government for new large accessibility improvement schemes across the SWR network for the 2024-2029 period. We hope to hear which schemes have been successful during the autumn. We are very grateful for the commitment and support shown by many of our key stakeholders to the schemes, especially where they have promised match funding.



Mid-Tier Accessibility Enhancements

We were successful in securing almost £2m of Government funding to make specific accessibility improvements at selected stations valued at between £300,000 and £500,000. These improvements are separate from and slightly smaller in scope than the larger Access for All funding schemes above which deliver major schemes such as new lifts and bridges.

These schemes deliver improvements such as toilets and waiting rooms / shelters but also level access to platforms where new lifts are not required to achieve this.

The schemes are currently in their design phase and are expected to be on site in early 2024. They are:

Dorchester South

The improvements at this station focus on enhancing the current limited waiting facilities at the station which can be cramped and uncomfortable for those with mobility constraints when it is busy (especially in poor weather) alongside the access routes at the front of the station. These complement the enhancements to the station toilets and station painting completed last year and the current relighting scheme being completed by Network Rail. We are awaiting the outcome of separate funding bid to Government for lifts at the station. The specific features expected to be included in the current scheme are:

- Moving accessible parking spaces closer to the front of the station
- Realignment of the access ramp at the front of the station to meet latest standards alongside improvements to the landscaping
- Widening of the access path around the front of the building onto platform 1
- Additional seating capacity and automatic doors to the station building alongside a new low level ticket office counter and improved flooring
- New large waiting shelter on platform 1
- New and improved waiting shelters on platform 2



Totton

The downside (Bournemouth) platform at Totton is completely inaccessible to wheelchairs with access only via sets of steps. In partnership with Hampshire County Council, the proposed scheme will deliver a new step free accessible footpath from the country end of the platform to the High Street in Totton.

Key elements:

- New footpath built on the old railway line.
- New access from the back of the platform linking the station to Totton High Street
- Significantly, reduced distance from the station to the key areas in Totton.
- Additional CCTV, lighting and ticket validators on the platform.

Chessington South

Chessington South station is heavily used for access to Chessington World of Adventures during the summer months and we have many groups and families using our trains to access the park. The installation of a ramp from the platform made the station accessible to all users in 2019 and since then it has needed extra facilities to enhance the offer at the station.

Using the Mid-Tier funding we plan to deliver accessible toilets including as many features of a Changing Places facility as possible in the available space. The works to deliver the new accessible toilets will be complete in the spring of 2024 in time for the new park opening season.

Surbiton

Surbiton station is currently not fully accessible despite there being 3 lifts leading to all platforms. One lift is the south-side booking hall is not currently in accessible as there is no secure and safe way into the booking hall to gain access. To make the lift accessible our Mid-Tier scheme will deliver:

- The construction of a new self-contained accessible walk way to the lift shaft
- Maintaining the heritage features of the booking hall for future use as requested by our heritage partners. (Surbiton is Grade 2 listed)
- Relocating ticket vending machine from the main transfer deck to be accessible at ground level
- Provision of a new Oyster Card reader as Surbiton is in TfL Travel zone 6.
- Installing new wider accessible doorways
- Upgrades and improvements to CCTV to ensure safe access.

Accessible Toilets

In 2022/23 new accessible toilets were installed at the following locations to the value of £100,000:

- Basingstoke
- Virginia Water
- Thames Ditton

In 2023/24 a new accessible toilet has been installed in the listed station building at Bookham. In addition, accessible toilet refurbishments are planned at Richmond and Kingston.

Calming features

Calming features for people with neurodiverse conditions have been installed in waiting rooms at the following 3 locations:

- Woking
- Brockenhurst
- Salisbury

It is intended to install similar calming features in all future waiting room refurbishments where possible.

Adult Changing Place

A new adult changing place was installed at Woking in 2022/23. This was the first of this type of facility to be installed anywhere on our network.



New Changing Place facility at Woking

RoomMate

This initiative was to install assistive technology in accessible toilets for use by visually impaired users.

The technology installed is an accessibility aid called RoomMate which is a device that is designed to assist people living with visual impairment, dementia and learning disabilities in navigating a toilet and its layout.

Each device has been uniquely programmed to explain, via audio, the surroundings of the toilet, eliminating the need for a carer/other person to enter the toilet with the customer, increasing independence of travel and living for some disabled people.

The units were installed at 15 locations in 2022/23 and it is currently planned to install units at a further 15 locations in 2023/24.

The 2022/23 completed locations are:

Aldershot	Southampton Central platforms 1 and 4
Basingstoke Platforms 2-4	Southampton Airport Parkway
Feltham	Winchester
Godalming	Woking platforms 1,2 and 5
Richmond	Tisbury

The 2023/24 locations currently being installed are:

Basingstoke platform 1	New Malden
Brockenhurst	Thames Ditton
Egham	Virginia Water
Farnborough Main	Walton on Thames
Fratton	West Byfleet
Hampton Court	Weybridge
Havant	Wimbledon

Wide Aisle Gates

An additional wide aisle gate was installed in the platform 1 booking hall at Southampton in 2022/23 to provide additional gateline capacity for customers requiring wider gates for wheelchairs, pushchairs etc.

It is planned to install an additional wide aisle gate at Richmond station in 2023/24.

Access for All Minor Works

The following Minor accessibility improvements were carried out in 2022/23 to the value of £361,000:

Bedhampton – Handrails, treads and tactiles	Hamble – Handrails and tactiles
Berrylands – Handrails, treads and tactiles	Holton Heath– Handrails and tactiles
Branksome – Handrails, treads and tactiles	Kempton Park – Handrails, treads and tactiles
Datchet – Handrails, treads and tactiles	Liss – Handrails and tactiles
Farncombe – Handrails and tactiles	Worplesdon – Handrails and tactiles

We are currently installing similar minor accessibility improvements to the value of £393,000 in 2023/24 at the following locations:

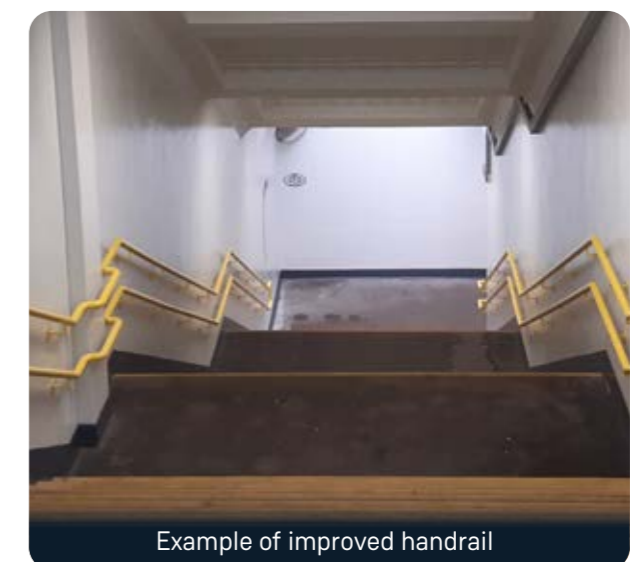
Basingstoke	Micheldever
Barnes Bridge	Parkstone
Bitterne	Sunningdale
Chessington North	Wanborough
Chiswick	Milford
Earley	Woking

Defibrillators

Automatic defibrillators and associated storage cabinets have been installed at all staffed stations during 2023/24.

Station Travel Plans

Station Travel Plans have now been produced for all of our stations and we are refreshing the customer surveys at 53 locations in 23/24 at locations that had previously low sample sizes, are larger footfall locations, or have had significant changes that may result in a change in customer responses.



Example of improved handrail

Customer Experience

We collect customer feedback through Voice of the Customer surveys, undertake regular Service Quality inspections of stations and trains, and carry out hundreds of mystery shops to gain an understanding of customer experience. This is supported and complemented by regular feedback and engagement with the many stakeholders that we work with from councils to user groups.

Insight from these programmes is used to develop projects to improve journeys across our network. A selection of some projects and improvements that have been developed this year in response to that feedback include:

Service Quality Performance

Customers are at the heart of everything we do and in support of this we have implemented a Service Quality Excellence programme which assesses the standards at our Stations, on our Trains and our Customer Service. Every four weeks, our independent assessors travel across our network, looking at a number of criteria important to our customers, to ensure we are meeting the standards expected of us. 60 stations are assessed, along with 200 carriages and 110 customer service mystery shops.



We work hard to achieve high scores, but where we don't meet the expected standard, we are committed to rectifying any issues identified within specific time frames, helping us to deliver high standards and excellent customer service to our customers.

Every 4 weeks, we will publish our performance. Scores are presented in 3 key parts (Stations, Trains & Customer Service) with each having its own Service Quality Areas.



West of England line service at Waterloo

December Timetable Enhancements

We are pleased to be able to confirm that the West of England line will see some significant timetable improvements from 10th December 2023. We have been able to agree the business case with the Department for Transport as a result of growing demand on the route.

From the above date the timetable will generally revert to that which existed pre-covid. This includes:

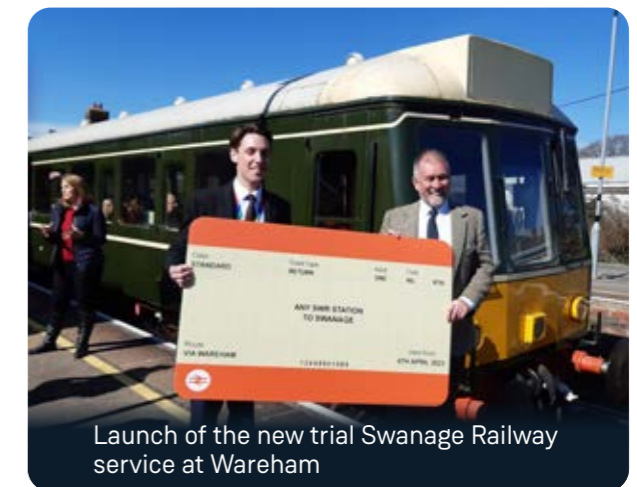
- Restoration of two through trains per hour off-peak between Salisbury / Andover and Waterloo
- A higher frequency of service and enhanced capacity between Basingstoke and Waterloo in the morning am peak and off-peak, reducing gaps in the service
- Reinstatement of am peak through services between Exeter / Yeovil / Gillingham and Waterloo that previously terminated at Basingstoke
- Reinstatement of through off-peak services between Grateley, Whitchurch, Overton and Waterloo.

Additional benefits include reduced pressure on seating capacity on Exeter services due to the increased frequency between Salisbury, Andover and Waterloo.

Swanage Railway Partnership and Arne Link

April 2023 saw the start of a new trial service running between our Wareham station and Swanage on the Swanage Railway, linking with our two trains per hour to / from Weymouth and Waterloo via Bournemouth. The service was run and managed by Swanage Railway with support from SWR which included provision of through ticketing, timetabling and marketing and promotion in partnership with the Purbeck Community Rail Partnership.

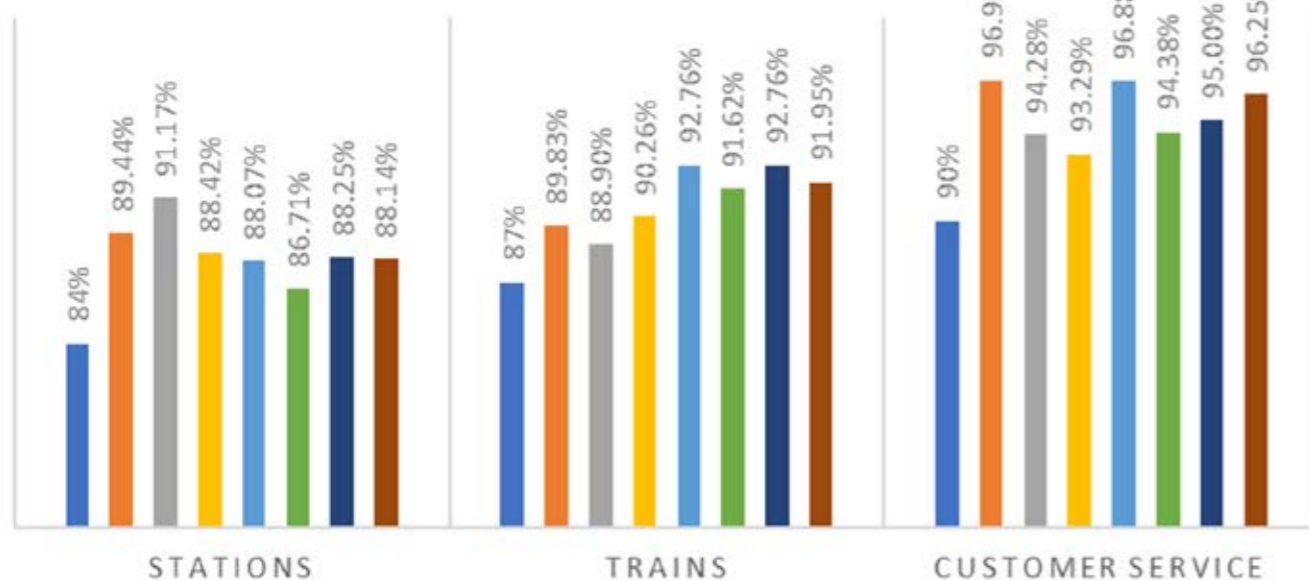
The service ran on four days a week from April to September 2023 using a heritage diesel multiple unit. SWR sold many through tickets to Swanage or Corfe Castle from a variety of locations including London, Brighton and Faversham. We look forward to supporting the return of these services in the future



Launch of the new trial Swanage Railway service at Wareham

SERVICE QUALITY PERFORMANCE

■ Target ■ Period 1 ■ Period 2 ■ Period 3 ■ Period 4 ■ Period 5 ■ Period 6 ■ Period 7



We have also been working with the Purbeck Community Rail Partnership, National Trust and RSPB to offer further new opportunities for customers. This includes financial and promotional support for a minibus link from Wareham station to the Arne nature reserve and the jointly funded installation of an interactive information totem at the station (due January 2024). We are developing plans with the CRP and National Trust to promote sustainable travel links from our stations to the Purbeck area in 2024.

Beryl Bikes Partnership

We are pleased to have been working with Beryl and council partners including BCP and Dorset for several years. Beryl specialise in providing shared transport facilities including bikes, e-bikes and scooters. The scheme in the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP) / Dorset area is one of the most successful in the country and includes bays at four of our stations with further ones planned or already close by. The scheme won the 2023 Best Transport Decarbonisation Project at the Municipal Journal awards and now includes e-scooters as well as standard bikes and a growing number of e-bikes.

Data from the scheme shows that:

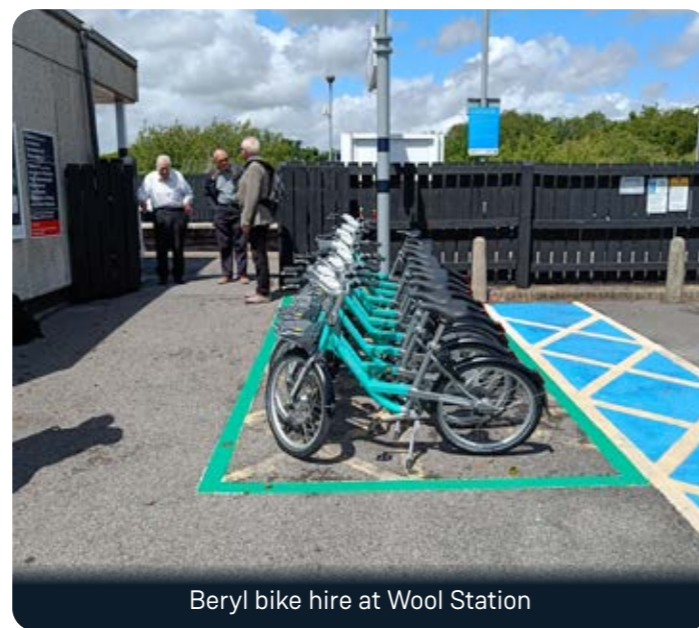
- Over 10,000 hires (all vehicle types) have originated from Bournemouth station since June 2020 with a further 7,000 from Poole station
- Over 36% of riders have used Beryl vehicles to connect with a train journey

The data above demonstrates the value of such a scheme to our customers for onward travel options and the benefits of a close partnership with both the provider and the council. It builds on a successful partnership with BCP council and the primary bus operator, Morebus which provides a direct interchange for many bus services at Bournemouth station.

We are also working closely with Beryl and councils in the Solent, Portsmouth and Isle of Wight to introduce hire bays at stations in those areas as new schemes are introduced in those areas.

Onboard Wi-Fi improvements

Working with suppliers to improve fault rectification and upgrade both software and hardware to increase reliability for customers. Providing information on the login page to highlight areas of low cellular network coverage where internet access is limited.



Beryl bike hire at Wool Station

Station Cleaning

We have reviewed and revised contractors' cleaning schedules to improve standards of cleanliness.

Train cleaning

Improvements have been delivered to daytime train cleaning, including additional 'turnaround' cleaning location at Woking, and 'on-board' cleaning between Basingstoke and Eastleigh.

Etching on station glazing

We have replaced or repaired etched glass at stations across the network, applying protective film to prevent re-etching.

Acid flush units

Five acid flushing units have been introduced at various train depots to improve the reliability of train toilets.

iQR

iQR codes have been trialled at five stations and on two trains. These QR codes link customers to up-to-date information about their journey and local facilities.

Journey alerting

We have extended our journey alerting service to deliver real-time information to customers via WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger or SMS text message.



Launch of the Go Jauntly app at Shawford

Go Jauntly walking app

Three walking routes from stations on the SWR network (covering Brockenhurst, Chessington and the Itchen Trail) have been digitised which are free to the customer via the Go Jauntly app

Text Box Mobility Scooter Information

Floor vinyls to illustrate the maximum size of mobility scooters that can be safely carried on train are being rolled out across all accessible stations, alongside an information guide on travelling while using a scooter.

Guide Dog Training

Working in partnership with Guide Dogs, a training session was undertaken at Portsmouth & Southsea to help expose guide dog training puppies to the sounds and stresses of a railway station environment.

Accessibility Forum Director Journeys

South Western Railway directors have begun accompanying members of the Accessibility Forum on their everyday journeys to better understand the experiences of disabled customers.



Train Fleet

The reliability and interior comfort of our train fleet plays a key role in achieving high levels of customer satisfaction.

We are currently in a transition period for the suburban fleet as we prepare for the introduction of our new Class 701 Arterio trains. The delay to this programme has increased the importance of maintaining the reliability of the existing but ageing fleet alongside the majority of the 707 units transferring to South Eastern trains.

We are proud of the fact that several of our fleets have won the top industry Golden Spanner awards for reliability in their category in 2022 and will continue to aim for high levels of reliability across the fleet in the future.

Suburban Network

Arterio Introduction Programme



Arterio unit on test

The introduction of the new Arterio fleet continues to be the major project and focus for our network, colleagues, and customers. Our £1bn investment into this new fleet aims to transform daily journeys for millions of passengers to and from one of the busiest stations in Britain Waterloo, and the surrounding Metro area.

A huge amount of work is continuing to take place, including readying the fleet, our wider business and colleagues for this change that will provide the backbone of our Metro services for the coming decades. Testing of these units with manufacturer Alstom and our trade union colleagues has been ongoing throughout 2023, to ensure the fleet is fit and ready for passenger service.

Our Clapham Traincare Depot houses two of our new Arterio Simulators for driver training, the focal point for over 800 drivers to pass through the course. To date, over 60 candidates have now been through the dedicated Depot Driver training course, allowing us to move the 55 units currently in our possession around within depot confines.

Infrastructure readiness for the Arterio fleet is of equal importance to the introduction of the fleet itself. Whilst maintenance for the fleet will be completed at Wimbledon, other locations such as Feltham Depot, where transformation work was recently completed, is critical to the fleets stabling requirements. Stations across the Metro area are being assessed and where required, upgrades or changes made to accommodate Arterio.

We continue to work tirelessly as we look forward to introducing the first of units into service.

Class 707

The majority of this fleet has now been transferred to the Southeastern network in line with previous commercial agreements. It has now however been agreed that two units will remain on the SWR network until the end of March 2024.

Class 455

We've also continued to invest in our Class 455 suburban fleet, including seat cover cleaning, spot paint repairs to internal panels, replacing internal glazing film and several technical upgrades to maintain good performance.

We've continued to run a heavy maintenance programme at our Bournemouth Depot to keep these trains in service until such time that the Arterio trains are introduced, at which point the Class 455 fleet will gradually be withdrawn from service. The fleet continues to deliver industry leading levels of performance, having won a 2022 Golden Spanner for best performing ex-BR EMU.

Class 458

The fleet continues to serve the suburban network, whilst gradually being withdrawn to enable them to be sent into a reconfiguration programme, managed by the original manufacturer, Alstom. The programme shortens the units to four car formation and regears the traction system, increasing the top speed to 100mph and enabling them to be used on our mainline services in future. They are also being repainted internally and externally and refitted with new carpets and seating.

Class 484

Our Class 484 fleet, operated on the Island Line, continues to perform exceptionally well which was also recognised at last year's Golden Spanners, when they won the award for the most reliable repurposed train.

Mainline Network

Class 158 and 159 (Diesels)

The fleet continues to serve our West Of England line very well, having won award for the most reliable ex-British Rail Diesel Multiple Unit train at 2022's industry train Golden Spanner reliability awards for the 15th consecutive year.

We are currently installing a new variable rate traction sanding system, funded by Network Rail Performance Innovation funding which will ensure these trains will have the latest in sanding technology to deal with poor adhesion for next autumn onwards.

We are continuing to invest in the fleet with several projects planned over the next year. These include replacing all internal lighting with LEDs starting in January 2024 whilst also replacing the passenger information system with a new system, planned to start in April 2024. This will also include a much improved public address system, enabling clear guard announcements as well as new information screens within each coach that will offer more reliable and enhanced levels of information. We are aware that the quality of announcements on this fleet has not been as good as it should be due to the current equipment being obsolete and difficult to repair.

As the fleet will continue to operate on our network until at least 2030, we plan to start an intensive heavy maintenance programme, including repaint and refurbishment over the next few years. As part of the specification we'll explore the feasibility of installing at seat USB charging sockets, replacement floor coverings, internal repaint and seat refurbishment.

Class 444 and 450

Our Class 444 and 450 fleet repaint programme has almost concluded, having been carried out at our Bournemouth Depot over the last 2 and a half years which now sees most of the fleet operating in SWR livery and improving their appearance.

We've worked with our maintenance partners, Siemens Mobility, over the last year to introduce a number of performance enhancing modifications, including modifications to the toilets and technical upgrades to the traction and electrical control systems which will improve technical reliability and ensure onboard facilities are available for our customers.



Class 444 unit at Bournemouth

Community Rail

We now provide funding for 12 different Community Rail Partnerships (CRPs) across our network, each of which do invaluable work promoting the railway and its development, encouraging sustainable travel and helping customers to the most out of their station spaces and environments.

The people involved in community rail play a vital role in making the railway a better place, ensuring stations develop into a focal point for the local community, not just a place where people board and alight trains.

100 Station Adopters reached

We celebrated a landmark milestone this year as over 100 of our stations are now adopted by local community volunteers. Staines station in Surrey, which was named Medium Station of the Year at the National Rail Awards, became the 100th station to be adopted, meaning over half of stations across SWR's network are now supported by dedicated teams of adopters.

Station adopters are groups of volunteers who work with us on making the most out of their station spaces and environments and take a lead on imagining new and creative ways for their stations to better serve their communities and strengthening their place within their local area.

At Staines, Incredible Edible Spelthorne has created a new, accessible community food growing space, aiming to inspire the local community to utilise space at the side of the station to learn how food is produced, sustainably grow food together and provide free food.

Our station adoption scheme began with the formal adoption by the Friends of Christchurch station in Dorset in 2007. Since then, our stations have been adopted in nine counties and from Brentford in West London all the way down to Pinhoe near Exeter - have signed up to be station adopters, all brought together by a desire to do something to improve both their local station and local areas.



Find out more

Celebrating Community Rail Week

Community Rail Week 2023 was launched at Tolworth station, adopted by the Community Brain (who are themselves responsible for the Community Train CRP). This annual week of celebration is organised by Community Rail Network and the Rail Delivery Group with the aim of celebrating fantastic community rail projects and initiatives across the country. At the launch the invited guests were treated to an overview of the Community Brain's work, including a tour that took in 'Baking Ideas', a sustainable community space, and the station's community garden, which provides a safe outdoor meeting space and encourages biodiversity.

Some of our Community Rail Partnership officers also held a display on the concourse of London Waterloo Station, engaging with customers about the importance of community rail and getting them to guess where on our network iconic places were to visit. We were delighted to be joined by Rail Minister Huw Merriman MP, who heard first hand from officers about the work they have been doing.

Waterloo 175

Our biggest community rail celebration this year was the celebration of London Waterloo station's 175th birthday.

As our mainline terminus station and the busiest station in the country, our CRPs were excited to celebrate this special occasion. A brand new Arterio train was named 'The Waterloo 175', while colleagues and CRP officers dressed in period costumes greeted customers who were on their journeys. A choir of SWR and NR colleagues, alongside a local community choir, sung Waterloo-related songs on platform 19, surprising VIPs who attended.



Celebrating Waterloo's 175th anniversary

Customer and Communities Improvement Fund (CCIF)

In April 2023, we were pleased to be able to announce £1.5m of grants were to be awarded to 58 local projects across the network from Vauxhall in London to Exeter in Devon, through our Customer and Communities Improvement Fund (CCIF).

The wide range of projects funded varied significantly in size and scale, including some which improved physical surroundings and others targeting quality of life.

In Wokingham, we awarded £1,350 to Wokingham In Need - a charity dedicated to helping homeless and vulnerable people - for early years play and learn sessions.

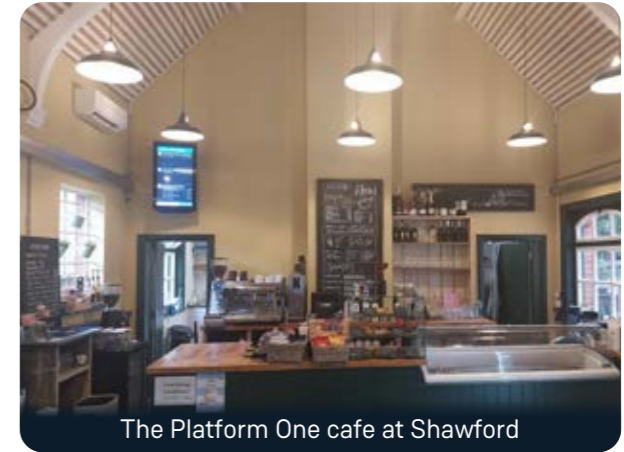
At the other end of the scale, we provided a grant of £76,759 to the University of Portsmouth for the UK's first 'skills garden', an interactive outdoor space that can be used by the whole of the local community.

Included in the 58 projects - 15 of which are run by local authorities in Berkshire, Devon, Dorset, Hampshire, Surrey and Wiltshire - are:

- The purchase of wet wheelchairs for Dolphins Swim Club in Woking, to provide more swimming opportunities for people with learning and physical needs. SWR is contributing £3,633.76 in funding.
- Active Vision, a 12-month project which will allow Guide Dogs to support 30 vision impaired people living across the SWR network, helping them to get out of their homes and re-engage with the local community. SWR is contributing £25,605 in funding.
- Improving facilities at Smallbrook Junction on the Isle of Wight, for passengers connecting between the Island Line and the Isle of Wight Steam Railway, including Customer Information Screens and power and lighting using solar power and biodiesel. SWR is contributing £46,000.

When combined with the additional match funding that 35 of the projects have also confirmed, a little over £3 million is being invested in these important community projects.

The latest round of CCIF brings the total number of projects supported by CCIF to more than 100 and SWR has now given more than £7 million in grants across three rounds of funding.



The Platform One cafe at Shawford

Our CCIF budget is provided by the Department for Transport, agreed through our annual business planning process each year.

Across our network, in this round of CCIF we are investing in:

- 19 projects in Hampshire worth more than £500,000
- 9 projects in Surrey worth more than £160,000
- 9 projects in Greater London worth more than £330,000
- 8 projects on the Isle of Wight worth almost £140,000
- 6 projects in Berkshire worth almost £100,000
- 4 projects in Devon worth more than £95,000
- 1 project each in Dorset and Wiltshire, worth £75,000 and £34,500 respectively
- A network-wide project worth around £35,000



Find out more

Sustainability Strategy

As one of the UK's largest train operating companies, we help our customers get from A to B in a more sustainable way. As a business we are committed to sustainability, and in December 2022 we launched our Sustainability Strategy: Our journey to a better future strategy. This sets out an ambitious programme for serving, safeguarding, and strengthening our people, places and planet.

Find out more about our Journey to a Better Future by scanning the QR code.



Find out more

Our sustainability strategy

Our journey to a better future is built around three key areas:
Planet, Places and People



Decarbonisation

As a business we consume large volumes of resources which have a carbon footprint. We have made significant progress as a company to reduce our climate impact, and recognise there is more to do to reach net zero. We are committed to playing a leading role in the rail industry on this vital journey. Our Decarbonisation Strategy includes strong emission reduction targets which are grounded in climate science. These targets are set in alignment with the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) we share the aim to limit global warming to within 1.5°C. Our target is to hit net zero by 2040, ten years ahead of the UK's target

Biodiversity

Our network stretches across South West London, Surrey, Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, Berkshire, Dorset, Wiltshire, Somerset and Devon, meaning it is home to a wide range of animal and plant species which we all need to protect and help flourish.

During the last 12 months, we have converted the equivalent of three football pitches into biodiversity gardens in partnership with the RSPB. We have also planted 15 wildflower meadows and introduced over 40 homes for insects and birds.

Earlier in 2023, we signed the Nature Positive Business Pledge. This involves mapping the biodiverse habitats of our network and creating a Nature Positive Framework and Action Plan to deliver a positive contribution to the regeneration and restoration of nature.



In June we teamed up again with the RSPB to support their 'Save Our Wild Isles Campaign'. As part of this Deborah Meaden, an advocate of conservation, made announcements across our stations to promote the wild isles message.

Charity Partners

As a business we are committed to supporting charity partners, voted for by our people, for our communities. This year we have proudly worked with a homelessness, missing people and health charities;

Ace of Clubs

Ace of Clubs run an independent charity in Clapham Common, where their aim is to support homeless people 365 days a year. They offer a hot shower, clean clothes and supplies and cooked lunch, as well as access to health care services. They run purely on donations and use volunteers in their mission. We have supported Ace as one of our charity partners for 2021-2023, during our time together we have supported the charity through buying clothes, donating unclaimed lost property from our trains, and we will be running a "Donate a Christmas Dinner" campaign in December. We have also provided Social Media support, producing a short film about their amazing work to share online.



Watch the video

Missing People - Safe Way Home campaign

Somebody is reported missing every 90 seconds in the UK. There is a strong link between transport and missing people. We have partnered this year with the charity Missing People on a new campaign aimed at people in crisis who are thinking of going missing by train or have already gone missing. Posters across our network and announcements our flagship stations throughout October will encourage people to contact the free and confidential Missing People helpline on 116 000

A video about the 'Safe Way Home' campaign can be watched here:



Watch the video

Alex Wardle Foundation

The Alex Wardle Foundation is one of our five charity partners. The Foundation was set up by Steve Wardle, an SWR employee and his family after his son Alex tragically lost his life to Sudden Arrhythmic Death Syndrome (SADS). The charity's mission is to raise awareness of SADS and to help install defibrillators into the community.

Steve and his family have been campaigning for greater public access to defibrillators, which helped inspire SWR to undertake its rollout. The foundation is one of SWR's official charity partners.

In March, we announced the start of the defibrillator rollout when the operator named a train after the Alex Wardle Foundation.

Since the train naming, there have been 92 alerts from The Circuit, when the location of one of the defibrillators has been used by an emergency call handler, indicating the difference they are already making.

In October 2023 SWR colleagues also took part in the Great South Run in Portsmouth in aid of the Alex Wardle Foundation and raised over £3000, more than double the target.

Social Value Report FY22-23

We have now published our Social Value Report for FY22-23. The report is a summary of the impact we have on society, the environment, and the economy, from delivering improvements for our customers every day, to supporting local communities of the South West, and helping build the economic and social prosperity of the UK. Social value can be defined by measuring the impact of activities on people and wider society's welfare and wellbeing.

The full Social Value report will be available on our website later this year.

Supplier Partnership

Ape20

SWR has partnered with ape20 to provide eco-friendly and ultra-filtered water fountain to customers at several of our higher footfall stations (Hampton Court, Vauxhall, Richmond, Wimbledon, Putney, Kingston, Twickenham & Bournemouth stations). Customers can purchase chilled still or sparkling water and stainless steel plastic-free ape20 bottles, with 10% of the cost also going towards marine and freshwater conservation and clean ups.

Ape20 was inspired by the plight of sea turtles in the Great Barrier Reef in Australia when founder Anthony was living there. Seeing the damage that marine plastic in all its forms was having on these beautiful creates he resolved to do something about it.

In September 2023, ape20 has presented our sustainability team with a 'gold award' to celebrate working together to save over 30,000 disposable plastic bottles from landfill and our oceans, the equivalent to 2.5 tonnes of crude oil.



Ape2Go's Anthony Newman with Georgia House & Jessica Van Staden from SWR's Sustainability team.

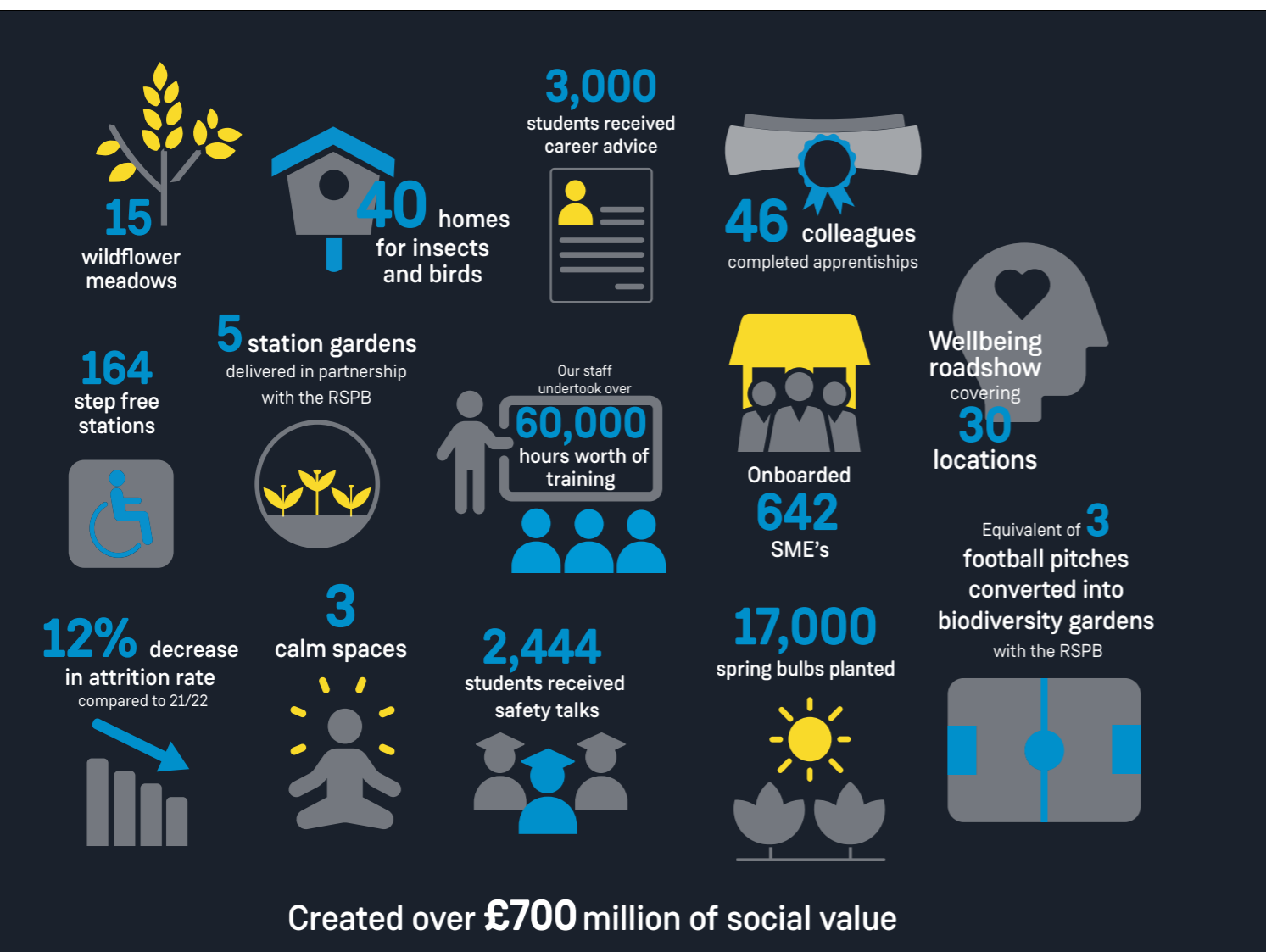
Sustainability Heroes Celebration

This year we took the opportunity to celebrate colleagues from across the business at our first ever Sustainability Heroes celebration. Over the past 12 months we have seen colleagues from across the business stand up and stand out from helping save energy, creating a home for nature, supporting local charities, or looking after someone in need our colleagues are leading us on this journey.

The Heroes celebration celebrate everyone equally and recognise their achievements across our three strategy pillars Planet, Places and People.



SWR's Managing Director, Claire Mann, at the SWR Sustainability Heroes awards



People and Culture



we are
SWR

Purpose, Vision, and Mission –
We Are SWR

We know that our people are the most important resource we have available to us and that in order to succeed and deliver for our customers, we need to make sure all of our colleagues understand what they are working together for and why. To support this, we have established and set out a Purpose, Vision and Mission for our business known as We Are SWR.

Our purpose

Bringing people together to get the most out of life.

Our vision

To be the team everyone trusts to connect the people and places that matter.

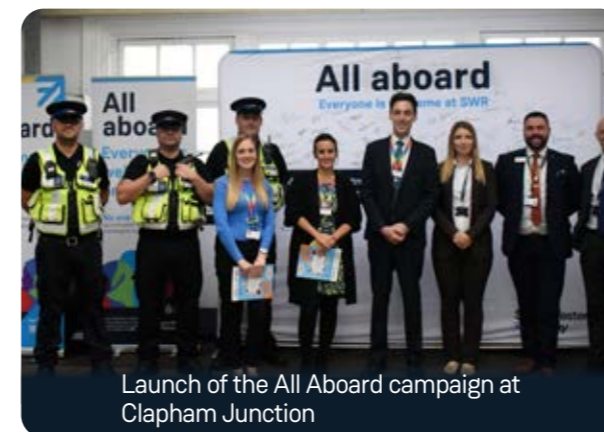
Our mission

Working together with care and commitment to make every journey, every day, easy and reliable.

All Aboard

In September 2023 we launched a major new campaign called All Aboard to tackle discrimination and abuse on the railway and affirm that everyone is welcome on our network. We believe no one should face discrimination or abuse of any kind on our trains, at our stations, or anywhere else on the railway, and we take a zero-tolerance approach to such behaviour in all its forms.

The campaign was launched during National Inclusion Week with events at Clapham Junction and Southampton Central stations, where colleagues and passers by were encouraged to take part and sign our pledge to treat everyone with respect and report any incidents of discrimination and abuse.



Launch of the All Aboard campaign at Clapham Junction

This work has been backed by YouGov polling we commissioned which revealed that:

- 10% of the public has been subjected to discrimination or abuse by a fellow passenger while travelling by train.
- 15% of the public has witnessed another passenger be subjected to discrimination or abuse by a fellow passenger while travelling by train.
- While 52% of the British public say they are likely to report such discrimination or abuse, 56% are unclear about how to report it, and a further 11% say they don't know if they are clear (two thirds of the public in total).
- Among those who say they are unlikely to or who don't know if they would report it, the most common reason is being unclear on how to do so (47% giving this reason)

We encourage anyone who experiences or witnesses discrimination or abuse to report it by texting the British Transport Police (BTP) on 61016 or calling 999 in an emergency. Reports to the BTP can also be made using the Railway Guardian app.

All aboard

Everyone is welcome on SWR

No one should face discrimination or abuse when travelling on our network



Armed Forces Covenant

As part of our commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant we have been involved with a number of different events to speak to military personnel. We are also currently working towards silver accreditation as part of the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme. Some highlights from this year in this area include:

Career insight event in Basingstoke

- Hosted 35 current military personnel at our Route Operating Centre
- Included presentations from SWR and NR colleagues, as well as a tour of the facility
- Talks were given by colleagues with military backgrounds
- Great feedback received and job applications already received from some who attended

Courses at Tidworth Military Recovery Centre

- Involvement with two courses this year
- Provided presentations on career opportunities with SWR and the wider railway, including the associated benefits and opportunities for development
- Gave advice on application, assessment and interview processes and some top tips for making progress
- Heard from current SWR employees with military backgrounds
- Attendance at careers fairs
- We have been represented at various careers fairs for military personnel throughout the year, showcasing roles in transportation, logistics and engineering



Diversity and Inclusion Campaigns

Over the year we have made positive steps forward in support of different campaigns for our colleagues. This includes:

- Signing up to the Employers Domestic Abuse Covenant, as well participating in the Rail to Refuge scheme – an initiative with Women's Aid – that allows people fleeing domestic abuse to travel to refuge accommodation free of charge
- Releasing new Dyslexia Guidance for colleagues during Dyslexia Awareness Week, making sure colleagues know the support provided by ourselves and others and how to get an assessment if needed
- Taking part in Black History Month celebrations at Waterloo, having also marked the 35th Windrush Day earlier in the year with an event at the National Windrush Monument located in the station
- Issuing a new Pregnancy Loss policy during the national Pregnancy Loss Awareness Week, detailing the support available to all colleagues sadly affected by the loss of a baby, including partners and surrogates.
- Hosting an Inclusion and Diversity Conference on 14th November 2023



South Western
 Railway