

GTR Social Impact Report

April 2025-March 2026

How GTR is supporting inclusive
growth across our network



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Grace Eyre Foundation participants in front of their mural at Preston Park station

Foreword

GTR enables inclusive growth by connecting communities across London, the South East and the coast to jobs, skills, education, healthcare and opportunity. Every day, our railway helps people access the things that matter most in their lives, while supporting local economies and helping communities to thrive.

The Government's ambition for 'growth in every postcode' recognises that economic success should be felt in people's everyday lives and in every community. As a major employer, purchaser and community partner, we believe our role goes beyond running trains. We have a responsibility to use our reach, investment and partnerships to help create opportunities, strengthen communities and ensure more people can share in the benefits of growth.

I'm proud of what we achieved during 2025/26. Across our network, colleagues and partners worked together to support community-led projects, create opportunities for people to build skills and confidence, make stations safer and more welcoming, celebrate 200 years of railway history through Railway 200, and help tackle some of the biggest challenges facing our communities, including poor mental health and social exclusion. These activities demonstrate the unique role a railway can play as a force for good in the places it serves.

None of this would be possible without the support of our partners. I am grateful to the charities, community organisations, local authorities, education providers, businesses and volunteers who work alongside us to deliver lasting change and maximise the positive impact of our railway.

Looking ahead, we want to build on this momentum. Our focus will be on deepening our community partnerships, creating more pathways into employment and skills, growing our mental health partnership with Mind, and ensuring the way we invest and procure delivers even greater value for local communities.

By working together, we can ensure that rail does more than connect places. We can help connect people to opportunity, support stronger communities and contribute to growth that is accessible, inclusive and felt across our network.

Myriam Walburger

Corporate Affairs Director & Chief of Staff
Greater Thameslink Railway



Community designed Railway 200 bench at St Albans



GTR job swap as part of Apprenticeship week



Staff fundraising football match for Mind



Preston park mural created by Grace Eyre Foundation

Executive summary

During 2025/26, GTR worked with hundreds of community partners, charities, schools and local organisations to create social value across our network.

Together, we helped strengthen communities, improve accessibility, support positive mental health, develop skills and employment opportunities, and reduce environmental impact.

Rail is a key enabler of inclusive growth. It connects people to jobs, education, services and opportunity; helps businesses reach customers and employees; and supports the development of homes and thriving places. Across the GTR network, we're working to make sure those benefits are felt as widely as possible.

This report shows how we combine reliable connectivity with targeted community investment, accessible travel, skills programmes, responsible procurement and local partnerships to turn economic growth into better opportunities, stronger communities and improved quality of life in the places we serve.



Primary Engineer celebration event



Buxted station partners with new planters

How we delivered social impact this year - our Social Impact Topic areas

Our Social Impact work focuses on five key areas to maximise the social impact we deliver to communities across our network: **cohesive communities and place; education, employability and confidence building; accessibility (previously Diversity and Inclusion), environmental sustainability and positive mental health.** The report is structured around these five topics, bringing together the social value we create, the stories behind it and how we'll take things forward.

Here's a snapshot of our impact across each area:

Cohesive communities and place

We're creating thriving, safer and more investable places around our stations, so they become a gateway that is more welcoming to customers, residents, and employers. This supports the Government's ambition that growth must be rooted in local places and deliver tangible benefits for communities.

Through four Community Rail Partnerships and 170 Station Partners, we brought people together to make stations safer, transform disused buildings and encourage more sustainable travel. These activities are a catalyst for stronger, more connected and resilient communities.

Through the Your Station, Your Community programme, we funded community-led projects that helped people affected by domestic violence, modern slavery and sexual violence, helping make our communities safer.

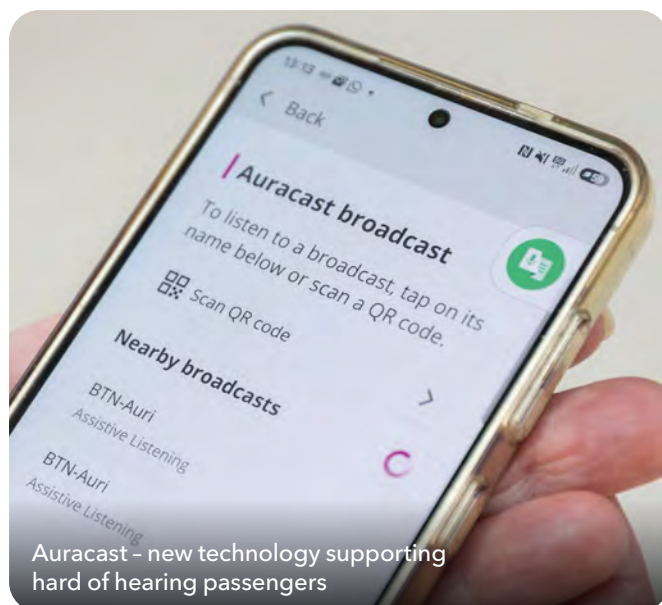
We supported 29 community projects through our Railway 200 grant scheme, including station anniversary events and partnerships with local museums as companies and community partners came together to celebrate 200 years since the first rail passenger journey.

We also focused our school outreach where it could make the biggest difference, supported White Ribbon Day to help reduce violence against women, and made communities safer with the rollout of more than 1,500 body-worn video cameras and other initiatives.

Education, employability and confidence building

We're committed to giving people the right skills and opportunities to be part of, and benefit from, economic growth. The Rail Youth Promise launched in June, our apprenticeships, work academies, STEM engagement and targeted support for young people are GTR's contribution to making sure new economic opportunity is accessible to our communities.

Specifically, our employability programmes opened up routes into rail for people looking for work, while our apprenticeships gave colleagues the opportunity to develop their careers. Some 708 colleagues are currently completing apprenticeships, generating more than £20 million in social value.



We also worked with schools and community partners to help young people discover what's possible. Through the Primary Engineer Rail Programme, volunteers helped pupils from 10 primary schools design and build their own trains, while our Teacher Encounter programme took careers leads behind the scenes to see the opportunities available in rail.

Through Your Station, Your Community, we supported projects that help people build skills and confidence. This included digital skills training for 141 people living near our stations and a STEM programme that reached 240 people from underrepresented backgrounds.

Accessibility

We want to remove barriers to mobility and make sure everyone can travel with confidence and be part of the UK's growth, whatever their needs. That starts with listening to our customers and understanding what gets in their way.

Through our Access Advisory Panel and Try a Train events, we listened directly to disabled customers and used their feedback to shape improvements. These included a new video guide for deaf customers and a trial of Auracast technology at Brighton station, which sends announcements directly to compatible hearing aids and other devices.

We were proud to provide 202,843 passenger assists, 23% more than the previous year, including more than 139,000 turn-up-and-go requests. We also trained 2,281 customer-facing colleagues to give passengers the support they need.

Meanwhile, we worked with community organisations to create opportunities for people with disabilities and learning difficulties. Adults with learning disabilities, supported by the Aldingbourne Trust, gave 8,618 hours of their time at 20 stations, developing new skills while improving the places around them. Plus, through Try a Train, we helped people with disabilities build confidence to use the railway independently.



GTR supporting mental health awareness week



Homes for nature at Royston station

Positive mental health

This year, we made meaningful progress on preventing suicide, supported people in crisis and made it easier for people to talk about mental health and find help.

Our colleagues made 203 life-saving interventions, generating £404.8 million in social value. We also strengthened our approach to suicide prevention, training frontline colleagues and working closely with partners like the Samaritans to target support where it's needed.

Our partnership with Mind went from strength to strength. More than 3,500 colleagues took part in fundraising and awareness activities, helping us raise £75,000 for the charity. Buoyed by that success, we've now doubled our original fundraising target to £150,000. Across the network, mental health campaigns reached more than 14 million people, opening up conversations and making it easier to find support.

Through Your Station, Your Community we supported organisations providing trauma support and mental health outreach. At the same time, we continued to care for our own people. Our in-house occupational health team provided more than 15,000 appointments across the year, while we continued to provide our peer-led TRiM programme.

Environmental sustainability

Rail is the most sustainable form of public transport, and we worked hard this year to reduce our impact even further while helping communities around us become greener, too.

We achieved a 12% reduction in Scope 1 and 2 emissions, while reducing energy use across our stations, offices and depots. A new approach to monitoring train energy use also helped us save £500,000.

We led the industry on adapting to climate change, strengthening our ability to keep the railway running when conditions are difficult. We also cut the amount of waste sent to landfill by more than half, significantly reducing our environmental impact.

We supported nature and biodiversity, creating 200 Homes for Nature to mark Railway 200, supported biodiversity surveys across the Sussex coast and found a sustainable solution to noise concerns by planting Thuja trees instead of expensive fencing.

Through Your Station, Your Community, we helped 893 primary school children learn about climate change and supported a food cooperative that rescues surplus food and provides it to 2,375 people for free every week.

Across all five areas, Your Station, Your Community generated £208,610,250 in social value, demonstrating the significant difference community-led projects can make.

What happens next?

Building on everything we've learned this year, our focus for 26/27 will be to put social impact at the heart of our work to make sure rail continues to connect and support regeneration and local growth in the communities it serves. The report outlines our commitments in each area, but we will also specifically focus on four key projects next year:



Launch of Industry Rail Youth Promise

Working for our communities

We will continue to support our Community Rail Partnerships and community partners to improve their local communities to make rail travel more accessible and inclusive. **We will refine our Your Station, Your Community Fund to target projects that meet local and rail industry priorities in locations where it is most needed**, including tackling anti-social behaviour, improving the environment and supporting young people to get into work.

Opening doors for the next generation

The Government wants public spending to create jobs and build skills in every postcode. That's an ambition we're already getting behind. Railway 200 helped us show young people what a career in rail can offer, and with around 1 million young people not in work or training in the UK, we'll do more to open doors into the industry. Our apprenticeships and employability schemes provide a strong foundation, and **we will continue to build on that foundation and deliver the Rail Youth Promise to create more routes into training and employment for young people.**



GTR apprenticeships visiting parliament during Apprenticeship Week

Making procurement count

We're using our spending power as a lever to create more social value. Our supply chain already makes an important contribution to the impact we create. We want to build on that by looking beyond price when we choose suppliers and consider the wider value they can bring. **From now on, 10% of the weighting for contracts over £5 million will reflect social value.** It's about making sure every pound raised from taxpayers and farepayers works harder for our communities and also for our environment.



Your Station, Your Community supported project - Havens Food Cooperative

Growing our corporate partnership with Mind

We will continue to **grow our partnership with Mind to raise more funds and support positive mental health across the rail industry** and communities we serve. By working with more of our industry partners, engaging more of our industry colleagues and delivering more campaigns, we will continue to raise awareness and support the 1 in 4 of our customers and colleagues who experience a mental health problem each year.

There are huge opportunities ahead, with major public and private investment planned over the next 15 years. On our network we will see the expansion of Gatwick and Luton airports, the new Universal Studios theme park in Bedfordshire and thousands of new homes. Through effective business and community partnerships, we play a crucial role in helping make sure this growth is accessible, inclusive and beneficial to the communities around it, while continuing to make our stations safer and more welcoming.



Social impact data summary

This section pulls together social impact - and social value calculations (shown in £xxs) where possible - for the business year 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. Last year's report covered a 15-month period, which makes comparisons between last and this year's report difficult.



London to Brighton bike ride raising funds for Mind

Accessibility

Access Advisory Panel

120 hours of consultation with our 10 panel members - £2,800

Disability training

2,281 customer-facing colleagues completed CPD-accredited disability equality training - £51,755.
All new starters will now complete this training

Convo app

British sign language interpretation app used by 167 this year

Assisted travel

202,843 total assistance requests (average 23% increase year-on-year)

63,736 total pre-booked requests (average -3% decrease year-on-year)

139,107 total turn-up-and-go (TUAG) requests (average 40% increase year-on-year)

Try a Train

GTR supported 13 Try a Train trips for 137 people and Southeast Community Rail Partnership, funded by GTR, supported 102 people - £97,293

Aldingbourne Trust

26 adults with learning disabilities providing 8,618 hours of gardening volunteering at 20 Southern stations - £199,710

Education, employability and confidence building

Sector-based Work Academy Programme

10 trained in job finding, 2 recruited from the programme - £13,504

Career returners

2 career break returners recruited on 2 apprenticeships - £83,790

Apprenticeships

708 staff participating in apprenticeships - £20,213,700

Development Hub

Staff spent 11,203 CPD hours on e-learning via our Hub - £254,196

Staff survey

68% of staff definitely or probably recommend GTR as a great place to work

Primary Engineer programme

450 primary school pupils engaged in STEM workshops - £68,299 and 150 hours of GTR staff volunteering in schools - £99,174

Mentoring

28 people received mentoring support - £62,098

Work experience

10 students - £2,993



Railway 200 Exhibition train at Tattenham Corner

Cohesive communities and place

Your Station, Your Community Fund 25/26

£480,000 grants for 26 projects generating £208,610,250 in social value. This figure is validated by Loop



Missing people

132 reports received with 72 forwarded to stations and on-board staff for action

SCRIP volunteering

34,805 volunteer hours at stations through the CRP - £679,000

Payroll giving

374 colleagues donated £58,723 to charities

Railway 200 exhibition train

Railway 200 exhibition train visited 4 Southern stations - £63,906

Station partners

170 station partners in GTR, including 64 within the SCRIP area, improving stations for our customers

Football partnerships

Travel passes provided to Academy players, 40 for Stevenage and 21 for Luton Town, with the players providing 113 volunteer hours across the year - £3,396

Charity collections

46 charities across 49 stations, allowing 264 collections

Gifts in kind

GTR provided the value of £457,370 in gifts in kind to community groups across our network

Small and medium enterprise contracts

70% of GTR contracts were awarded to SME suppliers

Circular economy

549 abandoned bikes at stations donated to community projects

550 sacks of lost property clothing donated to homeless projects

Body-worn cameras

727 fewer verbal assaults on staff wearing body-worn cameras than those without - £3,746,747

Safety talks

490 people engaged in 11 station events - £1,882

School safety talks

13,424 young people across 231 schools and youth groups, which involved 428 volunteer hours from GTR staff - £150,897

Go Learn safety talks

1,627 Year 6 pupils - £26,175



Body worn cameras improving staff safety

Environmental sustainability

Our Scope 1 and 2 emissions were 139,000 tonnes CO2e, a 12% reduction from the previous year (Social value of -£27.82m, the reduction is worth £1.99 million)

Electricity use (non-traction) fell by 6% and our gas use fell by 4.4% compared to the previous year. We continue to use a green tariff

Water use increased by 18% compared to the previous year. RSVT water calculations reflect carbon, and this additional cost is estimated at £1,813

We increased the total amount of waste generated by GTR by 32 tonnes

The RSVT calculation for waste, - £20,729, reflects the carbon impact. Estimates exclude hazardous waste. Halving landfill meaningfully reduced carbon emissions

Positive mental health

Life-saving intervention training

199 staff trained at 10 of our most at-risk stations - £9,867

500 staff completed suicide prevention e-learning

Life-saving interventions

203 staff interventions - £403,819,400

Employee Assistance Programme

1,565 calls to the programme

TRiM sessions (trauma support)

81 sessions provided - £77,299

Good to Know staff wellbeing events

3 roadshows held for 108 staff with 46 health checks conducted

Mind partnership

3,500 GTR colleagues participated in the Mind partnership this year raising over £75,000 for the charity and generating £39,615 in social value through their volunteering

Cohesive communities and place

Our services connect communities and our stations are often at the heart of them, serving as gateways and focal points for local businesses and visitors.

Through our Community Rail programme, we work in partnership with local organisations, volunteers and stakeholders to deliver projects that create positive social impact, support local business and address issues affecting both communities and the railway.

By bringing people together and encouraging local involvement, we help ensure our stations and routes remain welcoming, relevant and responsive to local needs.

This section highlights both the measurable value and real-life impact of our work in communities, including:

- Making stations more vibrant and safer through our Community Rail Partnerships, station adopters and community-led projects
- Transforming disused station buildings into community spaces that support local initiatives and services
- Promoting local tourism and encouraging sustainable travel to destinations across our network
- Working with national and local charities to support individuals and communities facing challenges
- Providing grants through our Your Station, Your Community programme, enabling grassroot projects that deliver lasting benefits for local people

Together these activities demonstrate how the railway can be a catalyst for stronger, more connected and resilient communities, creating benefits that extend far beyond the journey itself.

Community Rail Partnerships (CRPs)

We support four CRPs across our network: Southeast CRP (SCRCP), Beds and Herts CRP, Darent Valley CRP and Cam Valley CRP.

The core funding and gifts in kind we provide enable CRPs to deliver activities aligned with the four pillars of the Department for Transport's Community Rail Strategy:

- Providing a voice for the community
- Promoting sustainable and healthy travel
- Bringing communities together
- Supporting social and economic development

GTR provides further funding for the SCRCP Go Learn Education Programme (more detail is provided in the 'school safety talks' section).



Each CRP has its own website and publishes Annual Reviews showcasing its work and impact. Here are some highlights:

- **Cam Valley CRP** built on the community artwork created at the underpass in 2024, adding a wildflower garden either side of the Meldreth link path between the underpass and the station. The garden improves biodiversity and makes the station approach more welcoming for customers.
- **Darent Valley CRP** brought together partners from across the network for a mass choir performance on 7 March, raising money for our corporate charity Mind. The choir met at GTR's King's Cross office for a rehearsal before entertaining passengers on the station concourse.



- **Beds and Herts CRP** worked with St Albans Arts and HACRO charity on a photography exhibition with ex-offenders. Participants learned how to take and compose photos, with their work later displayed at St Albans City station to brighten up passengers' journeys.



Display of photos from ex offenders at St Albans station

- **Southeast CRP (SCRIP)** developed its own Your Community Cares campaign to support White Ribbon Day, which aims to reduce violence against women and girls. Some 40 partner organisations, including local knitting and crochet groups, created more than 7,500 small white hearts that were given out at stations by 20 volunteers.

This is just one example of how SCRIP brings communities together to support issues that matter to local people and the railway. Last year, the CRP facilitated 34,805 volunteer hours at stations, generating £679,000 in social value.

Station Partners

We work with 170 station partners who volunteer their time to improve our stations and the areas around them. Our partners range from small volunteer groups to other local organisations who bring their ideas and enthusiasm and build local pride. Every week, they make a visible difference at stations across our network. Here are just a few examples:

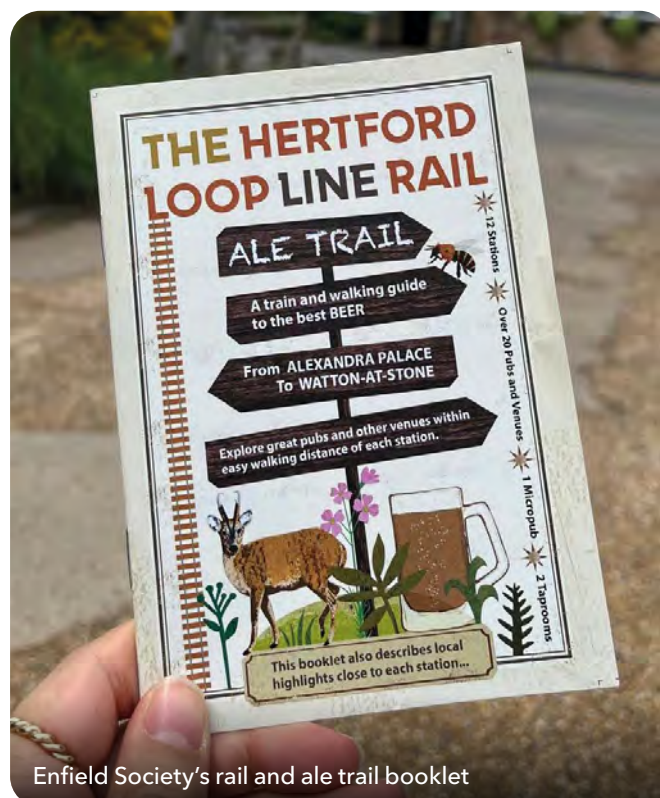
- **Crowborough Hub:** As part of our Railway 200 celebrations (more below), station partners helped Crowborough station host an open day celebrating its history and future. Visitors got a first look inside the station's new Community Hub, which is transforming a disused building into a much-needed community space. Station partners also helped prepare the station for the event, bringing planters back to life with new flowers.
- **Hertford Loop Rail and Ale Trail:** The Friends of Gordon Hill Station and Enfield Chase station partners created a guide to pubs within walking distance of 12 stations on the Hertford Loop. The new trail encourages passengers to explore local businesses by rail.
- **Art on the Line:** Our partnership with East Sussex Art College made fantastic progress, giving college students the chance to display their work at stations, while brightening up customers' commutes.
- **King's Awards:** In May, the Friends of Bishopstone were awarded the King's Award for volunteering, recognising their work in transforming the station into a vibrant community hub. In addition Tim Sparrow, founder of the Southeast Community Rail Partnership, was awarded an MBE for his contribution to community rail.

Railway 200

This year, train companies and community partners came together to celebrate 200 years since the first rail passenger journey.

We supported 29 community projects through our Railway 200 grant scheme. These included station anniversary events, partnerships with local museums and even a party on a train to celebrate the Marshlink's 175th anniversary. We also funded Rye Poetry Society to create a book of railway poetry, with 200 copies given to passengers.

Our support for Railway 200 didn't end there. We also hosted the Railway 200 exhibition train at four Southern stations, attracting 3,664 visitors, including 8 school groups and 4 mayors. Some 75 volunteers from GTR were involved, generating £63,906 in social value. Plus, we supported the heritage Bluebell Railway, providing more than 1,000 free tickets for schoolchildren to attend its Railway 200 education programme in June.



Enfield Society's rail and ale trail booklet



GTR staff fundraising football match for Mind

Staff charity support

We work with 170 station partners who volunteer their time to improve our stations and the areas around them. Our partners range from small volunteer groups to other local organisations who bring their ideas and enthusiasm and build local pride. Every week, they make a visible difference at stations across our network.

Our colleagues continue to make a valuable contribution to local charities and community causes across our network, often volunteering their time and raising funds outside work. While many support our corporate charity partnership with Mind (see the 'positive mental health' section), others choose causes that are personally important to them. Examples include:

- Drivers took over Peterborough United's football stadium for their annual charity event, held in memory of a colleague who sadly passed away in 2022
- Two Driver Managers competed in truck-pulling challenge the Big Pull to raise money for three local charities
- Colleagues helped run two 'Santa Trains' packed with festive activities for staff and passengers at Brighton and London Bridge, raising funds for two local hospices

We continue to support staff's local charity work through our Lost and Found programme, which turns unclaimed items into funding. Electrical items left unclaimed in lost property for more than three months are sold, with the proceeds used to support staff's charitable activities. Last year, we donated £17,175 to 28 local organisations nominated by colleagues, including local hospices, Alzheimer's Society, Macmillan Cancer Support, Tommy's, Bognor Regis Youth Centre and local youth sport teams. The funding also helped create two memorial gardens for colleagues who passed away.

Charity collections

We give registered charities space at our stations to run collections. Last year, we supported 46 of them across 49 stations, adding up to 264 collections across the year.

Supporting local business

We are committed to supporting Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and local suppliers through our procurement. By making sure more of our spending reaches these businesses, we create community value and align with government priorities to deliver economic, social and environmental benefits. In the last financial year, 70% of our contracts were with SMEs, with total spending reaching £109,166,108.



Two GTR staff participating in the Big Pull, raising funds for local charities

Case study

Celebrating railway heroes past and present

From Queen Victoria and Isambard Kingdom Brunel to the people making a difference in railway jobs today, 200 blue plaques brought stories of railway to life across the South East.

And that's all down to the work of SCRP. To mark Railway 200, SCRP commissioned the plaques, with grant support from GTR and other funders. Half celebrate historic people and events, while the other 100 shine a light on modern railway jobs, inspiring people to consider a career in the industry.

Historian Danny Coope worked with SCRP and local communities to research the historic plaques, while the modern plaques were developed alongside train operators and Network Rail.

Other famous names on the plaques - with unexpected stories connected to the railway - include Vietnam's first President Ho Chi Minh, Winnie-the-Pooh author A.A. Milne and Bee Gees singer Robin Gibb. All 200 were shown together for the first time at a community rail celebration event in Lewes.

The project went on to win the Railway 200 Legacy Award at the Community Rail Network Awards. One judge said: "A huge amount of partnership work was undertaken to make the concept a reality and it's a very fitting way to mark and celebrate the 200th anniversary."



Launch of 200 blue plaques by SCRP at Lewes

Making communities safer

Making our railway safe for customers and colleagues remains a priority. In fact, it's central to the role we play in the communities we serve. During 2025/26, we continued to strengthen crime prevention, anti-social behaviour and colleague safety by investing in people, technology and partnerships.

Key achievements included:

- **Completing the rollout of more than 1,500 body-worn video cameras** across frontline teams. The cameras give colleagues extra protection and provide valuable evidence when incidents occur. Across the year, staff who wore the cameras experienced 747 fewer verbal assaults than those without them, generating £3,746,747 in social value. Staff shared how the cameras stopped incidents from escalating. One said: "I recorded throughout and they ran off when they saw I was filming." Another said: "I turned on my camera and they left the train hurriedly."
- **Expanding our Travel Safe Officer team** and focusing their support on locations where anti-social behaviour, violence and vulnerability are higher. The officers provide a visible presence and reassurance across the network.
- **Delivering our Anti-Social Behaviour Improvement Plan**, contributing to a 5% reduction in reported incidents from GTR colleagues across the network.
- **Improving the Zero Harm reporting platform**, giving staff an easier way to report incidents, concerns and any emerging trends they see. The latest improvements also allow reporting of graffiti and environmental concerns. With enhanced data, we target resources where they're needed most.
- **Delivering targeted operations with British Transport Police and local police forces** to tackle anti-social behaviour, workplace violence, theft and other offences affecting customers and communities.
- **Using data and intelligence more effectively** to identify hotspots, target interventions and support local problem-solving initiatives in partnership with community and policing partners.
- **Continuing to invest in colleague safety and safeguarding**, including support for staff affected by workplace violence and specialist teams who are focused on anti-social behaviour and those who are vulnerable.

- **Strengthening station and community engagement.** More specifically, working with local authorities, schools, policing partners and community groups to address the causes of anti-social behaviour and improve safety around the railway.
- **Protecting vulnerable people at our stations.** Alongside our work to reduce anti-social behaviour and other criminal offences, we also have a Safeguarding on Rail Plan in place. More detail is provided in the positive mental health section of this report

- **Supporting community projects.** Through Your Station, Your Community, we are funding local community organisations targeted at reducing anti-social behaviour.

Together, these initiatives have improved safety, increased confidence in reporting incidents and helped us continue to create a railway where customers and colleagues feel safe, supported and confident when they travel.

Case study

Brochure boosts local tourism in Winchelsea

A community-led travel guide is helping more visitors discover the historic town of Winchelsea – and encouraging them to arrive by train.

Winchelsea is an ancient town near Rye on the Marshlink line in East Sussex, with a rich history and direct links to country walks and cycle routes.

The Winchelsea Station Partnership Group wanted to encourage more people to visit the town by train and created a travel map and brochure to highlight what's on offer.

Local businesses helped fund design and printing in return for advertising space, with other funding coming from Southern Railway, Community Railway Network and Southeast CRP.

The first run of 200 copies was so popular the group updated the brochure and printed a further 500. It's now going into its third print run.

Station use has increased over the past three years and is now well above pre-Covid levels. ORR passenger figures show a year-on-year increase of around 2,000 passengers, with an increase of around 5,000 following the larger print run.



Launch of Winchelsea travel map

Case study

Active bystanders: giving people the confidence to step in

When people witness harassment, hate crime or anti-social behaviour, it can be difficult to know what to do. That's where our Active Bystander training programme comes in.

Over the past year, we worked in partnership with Protection Approaches to deliver Active Bystander training through the Your Station, Your Community fund. The programme gives staff, passengers and community members the confidence and practical skills to intervene safely.

We delivered 52 sessions, reaching 1,021 people and generating £6,022,445 in social value.

One participant said: *"Before the training, I thought intervention meant putting yourself in the middle of a difficult situation. The session helped me understand there are lots of ways to respond safely, from distraction and de-escalation to reporting concerns and supporting the person affected."*

Another said: *"It has changed the way I think about situations I witness and given me confidence that there is usually something positive I can do."*



Active Bystander training session

Case study

Brushing up on station safety

A community mural installed at Moulsecoomb in 2024 was followed by a 50% fall in anti-social incidents in a year. With such great results, we've been taking the approach to more stations across the network.

Through the Your Station, Your Community programme, we continued to fund local artists, who work with residents and community groups to create murals and art for stations. Over the past year, new artwork has appeared at Brighton, Biggleswade, London Road and East Croydon.

Customers have noticed the difference. *"Great job on the painting! Please can we have more of this to make the approach to East Croydon more attractive and less scary? We love what you've done!"*

Another said of the colourful artwork at London Road: *"The colourfully painted shed is a reminder that changes are happening, and the station is being looked after and cared for."*

Customers were surveyed as part of the project. Some 82% said they felt more positive about their local station, while 78% felt more positive about their local community.



Biggleswade mural created by local residents and Co-Creative Connection



East Croydon mural created by local residents

White Ribbon Day

We continue to support our communities in reducing violence against women. As part of this, we and our community partners supported White Ribbon Day through a range of initiatives:

- **15 Revenue Enforcement Officers and managers** visited 67 stations and spoke to 682 customers and 215 colleagues about the role they can play in reducing violence against women
- **Travel Safe Officers** received specialist safeguarding training
- **Ticket machines** across our stations displayed White Ribbon Day messages for three weeks and a public awareness campaign reached over 66 million people
- We made **Active Bystander training** and **RDG Sexual Harassment training** available to all colleagues
- We continued to **share intelligence with BTP** to help them focus their resources and respond to incidents more effectively
- **We worked with 33 different stakeholders** during our activities, including SCRP, West Sussex County Council and West Sussex Library Service on the community-led Your Community Cares campaign

Case study

Getting to the heart of tackling violence against women

Thousands of handmade hearts brought a message of care and solidarity to stations across West Sussex, helping start conversations about violence against women and connect people with support.



In the months leading up to White Ribbon Day, West Sussex County Council asked local knitting and crochet groups to create the small white hearts - a symbol of care, peace and solidarity - and drop them off at any West Sussex library.

More than 7,500 hearts were made by 35 community groups and handed out by volunteers and station partners across the county on 25 November, White Ribbon Day itself.

Each heart came with a 'Your Community Cares' card, providing a QR code linking to the Samaritans and other local and national organisations.

One station volunteer said: *"It was lovely to see people's faces light up when they received a heart. It showed how small acts of kindness can make a big impact."*



Handing out knitted white hearts at station on White Ribbon Day



Children taking part in a Go Learn rail safety session

School safety talks

We focus our school outreach where it can make the biggest difference. Activities are prioritised based on three levels of need:

- Engaging schools following a specific incident
- Engaging schools in a particular area where anti-social behaviour has occurred
- Responding to requests from schools and communities

This approach means we put our resources in the right place to prevent future incidents.

Last year, we delivered face-to-face safety talks to 13,424 young people across 231 schools, including more than 120 SEND students. GTR colleagues spent 428 hours running sessions, generating £150,897 in social value. We reached a further 490 young people hosting stands and attending other events across our network.

Meanwhile, the Go Learn Programme which we fund through the SCRCP reached 1,627 young people, generating £26,175 in social value

We also worked with partnership organisations to spread our rail safety message. We helped Sussex Police deliver safety education to primary schools in Brighton and Hove. We ran a 'train the trainer' event for the Bluebell Railway, which educated 1,663 young people, including 142 SEND pupils, across 42 schools. Plus, we helped East Sussex Fire and Rescue implement the Chichester Junior Citizens programme, which will include rail safety education and launches in April.

It's difficult to put a precise value on prevention. But avoiding just one serious injury to a child is estimated to create more than £300,000 in social value. The real benefit goes beyond this number, as it prevents the long-lasting distress and harm felt by train drivers, passengers and families after a serious incident. That's why this work remains such a vital part of our community engagement.

15,051

young people reached through
our rail safety sessions

Your Station, Your Community Improvement Fund

Through our Your Station, Your Community fund, we invested in community-led safety projects that help people affected by violence and crime.

- **Bramber Bakehouse** supported 70 women aged 18 and over, including survivors of domestic violence, modern slavery, human trafficking and social exclusion. The project combined baking workshops with wellbeing, life skills and employability training, building confidence and independence. Participants reported a significant improvement in their quality of life (measured using the EUROHI-QOL survey) and the project generated £652,415 in social value.

"This has been a life-changing experience that came at an important time – a stage where I was ready to give up."

"It's just magic. Without them, I don't think I would be where I am now."

- **Cambridge Rape Crisis Centre** provides specialist support to women and girls recovering from the trauma of sexual violence. GTR's funding enabled the centre to support 43 women through more than 300 counselling sessions. The number of women who said they felt able to cope with everyday life increased from 25% to 63%, generating £36,140,118 in social value.

"This service literally saved my life. I think I would've died from suicide otherwise."

"I just want to say thank you. I started as someone terrified of the world, unconfident and unsure how to deal with life. I have left a completely new person feeling more confident about myself and everything around me."



Domestic abuse survivors participating in a Bramber Bakehouse cooking session

In the last four years the
Your Station, Your Community
Fund has generated

£352

in social value for every
£1 provided in grants

Cohesive communities and place: our commitments for 26/27

Last year, we generated £208,610,250 in social value and delivered real benefits for communities across our network. From brighter, safer stations and stronger community partnerships to supporting people facing difficult circumstances and encouraging sustainable travel, our work helped bring people and place closer together.

The work we've done has also shown us where we can make an even bigger difference. In 2026/27, we'll continue building on what has worked well, but also focus our efforts where data and experience show there is more to do:

- Continue to fund and work with our four Community Rail Partnerships to create better stations and environments
- Develop community partnerships to address anti-social behaviour at 10 targeted stations as part of GTR's network-wide safety programme
- Continue to support local projects and make communities safer through Your Station, Your Community
- Build on our rail safety education work as it becomes part of the national curriculum through PSHE in September 2026. We've already upskilled our colleagues in readiness to deliver this education in their local communities
- Continue to focus safety work on higher-risk areas, using BTP crime data and our own safety incident reports to identify where it's most needed and help reduce incidents
- Strengthen our approach to keeping colleagues and communities safe, including increasing the use of body-worn cameras
- Continue to focus on tackling offending at hotspots and work towards Safer Railway Scheme accreditation, while putting women's voices at the centre of our approach to safety
- Continue to support colleagues to make a difference in their communities through our Lost and Found programme

Education, employability and confidence building

Work can change lives. So, helping people find jobs and build meaningful careers is one of the biggest ways we make an impact in our communities. Our Talent Recruitment and People team, supported by our Community team, run employability initiatives, career talks and hands-on training that do just that. These opportunities help people inside and outside GTR discover what's possible, develop practical skills and have fulfilling careers in rail.

Employability programmes

We run a number of programmes designed to turn people's potential into real opportunity. Here are a few examples of our employability programmes in action:

- **Sector-Based Work Academy Programme (SWAP):** Partnering with Jobcentre Plus, the Department for Work and Pensions and East Sussex College, SWAP gives jobseekers experience in the rail industry and supports our recruitment needs. Our latest programme gave 10 candidates a 15-day introduction into railway operations, including work experience on the platform at Gatwick Airport and Eastbourne, and the gateline at Lewes. Two participants went on to join GTR, generating £13,504 in social value.



GTR job swap as part of Apprenticeship week

- **Primary Engineers Programme:** This year, we took part in a new programme designed to get primary school children excited about science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). With support from GTR volunteers, pupils designed and built their own model trains, putting engineering concepts into practice while learning about careers in rail (see case study).
- **Teacher Encounter Programme:** We hosted our third Teacher Encounter Day at Brighton station, which took teachers and careers leads from three local schools (Oriol High School, Longhill School and Brighton Hove and Sussex Sixth Form College) behind the scenes to explore careers in rail. Delivered in partnership with The Careers & Enterprise Company and West Sussex, Brighton & Hove Careers Hub, the programme gave educators new insight into job opportunities to take back into the classroom. Penny Daly, Enterprise Coordinator, said: *"I've had an amazing day at Brighton Station with GTR. Behind the scenes history, future-focused technology and endless career pathways in rail. So many inspiring links to education. Thank you!"*
- **Football partnerships:** We continue to provide free travel passes to academy players at Stevenage and Luton Town, helping them get to training and education across our network. Last year, we supported 61 players, many of whom wouldn't be able to take up their places without it. In return, the players gave 113 hours of their time to support community events. This included speaking to passengers on our Brew Train during a Blue Monday mental health event as well as volunteering at stations, with Stevenage academy adopting Stevenage station. Players even joined Samaritan volunteers to speak to supporters before Luton's match against Stevenage.



Case study

"The creativity and curiosity from the children has been genuinely inspiring"

Mentors from GTR inspired a new generation of engineers when they took part in the first Primary Engineer Rail Programme.

Pupils aged 5-11 from 10 primary schools across Hertfordshire designed and built their own model trains with support from GTR volunteers. The mentors guided pupils through the design process and brought engineering to life by showing how it's used on the railway.

At the final showcase, pupils proudly presented their designs, explained their ideas to judges and put their trains through a series of hands-on challenges.

Steve Lammin, Engineering Director, said: "The creativity and curiosity from the children has been genuinely inspiring. Programmes like this show how important it is to introduce education of key STEM subjects and how they can be applied to a railway at a young age. I'm proud of the time and commitment our colleagues have given as mentors."

Primary Engineer's Head of Partnerships, Chris Rochester, said: "It's been wonderful working in partnership with Great Northern and Thameslink to bring The Primary Engineer Rail Programme to schools in Stevenage."

The programme generated £167,473 in social value, highlighting the wider community benefits of early STEM engagement as well as our commitment to inspiring future engineers.



Primary Engineer celebration event

Apprenticeships

We continue to expand apprenticeships across GTR for both new recruits and existing colleagues. There are now 18 different apprenticeship standards ranging from levels 2 to 7, with 708 colleagues currently taking part. Women make up 27% of apprentices, with 34% coming from underrepresented groups. Our apprenticeship programme generated £20,213,700 in social value.

During National Apprenticeship Week in February, we gave MPs the chance to see apprenticeships from a different perspective through a job swap.

MPs Mohammed Yasin, Sarah Jones and Helen Hayes spent time with four apprentices, learning about their day-to-day work in depots and at stations. The apprentices then visited parliament to learn more about the work of an MP, giving both sides a chance to step into each other's shoes.

Our executive team met apprentices during and after Apprenticeship Week, with our CEO at the time, Angie Doll, joining the Women in Leadership Level 3 sign-up day. She said: "It was a pleasure to sit in on the first session of our latest Level 3 cohort. I particularly enjoyed hearing from Jayshree Karsan, who is doing the Women in Leadership Level 5 apprenticeship, on how the programme is supporting her development."

Leadership's interactions with apprentices also inspired a new reverse mentoring programme, called Shared Routes. Over six months, frontline staff will meet with an executive partner every four to six weeks, sharing their experiences and creating a direct link between customer-facing staff and our leaders.

Training our own colleagues

Alongside our apprenticeships, GTR offers a range of training through our online learning platform, Development Hub. Last year, staff completed more than 11,000 courses, earning 44,800 continuous development points. Courses cover everything from data analytics and people management to sustainability and using AI effectively.

Your Station, Your Community Investment Fund

The fund supported projects that helped young people build skills, get experience and open new career doors.

- **Spiral Skills - Empower Lab:** Five young people with lived experience of social and economic disadvantage took part in a programme to develop leadership skills and create positive change in communities around Loughborough Junction. Two participants focused on strengthening local community organisations while three went into leadership roles in the youth and community sector, putting the skills and experience they gained into practice. The project generated £746,435 in social value.
- **Tech Resort:** This project provided digital skills training to 141 people living near five of our stations across 52 sessions. Half of those taking part were living in insecure housing. Alongside the training, Tech Resort provided quiet spaces for people to look for work and accommodation, while giving them a chance to meet and connect with others. The project generated £2,035,820 in social value.
- **Sustainable Southwark - Motivez:** The project brought 20 STEM professionals together with young people aged 14-16 from underrepresented backgrounds in Southwark, using climate change and sustainable travel to explore STEM and engineering. More than twice the original target took part, with 240 young people getting involved. They visited six GTR sites to inspire ideas and open their minds to engineering careers in rail. They went on to develop 48 ideas for reducing local pollution and increasing sustainable travel, with the project generating £1,007,049 in social value.

Education, employability and confidence building: our commitments for 26/27

Our work this year has shown the value of helping young people build skills, confidence and a clearer idea of where a career could take them.

The launch of the Rail Youth Promise in July 2026 gives us an opportunity to build on this work. As part of the promise, we will focus most of our programmes on getting more young people between 16-24 into work at GTR. This will include:

- Expanding the number of sector-based Work Academy Programmes
- Leading on the development and roll-out of the Foundation Railway Apprenticeship
- Creating more opportunities for young people to access our apprenticeships, particularly for train drivers now the minimum age to apply has been reduced to 18
- Developing a summer programme for university students to train as onboard supervisors, gaining work experience and learning about careers in rail
- Continuing to support Stevenage and Luton academy players with travel to their apprenticeships, while giving them career guidance and experience of the rail industry
- Expanding our partnership with the Primary Engineer programme, bringing hands-on STEM learning into more primary schools through our engineers
- Focusing our Your Station, Your Community grants on employability programmes for 16-24 year olds in areas with high levels of youth unemployment across our network



Students from the Motivez project visiting the Houses of Parliament with Angie Doll

Accessibility

We are fully committed to making our services accessible and inclusive for everyone. We want all passengers to be able to travel with confidence, with support on-hand wherever it's needed. Breaking down barriers and making our stations and trains easier to use is at the heart of how we run our railway.



Listening to our customers: Access Advisory Panel

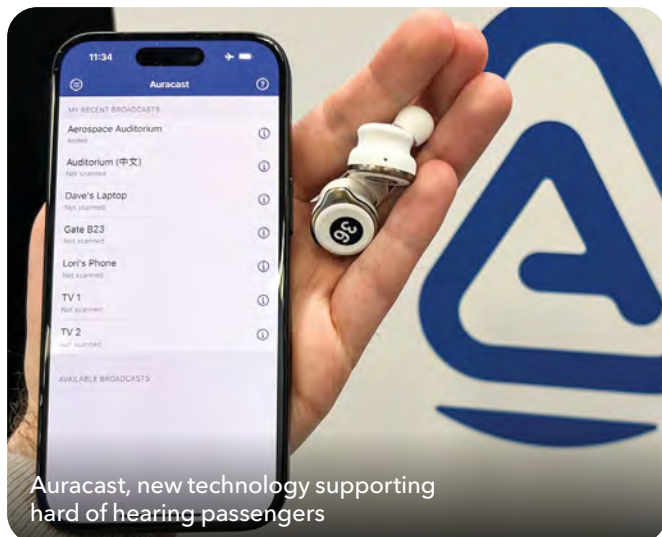
Our Access Advisory Panel (AAP) helps us deliver a more accessible railway. Made up of customers with disabilities, the panel meets every two months to provide their perspective on all aspects of accessible travel and help shape our plans for improving services. Last year, we delivered 120 hours of stakeholder consultation through AAP meetings, with a further 53 interactions throughout the year. Members shared their views on everything from station information and our accessible travel policy to website navigation and our Model Stations programme. Together, this work generated an estimated £2,800 of social value.

Listening to our customers: Station improvements

We listen to customer feedback and make improvements to our stations based on what they tell us. For example, we worked with Network Rail to install lifts at two stations (Biggleswade and Leatherhead) as part of the Access for All programme. Smaller changes are also making a big difference. We widened walking routes at Hendon station after a customer complaint. We also added seating next to the lift at Balham and improved our rail replacement bus service provision for wheelchair users on the suggestion of passengers.



GTR staff making rail as accessible as possible



Auracast, new technology supporting hard of hearing passengers

interpretation app and other improvements to customer information. Since Convo launched, 167 people have used the app to communicate with staff, and we'll continue to promote it to anyone who could benefit.

We also launched a pilot of new assisted hearing technology Auracast at Brighton station. It uses Bluetooth to send station announcements directly to compatible hearing aids, earbuds and headphones, making it easier for customers to get the information they need. The pilot will help us assess whether Auracast could be rolled out at more stations.

Passenger assistance

We continue to improve passenger assistance, both through staff training and booked and non-booked support. Last year, we provided 202,843 assists to passengers, 23% more than the previous year. This included 139,107 turn-up-and-go requests, up 40%, and 63,736 booked requests, down slightly by 3%.

These figures show that more of our passengers now feel confident travelling without pre-booking assistance, knowing that trained staff are there to help if needed.

Last year, 2,281 customer-facing colleagues completed our accessibility training, including all new starters as part of their induction. This training includes how to use our assistance booking app and gives staff the knowledge and confidence to support customers with mobility needs. At the heart of the training is our GALA approach to assistance: Greet, Ask, Listen, Act.

Building confidence through Try a Train

Through our Try a Train trips, we aim to encourage more people with a disability or impairment to feel confident using the railway. The trips give people the chance to visit a station with support, experience a journey and build the confidence to travel independently. Last year, we ran 13 Try a Train trips, including three with the Thomas Pocklington Trust that supported 137 people and a further 102 people supported by our partner SCRP, generating £97,293 in social value.



Innovating for our customers

We continue to work with disability charities and other organisations to innovate and improve the service we provide to people with non-visible and visible disabilities.

In November 2025, we worked with the British Deaf Association, East Sussex Hearing and Brighton and Hove Hearing Loss to better understand the barriers deaf customers face when travelling by rail. In response, our Accessibility team commissioned a specialist producer to create a video version of our Easy Ticketing Guide. It uses clear, concise visuals to explain different types of tickets and how to choose the right one.

We partnered again with the British Deaf Association to give deaf customers the chance to try our services. Through a series of Try a Train events with various deaf groups across the network, participants trialled our accessible support and spoke directly with our team about their journey experiences. Their feedback led to targeted improvements, including increased promotion of the Convo British Sign Language



Thomas Pocklington Trust try a train event at Wimbledon station



Preston park mural created by Grace Eyre Foundation

One school that took part was Chantry Primary Academy, who explained: *"We wanted our visually impaired children to feel more confident around train travel and to explore what the local train station staff can do to help them. We wanted them to access the trains, lifts and wheelchair ramps so they would feel more able to travel independently as they got older."*

People can only build confidence when they know what support is available. That's why we run regular awareness campaigns. As part of this work, we teamed up with Brighton and Hove Albion FC to create a social media video showing what independent rail travel can look like for a blind person. It followed one of the club's visually impaired players on her journey to training, using the Aira app and Southern Rail services. The video, which highlighted the support available and benefits of rail for visually impaired customers, was widely shared across social media.

Working with community organisations

Our partnerships with local organisations, many of which are long-standing, help us reach underrepresented people and deliver meaningful social value. Here are some examples:

Aldingbourne Trust: We continued our partnership with the Aldingbourne Trust and SCRP, giving adults with learning disabilities opportunities to volunteer and gain work experience at 20 Southern stations. With support from staff, participants look after planters and garden areas, improving the stations for customers while developing teamwork, problem solving and horticultural skills. Last year, the adults involved in the programme provided 8,618 hours of volunteer time, generating £199,710 in social value.

The partnership provides a fresh sense of purpose for those involved, with many getting involved in extra activities, including supporting Greening Arundel - a local network aiming to make the town greener - and Railway 200 events.

Grace Eyre Foundation: We provided the Grace Eyre Foundation with a grant from our Your Station, Your Community fund to create a mural at Preston Park station with adults with learning disabilities.

Working with a professional street artist, 27 adults took part in creative workshops to develop the design. The mural features the words, "kindness changes everything", with the words deliberately made harder to read. This reflects some of the challenges people with learning disabilities can face, while showing how different perspectives can create something beautiful.

For those involved, the project helped create a greater sense of belonging in their community. It also brightened up the station, with 91% of surveyed passengers saying the mural made the station feel safer and more welcoming. One passenger said: *"I love it! It has made the walkway much less desolate and had such a positive impact on how I feel about where I live."*

The project generated £214,268 in social value.

Network groups and inclusivity

As part of our commitment to make the railway and GTR as accessible as possible, we run five employee networks that supported our colleagues and drove positive change last year.

- **Disability Employees Network:** Raised awareness and understanding of different disabilities, including a webinar on neurodiversity
- **Gender Equality Movement:** Supported GTR's Women in Rail mentoring programme, pairing senior employees with more junior colleagues to help them progress in their careers
- **LGBT+ Network:** Led GTR's Pride Month activities across the network, including hosting a float in the Brighton Pride parade

8,618 hours

of volunteering provided by
adults with learning disabilities
at our stations through the
Aldingbourne Trust

- **Armed Forces Network:** Helped set up 'Squaddie Box', a mailbox at Crawley station that provides a secure postal address for homeless veterans, and ran mental health support campaigns

- **Race Equality Network:** Supported Race Equality Week and held an event to raise awareness of racially aggravated behaviour towards front-line staff, particularly at stations near far-right protests in London



Installing mail boxes at stations for homeless veterans



Supporting disabled passengers to travel by train

Accessibility: our commitments for 26/27

Our work this year has shown the difference that listening to customers, investing in our people and testing new ideas can make to accessible travel. Looking ahead, we will continue working with industry partners to support the delivery of DfT's Accessibility Strategic Roadmap, which sets out seven priority areas for improving the travel experience for disabled and older passengers. Specific areas where we can continue to make a difference are:

- Improving accessibility at stations and on trains
- Making passenger assistance more reliable
- Improving customer information

We'll keep listening to disabled people and use their experiences to make our services better. With our own Access Advisory Panel at the forefront, we'll deliver the following programmes:

- Roll out updated Refresher Training for staff
- Evaluate our innovation pilots to see how they can best support disabled customers
- Continue our Minor Works programme that delivers station improvements for disabled customers. This will include opening new lifts at Luton and Hertford North stations through the Access for All programme
- Improve how we forecast customer demand over the next five years to be sure we have the right resources in place
- Continue our Try a Train programme and help more disabled people build the confidence to travel
- Work with local disability organisations to deliver community projects and improve our services for disabled passengers

Positive mental health

Positive mental health matters to everyone connected to the railway – from the people who travel with us, to the communities we serve and the staff who keep things moving. However, poor mental health is a reality for too many of us, affecting how we feel, think and work. That’s why we’re committed to creating a culture where people feel safe, supported and confident to ask for help, whether they’re a colleague, customer or vulnerable person using our network.

Committed to preventing suicide on the railway

Every life matters. Even a single suicide on the railway can have a deep and lasting impact on families, colleagues, passengers and communities. Our Suicide Prevention Plan sets out how we’re working to reduce suicide through early intervention, proactive risk management and empowering staff to Recognise, Respond and Report any concerns. Achievements this year included:

- Employing a full-time Safeguarding Manager as a single point of contact for suicide prevention. If we see a rise in Concern for Welfare reports, they work with local authorities, social services and NHS teams to respond and co-ordinate the right support
- Achieving full accreditation in the British Transport Police’s (BTP) Safeguarding on Rail Scheme
- Producing a monthly Trespass & Vulnerability Risk Register (TVRR), which is shared with colleagues and external partners including Network Rail, BTP and the Samaritans, so we can all target our resources properly
- Providing training to colleagues, including Suicide Prevention e-learning for all staff, Safeguarding and Suicide Prevention training for all new front-line staff, and specialist Managing Suicidal Contacts training for those at higher-risk stations
- Our staff made 203 life-saving interventions, with each colleague receiving a Life Saver Award. These interventions generated £403,819,400 in social value

- Running campaigns that encourage people to seek help, including Samaritans-approved signs at priority locations and events like Brew Monday, which generated more than 4,250 passenger interactions and reached 1.8 million people. We also worked with Luton Town FC and their manager Jack Wilshere to create a suicide prevention video
- Continuing to run fundraising, engagement and awareness activities in the second year of our three-year corporate charity partnership with Mind
- Supporting staff after distressing incidents through our Trauma Risk Management (TRiM) programme and Employee Assistance services. Last year, we provided 81 TRiM sessions



Samaritan volunteers on match day outside Luton Town FC

203

life saving interventions
made by our staff

Your Station, Your Community Investment Fund

Through our Your Station, Your Community fund, we invested in community-led projects that support people across our network struggling with their mental health:

- **Centre 33:** This charity provides free mental health support and services to people under 25 in Huntingdon. Our funding enabled Centre 33 to support 159 young people, 61% of whom were experiencing moderately severe or severe psychological distress. After taking part, 100% of participants said they felt the support had prevented their situation reaching crisis point. The project generated £1,184,255 in social value.



At the Suicide & Co Summit, with the Speak Their Name Charity, meeting families bereaved by suicide with the Surrey Speak Their Name Quilt behind



Lucy Rayner Foundation mental health outreach assembly

One young person said of the service: "...my depression and anxiety spiralled. Centre 33 made me feel I could find a way through the dark. I am well now and have a job which makes me enormously happy. Thank you for my life."

- **Evolve Housing:** This project provided tailored mental health and trauma support to 323 people living in supported housing. Some 76% of them were living with an ongoing mental health issue or managing the effects of past trauma. Support included both one-to-one and group sessions, generating £131,484,547 in social value.
- **Lucy Rayner Foundation:** Our funding helped the foundation expand its suicide prevention and mental health outreach programme in Surrey. They supported 72 people experiencing a mental health crisis, many at risk of suicide, generating £18,303,516 in social value.

One participant said: "Thank you for all of your support. You really have helped me so much on this horrible journey since losing mum and I will forever be grateful to you."

£150,972,218

generated social value from
our 3 Your Station, Your
Community funded mental
health projects

Mind partnership

Our partnership with Mind, which aims to raise awareness, reduce stigma and improve support for mental health across our network, entered its second year – and continued to go from strength to strength.

Mental health is one of the UK's biggest public health challenges, with **one in four people experiencing a mental health problem each year**.

Working on the railway puts its own pressures on colleagues. Many support vulnerable people and those in crisis on the frontline of the organisation, with many others managing their own mental health challenges.

Our partnership with Mind helps us respond to these challenges. And, this year, we continued to deliver a wide-ranging programme of fundraising, awareness and engagement activities across the network.



3,500
colleagues took part in
Mind-related activities

Colleague engagement and fundraising

Between March 2025 and April 2026:

- More than **3,500 colleagues** took part in Mind-related activities
- We raised **£75,000** in support of mental health services, and now aim to meet an increased three-year target of £150,000

Activities included:

- Taking part in high-profile events such as the **London to Brighton Bike Ride** and **Tough Mudder** challenges
- A **company-wide step challenge**, which promoted physical and mental wellbeing
- Team building through **walks, raffles, pancake-flipping events** and a **yoga session at Blackfriars station**
- Drivers competing in – and winning – the **C2C football tournament**, which brought rail industry teams together to raise money and awareness

We're
supporting
Mind



Engineering Directorate taking part in the ultra-challenge for Mind

Public awareness campaigns

We used our stations and wider network to get people talking about mental health and make it easier to find support, with activities including:

- At Blackfriars Station, our **'1 in 4' installation** used four train seats to represent the number of people experiencing mental health problems each year. The installation also shared real-life experiences and provided QR codes directing people to more information
- We also used messaging across the network to make conversations about mental health more open and point people towards the right support

Together, these initiatives reached more than 14 million people, bringing the conversation to a much wider audience.

Internal support and wellbeing infrastructure

Looking after our colleagues is a key part of building a resilient railway. This year, we continued to invest in the support available to them:

- We now have the **largest in-house occupational health team** in the UK rail sector, delivering **15,000+ appointments annually**
- Mental health support is integrated into our broader **health and wellbeing strategy**, recognising that looking after people's mental health is just as important as supporting their physical health
- We made ongoing efforts to equip staff with the resources, training and support to manage their own mental wellbeing - and support others

"We're incredibly proud to partner with GTR on a programme that is not only raising vital funds but also helping to shift attitudes towards mental health. By engaging thousands of colleagues and reaching millions of passengers, GTR is using its unique platform to normalise conversations, challenge stigma and ensure more people know that support is available. We're hugely grateful for the commitment and support shown so far, and we look forward to building on this momentum together and seeing what more we can achieve through the remainder of our partnership."

Emma Ackerman, Mind,
Executive Director of Income Generation

Positive mental health: our commitments for 26/27

We're proud of the progress we've made this year supporting positive mental health across the network, from scaling awareness to encouraging people to seek help and preventing suicide.

Mental health will continue to be a major issue for GTR and the rail industry, so we'll continue to build on this work and help support colleagues, passengers and vulnerable people by:

- Doubling our original fundraising target for Mind from £75,000 to £150,000
- Running a major awareness campaign at Christmas, featuring celebrities to take the positive mental health message to millions more people
- Continuing to support colleagues' physical and mental wellbeing, helping them proactively look after their health and access support when they need it
- Developing strong local partnerships to reduce the number of vulnerable and distressed people who access and trespass on our stations and network - and reduce the risk of harm
- Continuing to support colleagues involved in distressing incidents at work through our TRIM programme, helping them recover with confidence

15,000+

annual appointments are delivered
by our occupational health team

Environmental sustainability

Our purpose is to create great journeys every day, for a sustainable future. With passenger numbers back to pre-pandemic levels and the planet facing a climate crisis, we have a bigger role to play than ever.

Sustainability is about more than reducing our environmental impact. It's about **transforming how we operate, how we innovate and how we make a positive difference to the communities around us.**

Our Sustainability Blueprint, based on the Rail Safety and Standards Board's (RSSB) own Sustainable Rail Blueprint, sets out our path to a greener, fairer and more resilient railway that is ready for the future. It focuses on three key areas: emissions, natural environment and social sustainability.

For this report, we're focusing on how we're making a positive impact on the planet, while highlighting the social value we generate in communities across our network and beyond.

Emissions

Despite being the most sustainable form of public transport, rail can still do more to reduce its carbon emissions as we work towards net zero carbon rail and cleaner air for everybody.

In 2024, we set a five-year target to reduce Scope 1 and Scope 2 greenhouse gas emissions by 42% from 2021 levels. This covers emissions from our direct operations and the power used to run them.

Non-traction electricity, used in our stations, offices and depots, is supplied through a renewable tariff. The traction electricity that powers almost all our trains, except services to Uckfield and along the Marshlink, is still purchased through Network Rail. And this is the biggest source of our greenhouse gas emissions.

In 2025/26, our Scope 1 and 2 emissions were 139,000 tonnes of CO₂e. That's a 16% reduction on the baseline and a 12% improvement on the previous year. This was largely driven by the lower carbon intensity of the electricity used to power our trains, despite us running more services. The amount of CO₂e produced by traction energy per passenger journey also fell from 520g to 430g compared to the previous year.

We're also working to make the fleet more efficient, getting the same journey done with less electricity. Factors such as the number of carriages and passengers, weather, maintenance, routes and timetables can all affect how much power our trains use. Improving efficiency saves money and energy. One example is our fleet engineering team's switch to the Train Control & Management System.



This has given the team better oversight of the energy being used, reduced the time needed to collect that information – and **saved half a million pounds** on new sensors. Both Network Rail and RSSB have recognised the value of this approach.

Energy use outside of powering our trains is also falling, with electricity down 6% and gas down more than 4%. Petrol and diesel use for ancillary vehicles increased by 1%, although these account for just 2% of total Scope 1 emissions.

Looking ahead, the ongoing decarbonisation of the grid will help us make progress towards our targets. At the same time, improving our energy efficiency and encouraging more people to travel by train helps tackle overall transport emissions.

A new framework for action

In the past year, we developed our new Sustainability Blueprint and Corporate Sustainability plan. While they were finalised in April 2026, we put their principles into practice throughout the year. This included giving colleagues more freedom to take action locally and aligning our work to industry and partner standards, which set a consistent direction.

Weather resilience and climate change adaptation plan

Climate change means we need to prepare for more extreme weather and make sure our railway can keep running when that happens.

Our climate adaptation work focuses on protecting colleagues and customers, as well as making sure our assets and operations can respond. Other measures focus on the systems and equipment we use to manage disruptions, including timetables, fault reporting, flood reports and pumps.



Ockley landslip



Work to repair the landslip at Ockley

A landslip near Ockley in January showed why this preparation matters. After heavy rainfall, part of the embankment gave way, leaving part of the track impassable – and disrupting passengers. With stronger processes in place, engineering teams responded quickly to fix the embankment, secure other areas near the landslip and rebuild the railway. At the same time, we maintained half-hourly trains, provided a bus for local journeys and directed some passengers to other routes. This meant the majority of customers could continue to travel by train.

In March 2026, Climate Sense reported on our ability to adapt to extreme weather, recognising our efficient management and highlighting examples of breakthrough projects.

Water use

In this reporting period, our water use increased by 18%. This was largely due to more train services. We're continuing to install water meters, which have revealed more leaks than expected. As a result, we're busy improving various management processes so we repair leaks faster. We're also assessing the risk of water pollution as part of infrastructure renewal projects, helping us identify and address potential problems before work begins.

Waste management

We reduced the amount of waste we produced and sent to landfill. Specifically, total waste fell by 32 tonnes compared to the previous year, a reduction of 0.7%. Disposal of hazardous waste fell by 42 tonnes (11%), while the amount of waste sent to landfill more than halved. At the same time, we sent 171 tonnes of waste to alternative recovery, mainly to be processed or used to generate energy. Food waste sent for anaerobic digestion increased from 65 tonnes in 2024/25 to 93 tonnes this year, a rise of 43%.

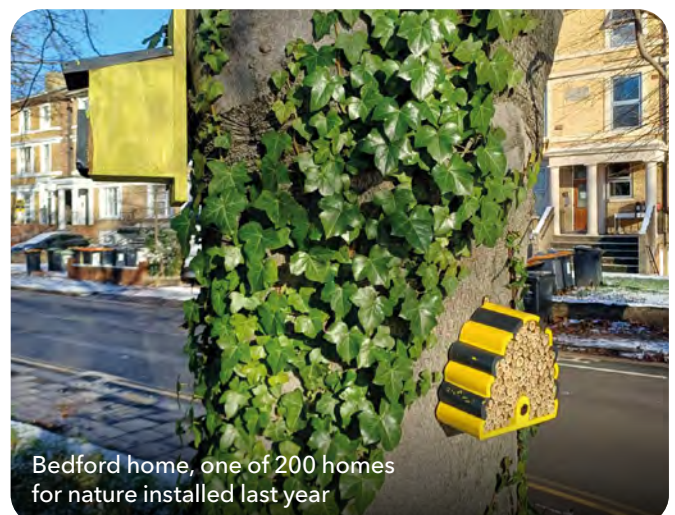
We also changed how we manage waste at stations in response to new recycling regulations. Following a trial, we removed bins from smaller, unstaffed stations where there isn't enough space for segregated collection and there are no colleagues on hand to stop waste streams being contaminated. Clear communication has been key. As well as asking customers at unstaffed stations to take their waste home, we've added signs at stations with segregated bins, so customers know which one to use. Meanwhile, staff areas at our depots and stations now have food waste caddies, making it easier for colleagues to separate their food waste.

Helping nature thrive

To celebrate 200 years of rail, we partnered with the Bee Friendly Trust to install 200 Homes for Nature at our stations. These include bug hotels, bird boxes, planters and pocket habitats for bees, beetles and butterflies, creating more space for nature alongside the railway.

Through a separate partnership with GreenTheUK, we supported the University of Sussex and Blue Marine Foundation to survey biodiversity at four marine sites near Littlehampton and Worthing. This builds on work our colleagues have already been doing to care for the coastline, including litter-picking at Brighton in September 2024 and 2025. Looking after the places our customers, communities and colleagues enjoy is an important part of our approach to sustainability.

We try to find sustainable solutions to almost every challenge. One example came at Hornsey, when nearby residents voiced concerns about noise from stabled trains. Instead of installing short-lived and expensive sound barriers, our fleet infrastructure team worked with partners Hollywell to plant Thuja trees. As the trees mature, their ability to dampen sound improves. They're also easy to maintain and bring wider benefits, by absorbing excess heat and rain, while adding greenery to the area.



Bedford home, one of 200 homes for nature installed last year



GTR facilities team installing new planters at Enfield Chase

Supporting sustainability in our communities

We supported a variety of important environmental projects through our Your Station, Your Community Investment Fund, including:

- **Climate Ed:** We funded a five-session programme on carbon reduction in 13 different primary schools within two miles of Thameslink stations. Some 22 volunteers delivered the programme to 31 groups of children, with 893 students taking part. The impact was clear, with 89% of pupils saying they would make at least one lifestyle change to support climate action. The project generated £2,777,797 in social value.

One teacher said: *"The climate workshop for Year 5 was incredibly informative and really brought the learning to life. Our volunteer was exceptionally inclusive and kind, building a strong relationship with the pupils from the start. The children were devastated when the programme ended because they enjoyed it so much. Overall, the workshop helped them understand how to live a more sustainable lifestyle, and they gained so much from the experience."*

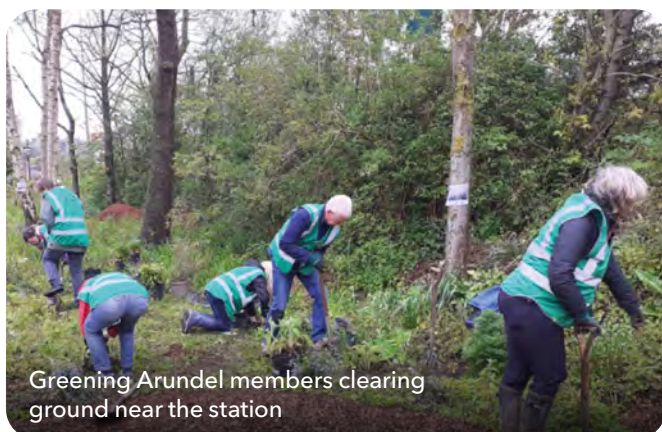
A pupil summed up the impact: *"I really liked the sessions. They helped me understand climate change and feel like there is something I can do."*



Installing a home for nature at Norbury station

£11,768,794

social value generated by our 3
Your Station, Your Community
funded environmental
projects



Greening Arundel members clearing ground near the station

- **Greening Arundel:** Since April 2023, more than 800 hours of volunteer time have transformed neglected green spaces at Arundel station, making them more biodiverse and community focused. Our funding has helped Greening Arundel deliver projects that would otherwise not have been possible, including:
 - Installing a second planter, bug 'castle', and wooden train to mark Railway 200, alongside planting hundreds of plants salvaged from Jubilee Gardens and constructing a dead hedge
 - Running a community art project with local teenagers, who worked with a professional artist to create graffiti artwork on the garden's picnic table
 - Creating an environmental poetry trail that connects the station with the town
 - Engaging the local community and businesses through a 'Great Big Green Welcome to Arundel' event at the station
 - Supporting 10 adults from the Aldingbourne Trust, who water the station's plants twice a week

Overall, the grant enabled the team to provide 500 extra hours of volunteering, extending the reach and impact of Greening Arundel and generating £1,389,845 in social value.

- **Havens Food Cooperative:** Based in Newhaven, East Sussex, Havens Food Cooperative works to fight food waste and help local people. Our funding helped the project expand its services, rescuing an additional 0.5 tonnes of surplus food every week and making it available to people and families who need it. The food is distributed through a free daily community pantry in Newhaven, as well as a pop-up pantry that supplies food to schools, social groups, food-support services and other organisations. Together, these services supported 2,375 people a week. There's a significant environmental benefit, too. By keeping good food out of landfill, the project prevents around 9,600kg of CO2 and 384kg of methane being released each week. The project generated £7,601,152 in social value.

"This has been an absolute lifeline in so many ways; the sheer amount of food that I've seen that would otherwise end up in the bin is diabolical. There should be a scheme like this in every county nationwide. The amount that's been able to feed people is amazing."



Havens Food Cooperative

Environment sustainability: our commitments for 26/27

We've made good progress this year, from launching our new Sustainability Blueprint to cutting our greenhouse gas emissions and supporting community projects across the network.

We want to build on that progress by embedding sustainability into how we work and giving staff more skills and confidence to act locally. In 2026/27, we will:

- Run a second intake for the Sustainability Apprenticeship Academy, giving more staff the skills and knowledge to take local action on sustainability
- Continue to work with operational colleagues in GTR, Network Rail and the Department of Transport to

respond to climate change. This will include a new programme to replace transparent canopies at stations, making them more comfortable and resilient to extreme heat

- Continue to deliver our Corporate Sustainability Plan and embed the industry's Sustainability Blueprint, helping make sustainability part of how we run the railway
- Continue to provide community grants to environmental projects on our network and support gardening and planting projects at our stations that improve the places people use every day

Conclusion and looking ahead to 2026/27

We're excited about the opportunities ahead to strengthen our partnerships and deliver even more social impact for the communities we serve.

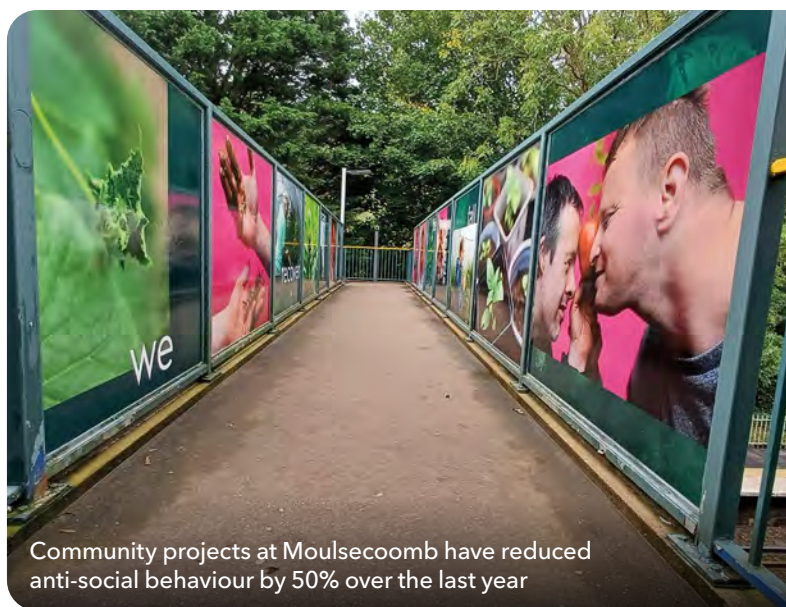
Building on everything we've learned this year, our focus for 26/27 will be to put social impact at the heart of Great British Railways, ensuring rail continues to play a positive role in connecting and supporting local communities.

The report sets out our commitments in each area, and we'll continue to deliver lasting, positive impact to our communities through our Your Station, Your Community programme, Community Rail Partnerships and charity collaborations, while moving forward on a series of new initiatives:

- **Rail Youth Promise:** an industry-wide commitment to get more young people into rail careers and help them progress once they're here. We'll work to inspire more young people and turn that interest into real job applications. We'll improve our recruitment practices and create targeted employability and learning programmes, such as an anticipated Rail Foundation Apprenticeship, opening more doors for the next generation
- **Making procurement count:** we will work even closer with suppliers, embedding social value into procurement and contract management for every contract over £5 million, so our spending creates broader benefits for our communities and the economy
- **Improving station safety:** we will continue to build new partnerships with community organisations and connect them with our safety teams to make 10 targeted stations safer, helping fund new partnership programmes through our Your Station, Your Community Fund. Together, we'll tackle local issues and help people feel safer and more confident using the railway

- **Going further with Mind:** we'll expand our corporate charity partnership with Mind to support more people and colleagues struggling with their mental health. We'll double our initial fundraising target, while raising awareness and challenging stigma among customers and colleagues with a celebrity-led campaign
- **Going further on sustainability:** we will embed the RSSB Sustainable Rail Blueprint across our organisation, helping us take action that is consistent with the broader industry to reduce our impact, respond to climate change and make the railway more resilient

By listening to the people and places we serve, we'll focus on addressing the issues that matter most. We will continue to enable inclusive growth by connecting every community on our network to jobs, skills, education, services and investment, while using our own spending, partnerships and local presence to ensure more people can share in that growth.



Community projects at Moulsecoomb have reduced anti-social behaviour by 50% over the last year

