

Social Value Report



June 2025

AVANTI
WEST COAST



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Foreword from Andy Mellors

At Avanti West Coast, our mission is to be the transport of choice, connecting customers and communities along the West Coast – helping to drive economic growth, green travel, and breaking down barriers to opportunity.

Our services have a vital role to play in bringing together families and friends, businesses and communities. We are in the privileged position of being able to make a positive difference to people's lives up and down the UK.

We are delighted that, overall, we have now created over £1 billion in social value impact.

This year, we have created over £450 million in social value impact – which is over £100 million more than last year – which equates to a one-third increase year-on-year.

We're particularly proud of providing increased support to the communities we serve, often delivered by our station teams. I'd like to thank my colleagues for their efforts, which have helped to generate £142 million in social value impact to local communities across our route, across 150 projects.

Community Rail initiatives help bring communities closer to the railway – whether it's for learning, cultural activities, or tackling social needs. You can find more details in the report, and we hope that by shining a spotlight on these activities, we inspire others to get involved in their railway, so we can make even more of a positive difference locally.

We remain committed to inclusive travel, we've supported 117,000 customers through the industry Passenger Assist scheme, a significant increase from the 77,000 we supported last year. We've bolstered this service in a number of ways, including improved wayfinding to help customers navigate the network.

We've enhanced how we work across the supply chain, promoting and encouraging sustainability across the companies we work with. We launched our first Supplier Sustainability Contest for partners, which included a Supplier Event to help generate ideas and innovation, share best practice, and encourage joint problem-solving.

Our award winning 'Safety First' campaign resulted in fewer station and onboard accidents over the festive season.

We want to be the leading train operator in the UK when it comes to creating, measuring and reporting social value. As the Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB) updates its Rail Social Value Tool (RSVT), we remain an active contributor in their efforts to recalibrate and rollout an improved way for the industry to understand and encourage social impact.



At Avanti West Coast, we continue working to promote, train and empower more colleagues to become users of the RSVT. As part of our efforts, we are delighted that Avanti West Coast Social Value Manager, Dr Theresa Robberts was awarded special recognition at The Breaking Down Barriers Awards 2025 – organised by the Purpose Coalition – for her work to promote opportunity, diversity and inclusion. We're incredibly proud of Theresa's efforts to drive positive change so that more people benefit from the opportunities rail offers.

We've come a long way in the last year, but there is always more we can achieve. We look forward to building on our progress to date to make even bigger contributions to society in the future.



Andy Mellors

Andy Mellors
Managing Director,
Avanti West Coast

Foreword from Dr Theresa Robberts, Avanti West Coast Social Impact Lead

Avanti West Coast is a responsible business. We are committed to delivering social value activities that add significant benefits the communities we serve.

It is my pleasure to announce that we have now created over £1 billion worth of social value, and are focused on delivering even more.

It was a privilege to compile this report, the third since we produced our Responsible Plan in 2021. We're proud to release this latest account of our progress, which shows an increase of £107 million in social value impact from the previous year. It's great to see how far we've extended our reach into our communities, with over 150 projects at our stations and offices. We are well on our way to reaching our goal of becoming the leading train operator in the UK when it comes to creating, measuring and reporting social value.

This report highlights our achievements not only in community engagement, but also in our quest to create sustainable jobs, promote diversity and inclusion, and invest in innovation and technology. These combined efforts from our staff and stakeholders clearly demonstrate our commitment to supporting social development and meeting the needs of the wider society. This report celebrates the positive impact that our business activities have on the lives of individuals. From 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, we contributed a total operational, environmental and economic impact worth £452,207,750.27.

Key highlights include:

Station and office teams, supporting the communities we serve, have tripled their social value impact in comparison to the previous year.

These projects and events resulted in a positive impact in communities we serve, supporting local organisations and charities. For example, charities such as Guide Dogs UK visited our stations raising awareness which helped both our staff and customers gain a better understanding of the challenges faced by visually impaired and how we can support them. These visits raised on over £10 million in Social Value impact.



Exceeding a total of £1 billion Social Value Impact.

This year we created more than £450m, an increase of £107m on last year. This is our third Social Value Report since the inception of our Responsible Plan in 2021.

We launched the first edition of the Supplier Sustainability Contest which invites partners to submit innovative proposals aimed at reducing environmental footprint and creating social value impact.

As part of the project we hosted a Supplier Event, bringing together our partners to share updates, exchange ideas and joint problem-solving.

117,000 customers supported through Passenger Assist, the industry scheme that supports inclusive travel.

We have bolstered this service with the continuation of Travel Companion (an online message platform that puts customers directly in touch with staff ready to help) and extending GoodMaps (a wayfinding indoor GPS that helps customers find their way inside our stations) to all our stations.



As we strive to become the leading train operator when it comes to creating and measuring our Social Value impact, we have been focussing on the following elements of our Social Value Impact:

- Promoting Social Value, and the way we measure its impact across the organisation with a special focus on our station teams and key staff at our offices.
- Training key staff members to use the RSVT.
- Increasing our understanding of utilisation of the RSVT, staying up to date of current and new metrics.
- Playing a key role in shaping the future of RSVT metrics working with the RSSB and other train operating companies.

As a result we have seen a significant increase in social value impact. These are examples of five of the categories we used in our Social Value Report over the past three years.

Social Value Impact category	2023	2024	2025
Community and charity	£97,152	£41,039,798	£142,914,442
Employment, training and skills	£5,473,638	£10,323,760	£23,199,137
Educational attainment	£20,588,799	£21,423,918	£49,132,801
Supply chain resilience and capacity	£57,887,863	£50,266,043	£74,442,090
Rail accessibility	£2,652,968	6,496,437	£13,339,334
Workforce equality and diversity	-	£8,206,504	£22,061,653



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T Robberts'.

Dr Theresa Robberts
Social Value and Accessibility
Manager, Avanti West Coast

Disclaimer: The figures stated in this report are calculated by an external source and Avanti West Coast can not be held responsible for them. The Rail Social Value Tool metrics, the United Nations Social Development Goals and the Purpose Goals are open to interpretation so reports and figures from other TOCs and related stakeholders might differ.



Introduction

What is social value?

Caring for the environment involves looking after our planet, social value is all about looking after our people. It's the positive experiences that affect our overall wellbeing. Measuring social value matters because it helps us on our journey towards being a responsible, sustainable business that benefits the communities we serve.

Social Value Impact is a key contributor to Social Mobility (the ability of individuals, families or groups to move upward in socioeconomic status.) It also enables us to understand the impact the railways have on the people and places around us, from environmental, social and economic perspectives. As a leading rail operator in the UK, we believe we have a duty to make a positive difference to the wellbeing of our customers and communities on the West Coast Main Line. We've come a long way in the last year, but there is always more we can achieve. We look forward to building on our progress to date to make even bigger contributions to society in the future.

The Rail Social Value Tool (RSVT)

The RSVT provides a practical way to forecast, monitor and measure social value. It also helps us to find new areas where we can improve our impact on communities and the environment. We've used the RSVT to calculate our social impact. Our report also includes case studies and other on the ground evidence on top of these calculations. This provides a deeper understanding of how rail impacts communities and people's lives.

It also enables us to demonstrate our contribution to the wider society beyond just providing rail services. Using the RSVT highlights our dedication to measuring and reporting our social impact and our commitment to continuously improve our contribution to society.

Working with the Purpose Coalition

The Purpose Coalition have created The 15 Purpose Goals, identifying the key barriers to opportunity in the UK, giving businesses the help they need to focus their efforts. The 15 Purpose Goals cover a broad range of societal and economic issues. They also identify the many faces of inequality and the need for a comprehensive approach by responsible businesses. We have used the Purpose Goals, together with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), as a benchmark of what we aim to achieve through our Social Value Impact.

Our approach

This report is guided and informed by:

- The Rail Safety and Standard Board's (RSSB) Sustainable Rail Blueprint
- The Rail Social Value Tool (RSVT)
- Our Responsible Plan
- The United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals
- The Purpose Coalition's 15 Purpose Goals

Please see Appendix A for more descriptions and explanations of the above mentioned frameworks and guidelines.

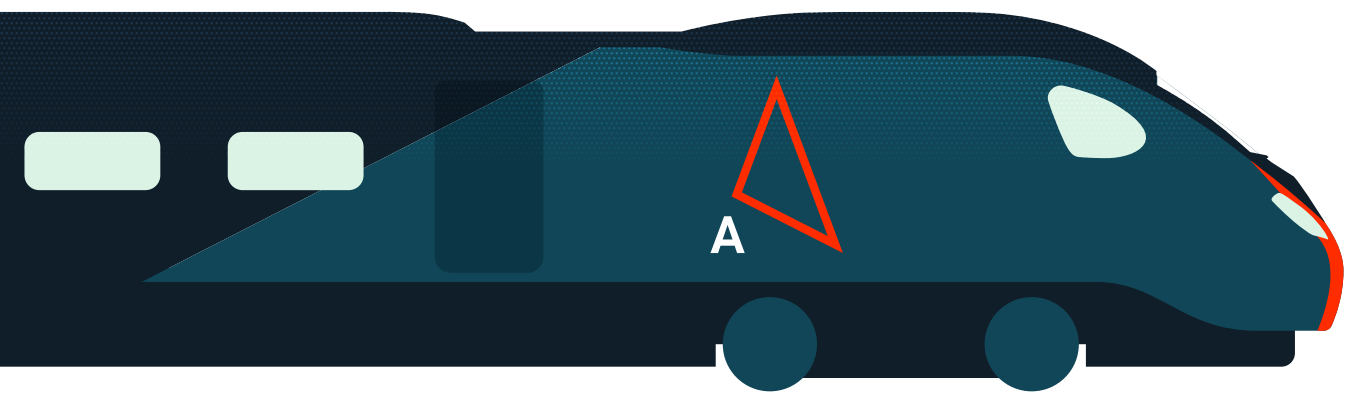
The social value indicators of the RSVT provide a framework for measuring and reporting the social, economic and environmental impact of rail services. Transparent and consistent reporting enables all rail companies to communicate their social value performance to customers, stakeholders and investors. For the purposes of this report, we use the following indicators:

- 01 Employment, training and skills
- 02 Educational attainment
- 03 Supply chain resilience and capacity
- 04 Rail accessibility
- 05 Workforce equality and diversity
- 06 Community and charity
- 07 Stakeholder engagement
- 08 Health and wellbeing
- 09 Safety
- 10 Climate and environment



Avanti West Coast

Social Value Impact:



117,000

customers supported
through Passenger Assist



3,042

staff members engaged
with training



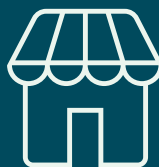
5,000

school children taking part
in our award-winning Feel
Good Field Trip initiatives



176

community initiatives
using the Rail Social
Value Tool (RSVT)



70%

of our supply chain
partners were Small and
Medium Enterprises (SMEs)

Total social,
environmental and
economic impact:
£452,207,750.27



01

Employment, training and skills

Social Value Impact: £23,199,136.05

The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals and The Purpose Coalition's Purpose Goals linked to this section:

<p>8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</p> 	<p>4 Right advice and experiences</p> 	<p>5 Open recruitment</p> 	<p>6 Fair career progression</p> 
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We understand the importance of investing in the future of our workforce. At the heart of our mission statement is determination to connect people with opportunity. We believe the railway should be open to young people not just as a mode of transport but as a potential career path.

- To do so we run projects like:**
- The King's Trust program
 - Arkwright Scholarships
 - Work Experience Placements (WEX)



The King's Trust

We continue to work with the King's Trust, delivering programmes which provide work experience, one-to-one mentoring and potential employment for successful participants.

Karen Broad, our Talent Development Manager, explains: "This initiative aims to improve the lives of young people who have faced disadvantages and adversity by providing them with work experience and opportunities for learning, leading to the delivery of a positive outcome."

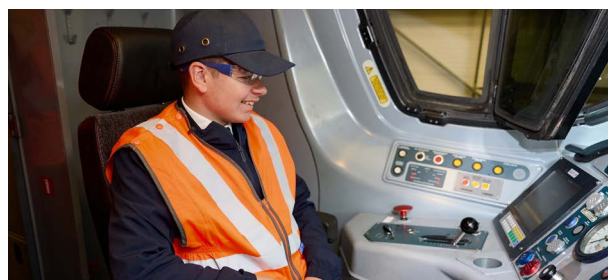
She added that this proposal is being recommended as a Business Plan Commitment (BPC), supporting our mission statement by providing a chance to work with local communities and other Train Operating Companies to create and deliver a programme, that builds young people's confidence and motivation and increase employability."

Each programme will deliver the following essential goals for up to 12 young people:

- Promote the wide range of roles available in the rail industry.
- Give people essential skills to secure a job.
- Increase employability of young people.

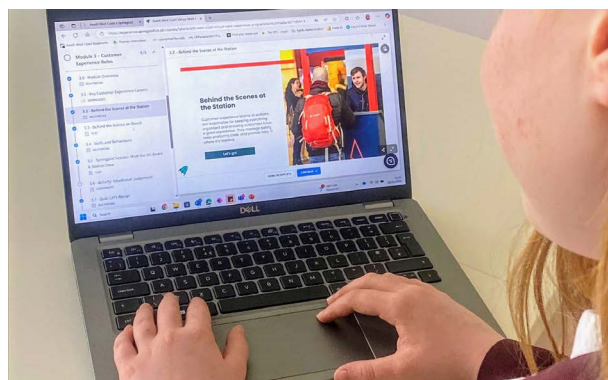
Arkwright Scholarships

An Arkwright Engineering Scholarship is the most esteemed scholarship of its type in the UK, designed to inspire students to pursue their dreams and change the world as an outstanding engineer of the future. The Scholarships are awarded to 16-year-old students through a selection process. Scholarships are sponsored by various organisations, which means that support is offered in various different ways, for example, valuable hands-on work experience, support for a curriculum project and a personal mentor who can help with aspects of studies and career planning.



WEX Placements

We support requests from local schools and relatives of employees to be able to provide meaningful work experience placements in our offices and stations. All young people who attend a placement with us have a full induction and we provide eLearning to support their knowledge and understanding of Avanti West Coast. Placements range from one day to two weeks.



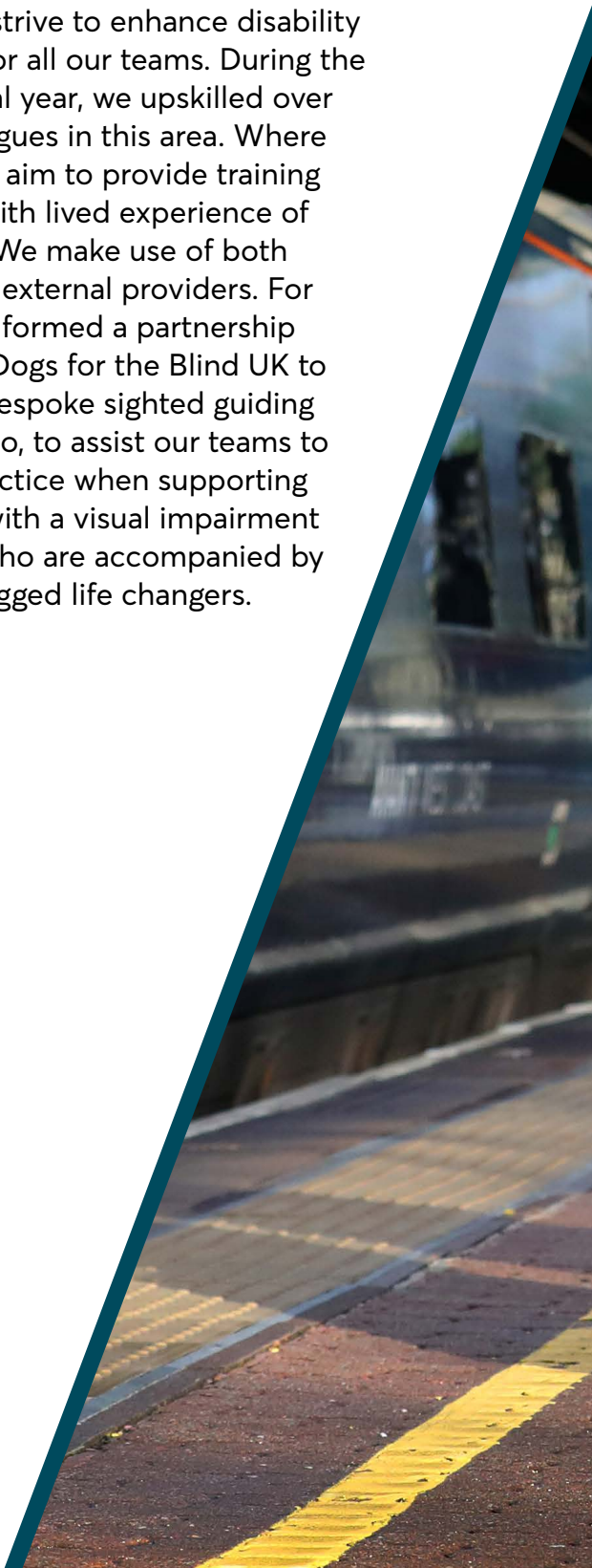
Training our employees to support and understand our customers

Our employees are our most valuable asset. Our Responsible Plan links with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and one of its four pillars is 'Our People'. Our Responsible Plan also encourages us to listen, empower and inspire colleagues, by talking more and encourage each other to take positive action. Our goal is to create a supportive and inclusive work environment that empowers our employees to reach their full potential. In the past financial year, 3,042 colleagues participated in some form of training, totalling over 116,000 hours across the business. Training included a range of formats such as in-person and online courses, safety briefs, and e-learning modules.



Disability awareness training

At Avanti West Coast, we believe our service should be accessible by all. By enabling people with disabilities to travel on our trains, we contribute towards their independence and quality of life. This is why we continually strive to enhance disability awareness for all our teams. During the past financial year, we upskilled over 2,500 colleagues in this area. Where possible, we aim to provide training by people with lived experience of a disability. We make use of both internal and external providers. For example we formed a partnership with Guide Dogs for the Blind UK to produce a bespoke sighted guiding training video, to assist our teams to use best practice when supporting customers with a visual impairment and those who are accompanied by their four-legged life changers.





02

Educational attainment

Social Value Impact: £49,132,800.95

The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals and The Purpose Coalition's Purpose Goals linked to this section:



Our ambition at Avanti West Coast, to create a railway which is open to all, does not only extend to our colleagues. We also believe that children and young people should feel confident and be safe to use the railways.

Together with external stakeholders we run a range of programs to empower children which includes but is not limited to:

- The Rail Safe Friendly Programme.
- Feel Good Field Trips.
- Schools and scouts visits to our stations.

Rail Safe Friendly scheme

At Avanti West Coast we have continued our partnership with the Rail Safe Friendly programme to ensure we support the education and awareness of the dangers of the railway to both primary and secondary schools, and to keep children within our communities safe. As a gold level supporter of the 'Learn Live' program, we have been able to offer the opportunity of live lessons and classroom support materials to pupils of all ages. In the past financial year we reached 65,128 learners from 108 Schools.



Feel Good Field Trips

During the past financial year we surpassed our target of hosting 5,000 children through our award-winning Feel Good Field Trips initiative. The initiative was designed to give up to 5,000 pupils aged between 4 and 18 the chance to travel by train for hands on learning and culturally diverse days out that may have previously been inaccessible for them. The scheme, which we delivered in partnership with Community Rail Lancashire, provided 215 trips for 5,250 pupils and saw 50,000 miles travelled on the West Coast Main Line to 60 destinations. Feel Good Field Trips was launched in April 2022 and over the course of three years, we partnered with organisations local to its route to offer unique and varied learning experiences, which included:

- Art workshops at The Herbert Art Gallery and Museum in Coventry.
- A trip to Gladstone Pottery Museum in Stoke-on-Trent.
- Outdoor adventuring in the Lake District.
- A news and media workshop delivered by The Guardian Foundation.
- A behind-the-scenes tour and matinee performance of Murder on the Orient Express.



Dave Savage of Community Rail Lancashire facilitated all the days out. The former geography teacher said:

"I've always believed that field trips are a vital part of a child's education, offering invaluable opportunities to broaden their horizons and experience places beyond their everyday surroundings."

"This project was made possible through the tremendous support of Avanti West Coast, Community Rail Lancashire and other train operating companies, as well as the dedicated Community Rail Officers along the route. Their commitment and collaboration have allowed us to turn these trips into powerful learning experiences that will stay with the children for a lifetime."



As part of the Feel Good Field Trip initiative Avanti West Coast welcomes schoolchildren to the home of Warrington Wolves Rugby League Club.

This unique outing was made possible after our team at Avanti West Coast teamed up with the charitable arm of the Rugby League Club to create a different hands-on learning experience for our Feel Good Field Trips scheme. Year 3 pupils from Mereside Primary Academy in Blackpool travelled by train to Warrington Bank Quay for a fun and educational day out at the Halliwell Jones Stadium – where the Super League club play their home matches. They enjoyed a tour of the stadium, an interactive session about how mental and physical health are linked, as well as the chance to learn how to throw and catch a rugby ball.

Joanna Buckley, Community Manager at Avanti West Coast, said:

"Warrington Wolves are well known on the West Coast and in the world of sport, so we're delighted to offer young people a day trip to the home of this great club."

"Connecting school pupils to learning opportunities they would never otherwise have access to is what Feel Good Field Trips is all about."

Platform for change

The Platform for Change programme is designed to engage and empower scout groups across Britain through collaboration with Community Rail Partnerships. Justin Williams, one of our Station Customer Service Assistants, has been a scout leader in Stafford for many years and has been working hard to turn a redundant piece of land at the station into a bee friendly garden space, which can be designed and implemented by local scouts with the help of members of our community. It's a long-term plan but Justin and the cubs, beavers and squirrels have made a start with idea sessions and litter picking. Justin, a Group Scout Leader for the 6th Stafford (Trinity) Scout Group, is inspiring Squirrel Scouts, Beaver Scouts and Cub Scouts to make a positive difference to the local community when they visit Stafford Station. Community Rail Network is collaborating with the Scouts Association and the rail industry to deliver Platform for Change, a programme to engage and empower Scout groups across Britain through community rail activity, station projects and rail confidence trips. The scouts are working hard hoping to achieve their 'Platform for Change' badge!



Stafford Platform for change

Eight Cubs and scout visits to the station was organised, looking at rail safety and litter picking. It even included a sleep over. Several age groups have taken part and have also planted some new trees funded by the forestry commission. The waiting room notice boards have been updated with art work done by the different groups.



03

Supply chain resilience and capacity

Social Value Impact: £74,442,090.45

The United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals and The Purpose Coalition’s Purpose Goals linked to this section:



The international standard for sustainable procurement: BS ISO 20400:2017 states the following:

“Every organisation has environmental, and economic impacts. Procurement is a powerful instrument for organisations wishing to behave in a responsible way and contribute to sustainable development and to the achievement of the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals. By integrating sustainability in procurement policies and practices, including supply chains, organisations can manage risks (including opportunities) for sustainable environmental, social, and economic development.”

Our Sustainable Procurement and Supply Chain strategy is based on the ISO 20400 framework, which we are embedding throughout our procurement and operational processes to ensure sustainable, responsible decision-making across the value chain.



In FY24, over 70% of our supply chain partners were Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). We are committed to opening access to these smaller suppliers, giving them market visibility and possibility to scale up and innovate creating job opportunities, supporting local communities, and sourcing locally to reduce environmental impact. This approach supports our sustainability goals and helps strengthen the communities where we work.

Our Food and Beverage Team says:

"Working with our local suppliers and SMEs is at the heart of our Food & Beverage proposition development. It reflects our core values and our commitment to supporting local businesses and communities along our route."

The Rail Social Value Tool (RSVT) measures the social value impact generated by sustainable procurement in the following areas:

- **Local Supply:** The impact of participation of 'local' suppliers and sub-contractors in supply chains. Local is user-defined.
- **SME's:** The impact of participation of small and medium enterprises (SME) suppliers and sub-contractors in supply chains, as defined by UK law (enterprises with fewer than 250 employees).
- **VCSEs:** The impact of participation of voluntary, community and social enterprises (VCSE) suppliers and sub-contractors in supply chains.
- **Payment Term = <30 days:** The impact of supporting financial health, stability and growth of our Suppliers securing payment terms =< 30 days paid on time.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** The impact of productive collaboration with internal and external stakeholder fosters inclusive decision-making, builds trust, and leads to more sustainable and equitable outcomes.



Daniel's Delights

One of our newest SMEs is Daniels Delights, a family owned Chocolatier that was launched in 2007 in Stoke On Trent. A family-owned chocolate firm started by a husband and wife team making wedding favours grew into a successful business. Partnered with Luker Chocolate, a family-owned Colombian Cacao plantation, producing cacao since the 1950s, wholly focused on investing in local rural communities and creating long term sustainable relationships with farmers and growers. The Cacao they produce is classified by the ICCO as being in the top 8% of the global production in terms of quality and has the fino de aroma classification.



In FY24, more than 50% of our Suppliers had payment terms agreed within 30 days. This promotes economic resilience, encourages ethical business practices and enable social impact for Suppliers. We actively promote innovation and shared value creation through collaborative initiatives with our Suppliers.

Daniel's Delights told us...

"Working with Avanti West Coast enabled us to launch a new size and pack format – 15g in an innovative paper flow wrap so we expect to enjoy new business as a result of this innovation. As we expand the format, we hope to be able to secure new business and in turn recruit, however we would say it has secured our business in what are challenging times for UK producers, especially in the chocolate category."



We launched the first edition of the Supplier Sustainability Contest which invites partners to submit innovative proposals aimed at reducing environmental footprint and creating social value impact. This initiative fosters creativity and co-ownership of our sustainability agenda.



We hosted a Supplier Event, bringing together our partners to share updates, exchange ideas, and collaborate on topics such as innovation, efficiency, growth and sustainability. This event served as a valuable platform for open dialogue and joint problem-solving. We maintain a high standard in collaborative practices, consistently delivering excellence in line with ISO 44001:2017 – Collaborative Business Relationship Management Systems. This was validated in FY24 through a three-year external audit, resulting in 100% certification achievement.

In addition, we drive continuous improvement and strategic value through Value Improvement Projects. These initiatives are co-developed with our strategic partners and internal directorates, focusing on enhancing customer experience, operational efficiency, and cost-effectiveness. We leverage collaborative tools and cross-functional expertise to maximise shared benefits across the organisation and our extended supply network.

04

Rail accessibility

Social Value Impact: £13,339,333.73

**The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals and
The Purpose Coalition's Purpose Goals linked to this section:**



Creating a railway that is accessible to all means we have a responsibility to prioritise accessibility so all our customers can enjoy a seamless end-to-end journey.

Our Accessibility team works with internal and external stakeholders to enable customers with disabilities and additional needs to go not just from A to B but from A to Opportunity.

To support this commitment, our station teams have completed 117,000 Passenger Assists in the past financial year.

Passenger Assistance

The number of users of the Passenger Assistance service has increased by approximately 40% in the last year. We continue to make improvements to the service to ensure a positive customer experience. We were the first operator to trial a new communication method between stations to increase the reliability and robustness of the service. We continue to work with industry partners to improve the system, ensuring a consistent, integrated service.

Improved Stations

We continue to make improvements at stations to make sure they are accessible to as many customers as possible. In the last financial year, we opened Changing Places Toilets at Lancaster and Stafford, meaning nearly half of all Avanti West Coast run stations have this facility. We also installed tactile maps at Coventry and Birmingham International to support visually impaired customers when navigating stations.

Travel Companion service

In 2022 we launched our Travel Companion service, a WhatsApp messaging service to assist disabled customers prior, during and after their journey. The service is the first of its kind in the UK rail industry. It's designed to build a stronger relationship with disabled customers and give them the confidence to make journeys independently. Our Travel Companion service has been welcomed by both internal and external stakeholders and, during the past financial year, was used by 480 customers.



GoodMaps

The GoodMaps app helps customers who need additional support to navigate train stations. It's very useful for customers with visual impairments, the app provides wayfinding directions that guide people safely around stations. It has audible and visual directions that provide clear location details of places such as platforms, Passenger Assistance meeting points, toilets and shops. During the past financial year we have launched GoodMaps at all Avanti West Coast stations and during this period 1440 customers benefited from the GoodMaps app.

Stakeholder engagement

Together with key stakeholders, we strive to continually improve our service to customers with additional needs. As part of this, we organise national online panels and host a Facebook group where customers can find advice and support when travelling with us. The Facebook page also shares key service updates and accessibility related news. Our accessibility team also attend key conferences and events to promote our services, including Travel Companion and GoodMaps. One such conference is Naidex, the UK's largest disability expo, where we worked in collaboration with the Rail Delivery Group and other train operating companies to listen to, and learn from, our customers.

Support groups at our stations

Our station teams do a great job in supporting passengers with disabilities or additional needs through Passenger Assist. Our teams have also created opportunities for organisations supporting people with disabilities in our communities, to use our facilities. For example at Runcorn station we host the Cheshire and Merseyside Autistic Adults Peer Support group. The group host sessions in the Community Room offering peer support for adults who have autism and struggle to integrate out in the community.

05

Workforce, equality and diversity

Social Value Impact: £22,061,652.90

The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals and The Purpose Coalition's Purpose Goals linked to this section:



We're committed to ensuring that our workplace is accessible and fair to all individuals, no matter what their background or circumstances. As part of our Responsible Plan, our goal is for all departments to be representative of society with zero pay gaps by 2031.

Our Responsible Plan encourages us to listen, empower and inspire colleagues. It also states that we can develop our culture of diversity even further and attract the best talent from all walks of life

Celebrating Black History Month

We recognise the importance of Black History Month and are committed to honouring and celebrating the achievements and contributions of black individuals. We held celebratory events at Birmingham New Street and London Euston stations. A colleague from Birmingham had the following to say:

"It was the best day we have ever had! The food was amazing provided by a local Caribbean caterer. Black History month represents me and many of my colleagues not only at my station but across the West Coast and all were invited. It was great to bring some tropical culture to work to boost moral for my colleagues but also give us something to be proud of. With the help and guidance of colleagues from Birmingham, London and Wolverhampton it was a great day and one we will talk about for years to come."



Cultural events at our stations

Our stations have found creative ways of celebrating our diverse communities by recognising important events and various cultural and religious festivities. The team at Stoke-on-Trent celebrated Diwali and Chinese New Year with our customers this year and handed some treats out. Zeb Nash, a Community Champion at the station, assisted 125 customers who were observing Ramadan by providing Iftar bags of snacks to assist with breaking their fast. This was greatly appreciated and was a very kind and caring thing to do. Zeb then decorated the station to celebrate Eid. Also at Stoke-on-Trent Station, Community Champions Amy Wiggins and Jade Clarke organised an Easter competition for the children in the community and gave out activity packs and treats. Together with Rugby station, the station also supported the British Royal Legion on Remembrance Day by hosting 'Poppy Appeal' fundraising and celebratory events. Station Customer Service Assistant Kylie Frears crocheted poppies and sold them as part of the appeal.



06

Community and charity

Social Value Impact: £142,914,441.75

The United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals and The Purpose Coalition’s Purpose Goals linked to this section:



At Avanti West Coast we are fortunate to have a team of passionate Community Champions based at our stations and offices who co-ordinate projects and events. These initiatives form a tapestry of social value impact in the communities we serve and are supported by Community Rail Partnerships.

In this report we can only celebrate a small sample of these projects. It is however important to note that we have more than tripled the social value impact of community projects we logged this year in comparison to the previous financial year. (£41,039,797.52 - £142,914,441.75)

With the support of Jo Buckley, Community Manager and station colleagues, we have increased the number of projects logged from 132 to 176 community initiatives using the Rail Social Value Tool (RSVT).

As set out in the introduction of this report, we divide our social value impact into 10 different avenues in line with the Rail Social Value Tool (RSVT). It is interesting that our community and charity project permeates all of these areas. If we were to celebrate every activity logged we would need a much bigger report but here are some highlights which include:

- Foodbank Collections.
- Bake Sales and coffee mornings.
- Collections and fundraising activities.
- Book clubs and book share initiatives.
- Christmas events and activities.



Foodbank Collections

From Rugby to Macclesfield, from Birmingham to London, from Stoke on Trent to Crewe, foodbank collections took place all over our West Coast network in the past financial year. Our offices in London, Birmingham and Crewe (Tatton House) hosted numerous collections for food and essential products needed by the homeless. In every case our colleagues combined forces with key external stakeholders such as building managers, local NGO's and corporations such as Sainsbury's with heartwarming results.



Bake Sales and Coffee Mornings

Our station and office colleagues love to put their baking talents to the test and as a result we had numerous bake sales and even bake offs last year. The team at Stoke-on-Trent combined their sale with their Halloween festivities, while our offices hosted Macmillan coffee mornings. Colleague feedback bare witness of it being a very special event.

"Thank you for all your efforts in putting this on, it was a great event and I enjoyed attending and contributing to a great cause!"

Annika Martin, HR Case & Policy Manager



Staff Halloween Cake Bake for City Farm in Stoke

"Hosting the Macmillan Coffee Morning at VSH Birmingham was a heart warming experience. It brought our teams together, not just over coffee and cake, but in shared support for a cause that touches many lives. The conversations, laughter, and generous contributions made the event truly special."

Joanna Buckley, Community Manager

Book Shares and Book Clubs

In our previous report we highlighted the Book Share Fundraising initiative, in aid of Penrith Mountain Rescue Team. This year Penrith station had the same success continuing the project and as a result over £10,000 has been raised. The Book Share idea has proven to be popular and has been adopted by the majority of our stations.

The idea is simple, a bookshelf is set up at the station in area where commuters have easy access to it. If the team wish, a donation box or tin is secured at the same spot along with a message asking for donations for a nominated charity. Interested people get to borrow a book for a donation and return it once they have finished reading it. Reading is a mindful activity so the Social Value impact of this initiative is very high.



Our offices have also done similar projects like the Book Club and Christmas Book Swap at the Euston offices.

"The Christmas book swap was such an amazing idea by our Green Champion, Livi Player, to end the year on a high note. The generosity of everyone bringing in multiple books and even baking mince pies was really heartwarming. At the time, we were going into a stressful and uncertain Christmas period, with strikes and engineering work looming, and having a calm space to meet, swap some of our favourite reads and discuss our shared passion was really positive for my sense of wellbeing. A festive morale booster!"

Simon Brooks, Commercial Partnerships Manager

"The 338 book club adds social value to my time in the office, it has created a community in 338 for those with a shared passion and interest. Our lunchtime meetings encourage me to step away from my desk and has enabled me to bond with my colleagues."

Sophie Thomas, App Product Owner



Christmas activities

The festive season as an opportunity for both station and office colleagues to host community activities and collections. Whether it is Christmas Jumper Day across the West Coast, a Grotto at our Training Academy, Toys and Gifts Appeals at Birmingham New Street and Stoke-on-Trent stations or Secret Santa events at our offices, the results lift all our spirits. Numerous charities and community organisation benefit including Age UK, MyCWA (Cheshire Without Abuse) and Railway Children.

Charity collections

Our colleagues often organise collections for charities in their community, which have a special place in their hearts.

Here are some examples of what they achieved:

- **Tatton House Training Academy** celebrated Leon day, by hosting a Toy drive in aid of the women's refuge Cheshire Without Abuse, a local charity who organise outings for mums and children in their care. The toy drive ensured that they had a truly memorable day.
- **Rugby Station** continue with the efforts to raise funds for the local Gymnastics Club.
- **Hospice collections:** Many of our stations do collections to support their local hospices. These funds are vital for the continuation of their services in the communities.
- **Macclesfield Station** did a collection for the local Dove Hole Cat Sanctuary after an urgent appeal was put out for help



Customer and Communities Investment Fund (CCIF)

Organisation: Mencap Liverpool and Sefton

Project Name: On the Right Track: Inclusive Travel Training Project

Project Summary: Nadine from Mencap Liverpool and Sefton said the following when reporting back on their CCIF funded project.

"Travelling shouldn't be a barrier, and it is so important to that we hear and listen the voices and perspectives of people with lived experience. We can really learn from each other, and this is vital in order to keep moving towards travel being fully inclusive. Our On the Right Track Project co-designed Travel Training with Mencap Members, building from their real-life experiences, worries and aspirations and we hope to be a part of shaping a more understanding and inclusive future."

"The project aimed to encourage and promote independent travel of people with a learning disability. Lack of access to travel is a barrier to many people with Learning Disabilities to lead happy, healthy and fulfilling lives. Being able to travel independently opens up a wealth of opportunities from getting involved in their local community to voluntary and employment opportunities to reducing isolation by making lasting friendships and engaging in social activities."

Mencap Liverpool and Sefton first determine the barriers, positives, negatives and overall views of travel by producing an accessible survey for their members and the wider community of adults with Learning Disabilities.

From this research and information gathered through in person workshops, common themes emerged including:

- How information is shared and how this can be more inclusive.
- How to travel feeling safe and secure.
- Being heard - People with a learning disability should be seen, heard and valued in all aspects of life - and this includes transport services.
- Utilising and understanding existing accessibility tools and reasonable adjustments.

The project also educates and raises awareness to travel operators to understand the difficulties people with a learning disability face travelling, both independently and with families. The project has also created a legacy through creating inclusive Travel Resources co-designed by people with lived experience.



Participant Feedback:

"I definitely feel more confident now travelling, through learning at the workshops, practical sessions and trips! All the Avanti West Coast staff have been spot on and very friendly!" - J

"Travel training helped me, it was really helpful to help people feel more confident travelling - I now feel confident enough to travel independently outside of Liverpool." - P

"It was interesting to learn that there is more information around in stations than we thought, especially once you know what to look for." - J

"I learned that there is a lot of support in the stations, helpful staff around to guide you, which made you feel better in yourself and more secure and safe." - A

"I use my travel checklist when I go on trips now! It helped me travel to Manchester independently." - P

Our adventure so far...

March 2024

We were **awarded funding from Avanti West Coast** to begin our journey with the On The Right Track: Travel Training Project.



July 2024

We created an **accessible Travel Training Survey** for adults with learning disabilities and people who work for learning disability organisations to share their thoughts and experiences on independent travel.



August 2024

We began our **Focus Groups** in Liverpool Central Library to explore and share thoughts on public transport, both the positives and the barriers to help build our resource list, we had a lot of interesting insights.



September 2024

We discovered **themes to explore** in our Weekly sessions, including Safety & Security, Journey Planning, and more.

November 2024

We continued our **workshops** looking at breaking down barriers and addressing worries and fears about travelling independently and had special sessions from Mersey Travel.

October 2024

Using the knowledge and confidence they built in the workshops, **the Travel Training team** planned their first trip to Manchester.



Organisation: Cheshire Buddies partnership

Project Name: Train Buddies

Project Summary: In May 2024 Central Buddy Scheme also received funding from Avanti West Coast to assist with their 'Train Buddies project' which was designed to support disabled children and young people to access train travel. The organisation was aware that some children had never been on a train and were not confident in using the railways. The project also included an art project at Crewe station as a legacy piece of artwork.

The project provided disabled children and young people, as well as sibling young carers, the opportunity to have days out on the train and for train travel to be a positive experience; it also enabled the

development of valuable life skills visiting a railway station, reading arrival/departure boards, finding platform numbers, boarding and alighting the train. For most it was their first train journey and first time visiting some amazing cities.

"I was a bit scared about going on a train but now it's fine, if you get stuck you can ask the staff, they will always help you. We've had to use a ramp a few times for one of our friends, and it's fine. It means we can all go on the train together, which is so good."

Project participant

CCBS





Organisation: Fylde Rugby Community Foundation

Project Name: Blackpool Community Physical and Mental Wellbeing Walking Rugby Sessions

Project Summary: The organisation expanded their highly successful Walking Rugby Program in Blackpool, to provide accessible walking rugby and social activities to vulnerable and isolated older locals aged 50 and over. The aim is to improve participants wellbeing, mental and physical health and to reduce social isolation and physical inactivity. The funding from Avanti West Coast has made a significant difference in the lives of the participants, by providing physical exercise leading to weight loss and improved fitness.

The social aspect of the sessions has been incredibly beneficial for participants' mental health as it provides a supportive environment where participants can socialise, meet new people, and build friendships. The program has helped reduce social isolation, particularly among the older generation, giving them a sense of belonging.



"To someone that has been heavily involved in rugby for over 50 years, to have the opportunity to still 'play' has been fantastic. The camaraderie and balance of fun, effort and competition is spot on. I can't thank the Fylde Foundation enough for this initiative!"

Robbie Jones, 71 Years old



07

Stakeholder engagement

Social Value Impact: £5,997,051.24

The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals and The Purpose Coalition's Purpose Goals linked to this section:



“Crucial Crewe (CC) is the most valuable partnership initiative of it’s kind anywhere in the UK,” reports Crewe Station Manager Taryn Banks. The event is a wonderful example of a wide variety of stakeholders taking hands to achieve a common goal.

The stakeholders involved with this project strive to give children the skills to deal with a wide range of emergency situations, and to enable them to make a valued contribution to their local community through good citizenship. The project included a two day event at Crewe Alexandra Football Stadium where two of our Community Champion from Crewe station, Niki and Emily, ran two workshops. Each company had a stall set up where groups moved around the room spending time with each company present. Our Champions created a session to teach the children about Rail Safety and what the colleagues at and onboard do to ensure our customers are safe.

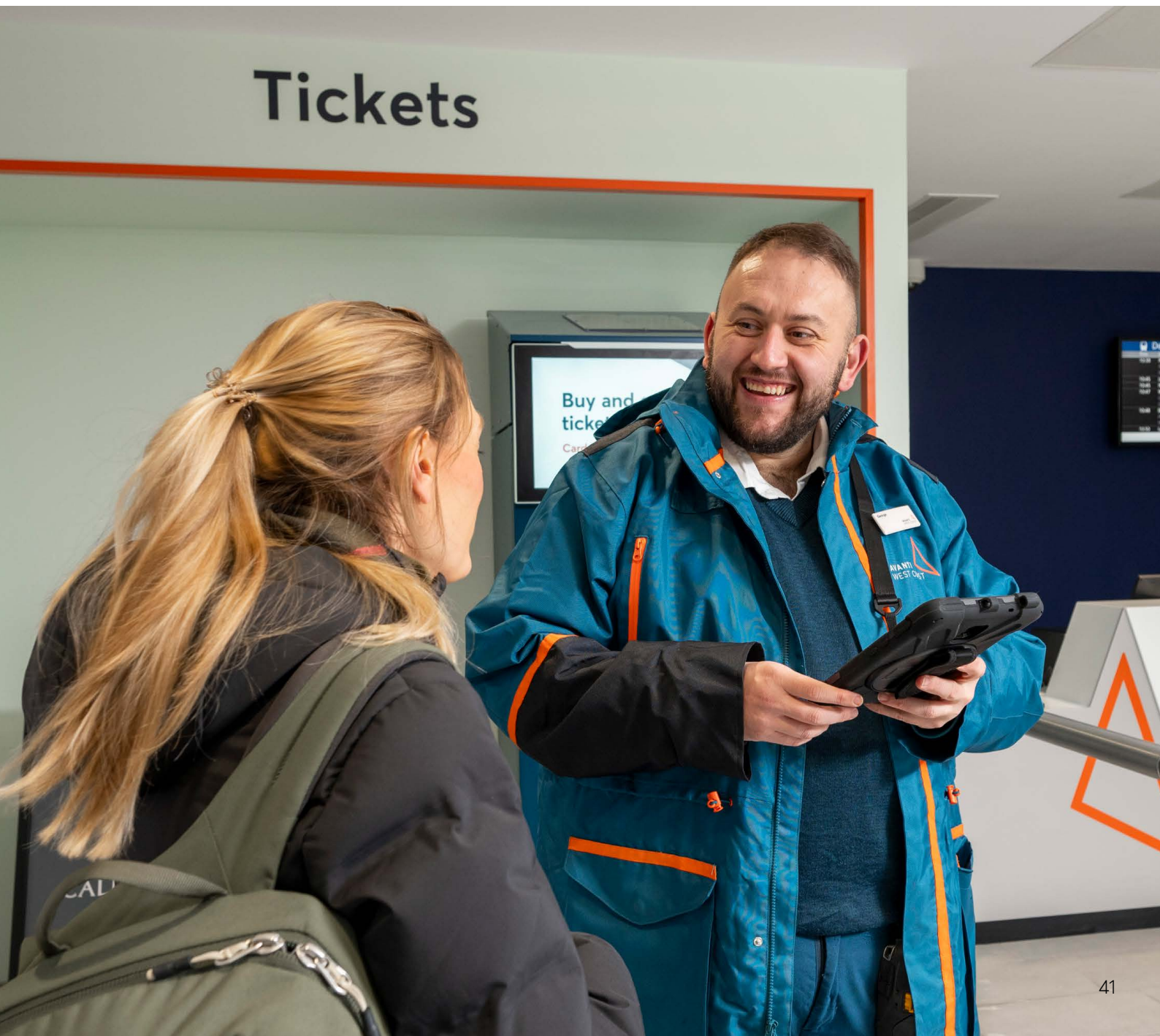
Feedback from event organiser at ‘Child Safety Media’

“Thank you all for the wonderful work that you and your colleagues have put in to make this year’s Crewe ‘Crucial Crew’ a great success. Having witnessed the children totally immersed in the sessions and their delight and laughter on the final session yesterday, I think you should all feel very proud of the work that you do to keep children safe. It never ceases to amaze me how you continue to present your activities with the same energy and enthusiasm... session after session, day after day – well done you all!”



Stockport Foundation 92

Working with young people who are living with additional needs. Along with colleagues from CrossCountry Trains, we delivered a station tour that included navigating the ticket purchase process and use of the train information boards. We also spoke about the importance of rail safety and who to ask for help along with an educational talk from British Transport Police.



Network Rail investment breathes new life into historic building at Glasgow Central

- New facilities offer improved journey experience, as part of station upgrade project.
- Ticket Office and First Class Lounge relocate to Caledonian Chambers bringing Avanti West Coast closer to its customers.

Avanti West Coast has opened the doors to its new Ticket Office and First Class Lounge at Glasgow Central following major works to upgrade the station. The new facilities, which are part of a £5m investment by Network Rail, offer an improved customer experience for those travelling to and from Glasgow. Located in the historic Caledonian Chambers on the east side of the concourse and near to Platforms 1 and 2 – where Avanti West Coast’s Pendolino trains arrive and depart – the Ticket Office and First Class Lounge now mean our facilities and colleagues are closer to our customers. Network

Rail’s work to refurbish the Caledonian Chambers has seen it respectfully preserve the original building and its features. An exposed steel pillar is part of the interior of the new Ticket Office. In addition, a £52,000 grant from the Railway Heritage Trust has enabled Network Rail to restore some of the original sash windows on the building façade, which feature in Avanti West Coast’s First Class Lounge. As part of the project, Network Rail have created a new step-free Station Reception on the concourse level of the building to improve accessibility – particularly for those with wheelchairs, prams or luggage.

Liam Sumpter, Managing Director at Network Rail Scotland, said:

“This project represents an exciting opportunity to enhance facilities within the station in what is a multi-million pound investment in Glasgow Central.”





Hope in Hamilton – Mental Health Community Project

Avanti West Coast, together with other train operating companies, unveiled a community project to champion mental health in Scotland. A train carriage has been transformed into an interactive art installation at Hamilton Central station.

The large-scale artwork titled 'Hope in Hamilton', features visual messages collected from members of the community. The installation aims to create a sense of hope with a display of uplifting messages that can be viewed on a ticker display on the platform.

The unique art piece is the result of a project by Rail 74 Community Rail Partnership and supported through Avanti West Coast's Station Community Fund, as well as funding from CrossCountry and ScotRail.

With the support of Samaritans, a series of workshops were held over eight months for members of the South Lanarkshire community and artist, Rob Mulholland, from Arcadia Sculpture Centre in Loch Lomond, brought the participants' ideas to life using a train carriage that was donated by rail manufacturer, Alstom.

Joanne Buckley, Community Manager at Avanti West Coast, said:

"We want to support causes that matter most to communities along our route, so we're proud to have played a part in raising awareness and understanding of mental health in South Lanarkshire through this amazing project.

"Through our work with Samaritans, we know it's the small things that can make a huge difference to our wellbeing and this project has given people the chance to engage in art therapy and connect with others who have a shared experience – championing positive mental health. We want everyone to feel the sense of hope the art installation symbolises, so those who are struggling can talk or seek help."

08

Health and wellbeing

Social Value Impact: £25,594,385.75

The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals and The Purpose Coalition's Purpose Goals linked to this section:



Kelly Burton, our Health and Wellbeing Partner, prioritises the health and wellbeing of our colleagues. The railway can be a challenging environment for our workforce due to demanding schedules, shift patterns, challenging working conditions and exposure to potentially distressing events. By prioritising the health and wellbeing of our employees, we aim to build a happier and more productive workforce, which ultimately benefits our customers and our business.

Community Mental Health organisation supported by our stations

Mental Health organisations in our communities often use our stations as a base to host support groups and awareness raising activities.

Andy's Man Club at Macclesfield

Andy's Man Club is a suicide prevention charity who offer peer to peer support groups at Macclesfield station. Having someone to reach out to when in crisis is critical, especially on a railway station. The team at Macclesfield report that they have seen an increase in interventions and are hoping that having support groups at the station will assist people in getting the support they need.



Good2Talk at Runcorn

Good2Talk use the community room at Runcorn to host online support sessions, podcasts, phone support initiatives and podcasts. Once a month they host a mental health workshop for men. On Fridays they host a session which is open for people to come in to have someone to speak to.



Men's Room Health and Wellbeing events

The Health and Wellbeing Team hosted The Men's Room at various locations across our network. The Men's Room, a safe space for our male colleagues to come and have a chat about any health related questions and a chance to gain some insight into your wellbeing. The sessions featured:

- Free mini health checks, provided by our Health and Wellbeing team.
- Chaplains Mike Roberts and Andrew Hall from Railway Mission, were available on site to provide any advice and information.
- Nathan James from the mental health charity, Good2Talk shared useful tips on mental wellbeing.
- Tony and Alex from Active Hub our fitness and wellbeing provider, promoted the 'My Active Hub' app and 'My Gym' Discounts.
- Jo Mellor from Mentell provided advice and resources to colleagues.
- There were resources available from our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Spectrum.Life.



Sustainability month - Wellbeing events

In March 2025, we hosted Sustainability Month where one of the four pillars of our responsible plan, 'Our People' was focussed on. During this month events promoting good health and wellbeing were hosted by our stations and offices. Here are some examples.

Wellbeing lunch at our London and Birmingham offices

During Sustainability Month as part of the Health and Wellbeing Day in Euston 338 and Birmingham, an external agency was organised to give out meat-free and vegetarian or vegan sample food for colleagues in the office to encourage meat-free meals and healthy alternatives as well as share a range of great recipes for healthy dinners and snacks. This was a very popular event, with all the food on the tasting menu running out before the events were over.

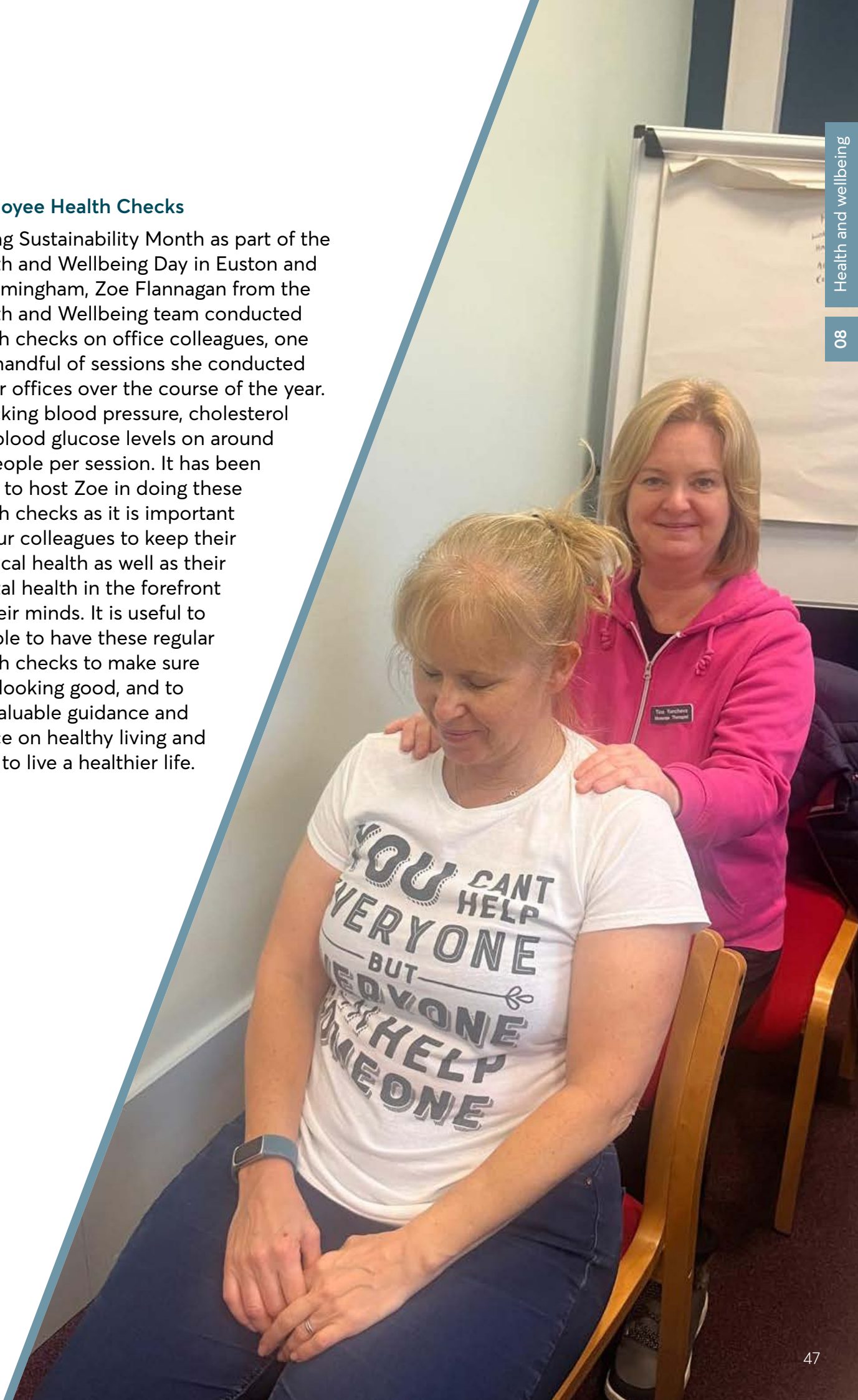
Free fruit Tuesdays

Looking at the pillar 'Our People', one of the most common pieces of feedback from colleagues in our Euston and Birmingham offices, is that they would like the offer of free fruit in the office on a selection of days throughout the month. Working closely with our Food and Beverage team and our contacts at DHL, we organised a selection of days for fruit to be delivered to the office for colleagues to be able to start their day with a healthy snack and encourage healthy lifestyle choices. The fruit was a great success amongst colleagues, with all fruit being eaten by the end of each of the selected free fruit days and with colleagues asking for this to become a common occurrence as it was a nice addition to office life and helped to make good diet choices.



Employee Health Checks

During Sustainability Month as part of the Health and Wellbeing Day in Euston and in Birmingham, Zoe Flannagan from the Health and Wellbeing team conducted health checks on office colleagues, one of a handful of sessions she conducted at our offices over the course of the year. Checking blood pressure, cholesterol and blood glucose levels on around 25 people per session. It has been great to host Zoe in doing these health checks as it is important for our colleagues to keep their physical health as well as their mental health in the forefront of their minds. It is useful to be able to have these regular health checks to make sure all is looking good, and to get valuable guidance and advice on healthy living and ways to live a healthier life.



A summary of the Health and Wellbeing initiative hosted by Avanti West Coast for colleagues

Project	Description
Health and Wellbeing Day	Wellbeing event for colleagues to attend providing health checks and holistic therapies as well as useful tips around support and benefits available at Avanti West Coast.
Know Your Numbers Week	Know your number week is a national campaign with a focus on blood pressure and the health conditions related to this. Blood Pressure checks were provided for all employees as well as literature around maintaining healthy blood pressure and discussion around what impacts blood pressure and why.
Stay Well this Winter Campaign	Health and Wellbeing event held with a focus on winter wellbeing. Health checks provided as well as holistic therapies. Focusing on flu and other winter related illness such as Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) and the effects that the festive period can have on Mental Health.
Healthy Hearts Sessions	February is Healthy Hearts month. During this time Health Screening was provided as well as information around lifestyle habits that can affect heart health. Literature available for employees to take away.
Fatigue and Wellbeing drop-in sessions	Session for all staff with a focus on fatigue and the implications that this has on wellbeing. Mini health checks are also provided with a sleep therapist and a psychotherapist made available on the day.
"A Closed Door" Grief and bereavement session	Online sessions hosted by Kelly Burton, Health and Wellbeing Partner and Mike Roberts, Railway Chaplain for managers who were supporting colleagues during bereavement. The session focused on the grief process and how to support and manage people during difficult times.

"Great set up nice friendly atmosphere
really enjoyed a bit of pampering as
well as my mini health check and some
new recipes to test on the family."



09

Safety

Social Value Impact: £94,991,017.50

The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals and The Purpose Coalition's Purpose Goals linked to this section:



At Avanti West Coast, safety is our top priority. That includes the safety of our colleagues, our customers and vulnerable members of the communities we serve.

Samaritans and Avanti West Coast joining forces to care for staff and customers

Samaritans is a charity dedicated to providing emotional support and preventing suicide, ensuring that individuals facing difficulties always have someone to turn to. Avanti West Coast works closely with Samaritans to promote mental health awareness across the rail Network. This partnership includes supporting key campaigns, hosting awareness events, and funding initiatives that encourage open discussions about mental well-being. Samaritans also play a crucial role in offering post-incident support to both colleagues and customers affected by traumatic events, helping them cope with emotional challenges.

Additionally, Samaritans provide specialist training for rail employees, equipping them with essential skills to support colleagues and passengers in times of crisis. Through this collaboration, Avanti West Coast and Samaritans continue to foster a compassionate and supportive rail environment, ensuring those in need receive the help they deserve.

Back on Track Trauma Support

Back on Track Trauma Support Training, facilitated by the Samaritans, is designed to help rail colleagues who may witness traumatic events or need to support colleagues affected by such experiences. With around 250 suicides occurring annually on the railways, these incidents can have a profound impact on individuals, teams, and the wider rail industry. While preventative measures are crucial, providing effective support after traumatic events is equally important. This training equips participants with the skills and understanding needed to navigate trauma, fostering resilience and promoting emotional well-being in the workplace.

Samaritans' Brew Monday initiatives

We supported the Samaritans campaign, Brew Monday, across our Network and Social Media Channels. The campaign focus on supporting the mental wellbeing of customers and colleagues

Working with both Avanti West Coast and Network Rail, Samaritans hosted this event in January at stations like Edinburgh, Stafford and Euston, to raise awareness of mental health related issue at our stations handing out tea and biscuits.

"We had such a good day, we had tears, laughter and loads of interactions with passengers who have used and supported the Samaritans".

Nicole Elgram, Shift Station Manager, Network Rail, quoted:

Samaritans – Small Talk Saves Lives

We are supporting the Samaritans Campaign across our Network and Social Media Channels. Emphasis is placed on the impact a chat, small talk, or a simple check in, can have on supporting both customers and colleagues mental wellbeing. Samaritans were in attendance at a number of our stations throughout the campaign, engaging with customers and staff.

Railway Children Projects

Railway Children – Day of Action

Avanti West Coast supported the charity Railway Children in August to raise awareness of safeguarding across the West Coast Main Line route from Glasgow to London as part of a Safeguarding Awareness Day and the Railway Children Right here, Right now campaign. Starting at Glasgow Central Station at 8 am colleagues from Railway Children, Network Rail and Avanti West Coast began public engagement activities to raise awareness of vulnerable young people found on the rail network including how to spot them and how to refer them to British Transport Police. The group travelled down the West Coast Main line throughout the day, stopping at Preston, Birmingham New Street and finishing in London Euston at around 5:30 pm. At each station, public engagement activity were taking place through the Safeguarding Action Groups (SAGs), part of Railway Children's Safeguarding on Transport programme. Safeguarding Action Groups bring together those responsible for the physical spaces at stations and areas of high vulnerability on rail lines, including British Transport Police (BTP), retail managers and security firms and others. Together, they look at how and when the spaces are used and make changes so they are hostile to those who would do harm and become safer for vulnerable children and young people.

Railway Children – Big Sleep Out

Once again Avanti West Coast colleagues supported the Railway Children with the Big Sleep Out challenge – spending a night on the floor at Birmingham New Street station, to raise funds and awareness of young people who find themselves alone and at risk at stations across the UK and abroad.

White Ribbon Day

At the end of October 2024, Avanti West Coast were granted accreditation to White Ribbon, showing our support and commitment to the charity and its aim to end violence against women and girls. In November, White Ribbon Day, we invited other TOC colleagues and our Safeguarding Team - Amulet, to join forces as a choir, to raise awareness of White Ribbon through a singing event held at Birmingham New Street station. The choir performed the song Roar, by Katy Perry, on the main concourse. When not performing, time was taken to engage with members of the public and encourage people to take the White Ribbon promise to never use, excuse or remain silent about men's violence against women.



Safeguarding Training

Safeguarding Awareness Week

This was run in conjunction with our internal Customer Experience week. Information on different types of vulnerability were shared throughout the week with Station and Onboard teams, these included information on:

- Suicide Prevention – dealing with an intervention.
- General Safeguarding.
- Child Exploitation.
- Rough Sleeping.

Missing People – understanding of why people go missing

A number of roadshows at stations in the North West were also held, to engage with colleagues further about the issues that they can be faced with. In March 2025 our new safeguarding training went live on the e-learning portal. The training is provided by the Railway Children and is CPD (Continuing Professional Development) accredited – All members of frontline colleagues have been invited to complete the training.

Safeguarding Champions training

We are working towards the upskilling of frontline colleagues to become safeguarding champions across our network. We aim to give them the ability to recognise and respond to incidents of vulnerability and support colleagues with any incidents they are involved with.

The safeguarding champions also support where possible with local notice boards and newsletters, safety and safeguarding awareness events, and generally promoting understanding of safeguarding with their colleagues.



Safety Thirst – Avanti West Coast's creative safety campaign

Christmas brings festive cheer, packed trains, and plenty of pints. Unfortunately, it also brings a spike in station accidents. According to the Rail Safety Standard Board (RSSB) alcohol-related incidents jump 45% during the festive season.

We decided to launch a safety campaign resulting in fewer accidents and met the following objectives:

- Reduce passenger accidents by changing behaviour.
- Raise awareness of key safety messages.
- Generate positive media buzz and social engagement with an upbeat festive campaign.

We all know the risks of rushing but most passengers aren't thinking about them. Safety messaging often sounds like a lecture. We didn't want to be another voice telling people off. To reduce accidents, we needed something memorable and entertaining. Our team challenged creative agency, Cubaka to make safety fun. RSSB data showed with Christmas approaching, accidents were likely to increase. Could we persuade them to drink less? Avanti West Coast has strong ties to communities on its routes, so we partnered with the Birmingham Brewing Company to rebrand their 0.5% pale ale. Our team designed the can with a modern twist on vintage railway signage.



We launched the beer with a fun Christmas jingle (and music video!). We needed an instantly recognisable earworm in the public domain and landed on a catchy Christmas number: 'Jingle Bells.' We rewrote the lyrics with, author, Richard Shotton's advice, and Avanti West Coast's colleague choir sang it to life in a recording studio. Shooting the video without disrupting the timetable and other passengers was a challenge. We worked with managers to free up railway colleagues from shifts and timed scenes around the train schedule, with only two-minute windows between stops. We did this all with the full support and endorsement of charity partner, Drinkaware, and the RSSB.

The results

Safety Thirst reduced station and onboard accidents

- 25% fewer intoxication-related passenger accidents within four weeks.
- 13% year-on-year decrease in accidents.
- Zero intoxication-related assaults on staff during the 2024 festive period – a 100% decrease.

10

Climate and environment

Social Value Impact: £80,998.30

The United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals and The Purpose Coalition’s Purpose Goals linked to this section:



Climate change presents a significant global challenge, particularly for the transport and travel sector.

Train operating companies are increasingly affected by extreme weather events—such as heavy rainfall, flooding, high winds, and extreme temperatures—which can damage infrastructure, trigger landslips, and lead to service disruptions. In alignment with national climate objectives, we are committed to achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2031.

While this is an ambitious goal, we are taking decisive steps to decarbonise our operations and embed sustainability across our business. We recognise that this journey requires sustained effort, innovation, and collaboration.





Key achievements in the 2025 financial year include:

- Introduction of the Evero fleet, featuring electric and bi-mode trains.
- Operation of six waste segregation sites across our stations.
- Installation of energy efficiency measures, including boiler upgrades, draught-proofing, and pipework insulation.
- LED lighting and smart controls installed on Stafford station platforms.
- Introduction of colleague recycling bins, supporting compliance with new Simpler Recycling legislation.
- Feasibility studies conducted to explore station decarbonisation and air quality improvements.
- Installed Water-saving devices at four stations.



Progress in 2025: Reducing Our Carbon Footprint

This year, we successfully reduced our carbon footprint compared to the previous year. A key driver of this reduction was the introduction of our new Evero fleet, which replaces our diesel-only Voyager trains with a combination of fully electric and bi-mode trains. These new trains represent a major step forward in our decarbonisation strategy.

The Evero Fleet: Driving a Low-Carbon Future

The launch of our Evero fleet in 2025 marks a transformative moment in our sustainability journey. These state-of-the-art trains replace our legacy diesel-powered Voyager units and are designed to operate primarily on electric power, with bi-mode capability for non-electrified routes. Given that the majority of our network is electrified, the Evero fleet significantly reduces our reliance on diesel.

Early performance data indicates that the Evero fleet is 61.8% more carbon efficient than the Voyager trains, delivering substantial environmental benefits while maintaining high service standards.

'MARCH: Make A Real Change Happen across our routes and from our roots.'

At Avanti West Coast, sustainability is at the heart of everything we do – but many people may not realise the full extent of it. During Sustainability Month we focussed on deepening engagement with Our Responsible Plan. The theme for the month was: 'MARCH: Make A Real Change Happen across our routes and from our roots.' An exciting programme of events took place across our route to inspire people to take action for the future! Our Green and Community Champions led the way with sharing valuable information all month long across the West Coast showcasing how passionate and committed they are by hosting events.



Melanie Hockenhull, Head of Sustainability, shares her thoughts:

"Making a change for sustainability doesn't have to be disruptive - it could be something small like eating meat free for a day or choosing to buy second hand rather than new. At work, it could mean having a conversation with a colleague or reaching out to my team to see how sustainability can be embedded in existing work. Sustainability provides a new lens to view real world problems and can provide some creative solutions!"



Euston Litter Pick

This Sustainability Month 2025, we partnered with Network Rail and Mitie (a facilities management company) in a multi-company litter pick around Euston station and Camden with representatives from all three companies. A group of 14 People took part in keeping the streets of Euston station's surrounding area clean and green for our customers and our local community. All the rubbish we collected was taken away by Mitie and taken to Euston's very own recycling plant.

"Taking part in the Euston litter pick was a great opportunity to meet colleagues I haven't interacted with before. Getting to know teams in other areas of the business was valuable and highlighted how key collaboration is. It was a positive experience knowing collectively we were making a difference on sustainability for our customers and colleagues."

**Sophie Thomas, App Product Owner ,
Avanti West Coast**

"The litter pick was not only a great opportunity to see more of the local neighbourhood that Euston serves but also to engage with colleagues we wouldn't normally have a business reason to interact with and do something beneficial for the local environment. As individuals, we wouldn't have made a big mark, but as a big team we collected so much rubbish and it was really great to see with what we collected that we'd clearly made a dent on the station environment, but also on safety by removing objects that can become a hazard too."

Leo Morton, Senior Revenue Analyst

"It was great to dedicate time together with my colleagues taking care of our community and our environment, we did something good, and I felt proud!"

**Francesca Siena, Sustainable
Procurement Manager**



VSH Litter Pick – Sustainability Month

A similar initiative was organised in Birmingham. We partnered with CrossCountry Railway and West Midlands Trains in a multi-company litter pick around Birmingham City Centre, focusing on green spaces.

"I never want to miss the Victoria Square House litter pick again. Not only is it great for the community and the environment but it also gives us an enjoyable opportunity to get away from our desks. Get the steps in and enjoy some sun, rain, wind or hale, depending on your preference. I love seeing the difference we can make tidying up the city when our bags are full, and the wellbeing benefit of spending time with colleagues during this positive activity only doubles that satisfaction."

Victoria Mottram, Customer Communications Manager

"Being part of the litter pick at VSH was a great way to improve the community we work in and also network with colleagues throughout the business and from other TOCs. It's important to step away from the desk sometimes and take time out to do our bit."

Louise McGregor, ACMS Administrator



"I really enjoy taking part in these events. Not only are we supporting our community and local environment, but it's a great way to catch up with friends and colleagues in the fresh air. Whatever the weather (rain, sleet, snow, sunshine, gale force winds, we've been through them all!), litter picking is always such a good laugh."

Vicky Yates, Strategy Manager – West Midlands Trains

Sustainability, climate and environmental projects at our stations

In addition to the numerous Sustainability events at our stations, our teams at both our stations and office engaged in environmental and sustainability projects.

Birmingham Wellbeing Walk and Litter Pick

In September our staff at our Birmingham office organised another Wellbeing Walk and litter pick. Overcoming adverse weather conditions, the group managed to gather numerous bags of rubbish. The activity was great for the environment but the walk and interaction with team members also contributed to the health and wellbeing of participants.

Stafford Wildlife Trust

Our team at Stafford station made pollinator pots with customers and raised awareness of bee conservation. This included making Bug Hotels from their ticket stock rolls.



Macclesfield Community Gardens

Community groups assisted our station at Macclesfield with planting new plant pots. This resulted in the station being nominated in the 'Cheshire in Bloom' competition. Customers have loved the plants and flowers. A community group is using some space at the station to grow saplings to plant in the local community.

Penrith Community Gardeners

Our team at Penrith station had another great year in partnership with the 'Penrith Community Gardeners'. Their presence and hard work at the station really brings light and colour to customers experience. The "release the flock" initiative went down really well and was a talking point during the summer months as customers took a pom pom sheep and posted on their socials. Thanks to Joan Robinson who heads up the Community Gardeners and her connections, our team at Penrith Station were able to secure some fabulous hanging baskets to brighten up their platforms and station front. These were donated by the Penrith BiD to brighten up the whole of Penrith.

Rugby litter picks and bicycle recycle projects

Our team at Rugby do several litter picks throughout the year. The areas they focus on include the surrounding areas of Drovers House, a residential care home.

The team has also recycled 11 bicycles in aid of an international charity in Africa.

Summary and future opportunity

We are determined to ensure that social value is front and centre of industry and policy discussions. We are dedicated not only to delivering for our passengers, our colleagues, and the wide range of communities we serve, but to interact right across the spectrum to address the challenges so many are facing right across Britain.

We will build on all that is set out in this report. We will work with leaders right across sectors and industries to break down barriers to opportunity and deliver social value to the people and places that need it the most. We have grown in our understanding and measuring of social value. With our goal to become the leading train company in social value creation, impact and measurement, we are looking forward to a year with an abundance of opportunities to build sustainable communities and a resilient workforce.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank each staff member who contributed to our social value impact over the past financial year. We are also looking forward to working with key stakeholders to improve our social mobility.

Dr Theresa Robberts, Social Value Lead, Avanti West Coast



This year we plan to increase our social value impact by:

- Further promoting social value to internal and external stakeholders.
- Using the updated industry measure of social value – the National Social Value Standards (SVS) embedded in the Rail Social Value Tool (RSVT).
- Influencing future RSVT metrics by contributing to and influencing the Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB) steering groups.
- Empowering more key staff members to become users of the RSVT.
- Supporting charities within the communities we serve, helping them to measure their own social value impact and help them to attract third party funding.
- Working in partnership with Network Rail and other stakeholders and train companies to deliver more projects with a high social value impact.

Changes in the way we measure our Social Value impact

The industry platform to measure of social value – the RSVT - has recently updated its metrics to be in line with the latest National Social Value Standards (SVS). The updated framework is in line with the updates by the HM Treasury Green Book. All valuations, outcomes, and additionality factors has been reviewed and updated – using the latest academic data and government thinking. This new updated framework and metrics give train operating companies the opportunity to set new targets, increasing their impact on the communities they serve.



Appendix

Our approach

This document serves to provide more information on our approach to social value. We mentioned that our report is guided and informed by the following frameworks and guidelines:

- The Rail Safety and Standard Board (RSSB) Sustainable Rail Blueprint.
- The Rail Social Value Tool (RSVT).
- Our Responsible Plan.
- The United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals.
- The Purpose Coalition's 15 Purpose Goals.

RSSB Sustainable Rail Blueprint

The RSSB Sustainable Rail Blueprint is a strategic plan for the rail industry that provides a framework for making cleaner, more sustainable rail travel a reality. As part of this, all rail companies are required to create and maximise social value and to measure the impact of this on society. We are, of course, totally onboard with this.

The Rail Social Value Tool (RSVT)

The Rail Social Value Tool provides a practical way to forecast, monitor and measure social value. It also helps us to find new areas where we can improve our impact on communities and the environment.

We've used the RSVT to calculate our social impact. Our report also includes case studies and other on the ground evidence on top of these calculations. This provides a deeper understanding of how rail impacts communities and people's lives. It also enables us to demonstrate our contribution to the wider society beyond just providing rail services. Using the RSVT highlights our dedication to measuring and reporting our social impact and our commitment to continuously improve our contribution to society.

Our Responsible Plan

As part of the introduction to this report we set out the four pillars of our Responsible Plan:

- **Our Planet** (we're developing and refining our decarbonisation roadmap to track our progress towards net zero).
- **Our People** (our schools engagement scheme is a great example and continues to go from strength to strength).
- **Our Customers** (we continue to engage with our accessibility panels and support disabled customer).
- **Our Communities** (we increased our social value impact by more than £100 million in the past financial year).

At Avanti West Coast we aim to advance our four pillars of sustainability to keep up with the wider industry ambition. The RSSB launched their Sustainable Rail Blueprint in 2023 that sets out the rail industry's view on how to make the railway even more sustainable. Our Responsible Plan contributes to the Blueprint's three key pillars of emissions, natural environment, and social sustainability.

The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals

The United Nations' Sustainability Development Goals provide a shared blueprint to make the world a better place for everyone. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by the United Nations in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that by 2030 all people enjoy peace and prosperity.

In this report we link each section with the relevant Sustainable Development Goal. This allows us to analyse our performance over a set time period and compare it to other organisations in the rail industry.

The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals



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

- 1. No Poverty**
End poverty in all its forms everywhere.
- 2. Zero Hunger**
End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture.
- 3. Good Health and Well-Being**
Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.
- 4. Quality Education**
Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- 5. Gender equality**
Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
- 8. Decent Work and Economic Growth**
Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all.
- 9. Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure**
Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation, and foster innovation.
- 10. Reduced Inequalities**
Reduce inequality within and among countries.
- 11. Sustainable Cities and Communities**
Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.
- 12. Responsible Consumption and Production**
Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.
- 13. Climate Action**
Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
- 14. Life on Land**
Protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.
- 15. Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions**
Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels.
- 17. Partnerships for the Goals**
Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.

The Purpose Coalition's 15 Purpose Goals

The Purpose Goals identify the key barriers to opportunity in the UK, giving businesses the guidance they need to focus their efforts. The 15 Purpose Goals cover a broad range of societal and economic issues, from early childhood development to workplace inclusivity. They identify and clarify the many faces of inequality and the need for a comprehensive approach by responsible businesses.



- 1. Strong foundations in Early Years**
A lack of strong foundations in Early Years is one of the major barriers to opportunity. Getting the best possible start in life is crucial. A strong foundation in early years education is the cornerstone of social mobility.
- 2. Successful school years**
A lack of successful school years is one of the major barriers to opportunity. Successful school years are a crucial part of not only a young person's academic development, but also their wider personal development.

- 3. Positive destinations Post 16+**
A lack of positive destinations Post 16+ is one of the major barriers to opportunity. Everyone is different, so making the right choices as a young adult is key – that's why we want to make sure that everyone has a positive destination post 16 and after GCSEs.
- 4. Right advice and experiences**
A lack of access to the right advice and experiences at the right time is one of the major barriers to opportunity. There is an adage "you can't be what you can't see". Getting great access to career advice and wider experiences that broaden horizons and set schoolwork in context are vital. Working out how we can consistently provide high quality careers advice, support, mentoring and access to work experience is an essential step in improving social mobility.
- 5. Open recruitment**
We need open opportunities and open recruitment so that our nation's talent can make the most of its potential. The chance to keep developing once in work and progress in a career isn't just important from the perspective of increasing your earnings, it's also about how you can continue to feel challenged and learn even once you've left your school years behind.
- 6. Fair career progression**
A lack of fair career progression is one of the major barriers to opportunity. Businesses that provide employees the opportunity to keep developing and progress in their careers will do better.
- 7. Widening access to savings and credit**
A lack of access to savings and credit is one of the major barriers to opportunity. Whether it's being able to afford day to day essentials and housing or putting money aside to have a decent retirement, being able to manage money and getting good financial advice can make all the difference when it comes to people making the most their potential.

8. Good health and well-being

A lack of good health and well-being is one of the major barriers to opportunity. Tackling health and wellbeing inequalities are central to driving levelling up and improving social mobility. Good health and wellbeing are often a precursor to a person being in a position to make the most of their talents and in work, feel they can consider taking the next step in their career.

9. Extending enterprise

A lack of private enterprise and entrepreneurship is one of the major barriers to opportunity. Enabling people and communities to create their own jobs is perhaps the most powerful way of really driving opportunity on the doorstep. If we can embed a social norm of entrepreneurship across our country, and in communities where setting up a business is less usual, then we'll have a powerful lever to help talent and ideas thrive wherever they are.

10. Closing the digital and AI divide

The digital and AI divide is one of the major barriers to opportunity. The digital and AI divide is a gap we have to close if we're really to enable equality of opportunity. The internet revolution is an opportunity for a level playing field, but it also poses a growing inequality threat for those who can't take advantage or cope in an online world.

11. Infrastructure for opportunity

A lack of good infrastructure is one of the major barriers to opportunity. For communities with less opportunity on the doorstep, being able to travel to where opportunities are is absolutely essential. That's why investment in the roads and railways matters so much. It's an enabler that can unlock people's chances to go for roles that might not be on the doorstep but can turbocharge their careers.

12. Building homes and sustainable communities

A lack of good homes and safe, sustainable communities is one of the major barriers to opportunity. Communities that are safe, with a good quality of life and homes people can afford are communities that are sustainable in the long run. Those that aren't risk losing their talent and driving away the very opportunities from business investment that could transform their fortunes. It's why place-based approaches matter so much, from the government but also from businesses.

13. Harness the energy and net zero

A lack of a fair energy transition is a major barrier to opportunity. The transition to net zero is a unique opportunity to create new careers and roles in the places where they can make the most difference. People and the planet are two sides of the same coin. Investment in the green economy is already bringing brand new opportunities to areas across the country and it's crucial that the energy transition is equitable for people and communities everywhere.

14. Achieve equality through diversity and inclusion

A lack of equality, diversity and inclusion is one of the major barriers to opportunity. Diversity matters. The research is clear; more diverse companies make better decisions because they have a wider perspective and avoid groupthink. Diversity extends beyond gender and ethnicity to sexuality, disability and other characteristics that can lead to disadvantage. Britain will not succeed unless and until its leadership roles, wherever they are found in our society, better reflect the wider society at large.

15. Working in partnership

We need organisations to work in partnership to boost opportunity. By fostering strategic alliances with unions and citizens assemblies, organisations can harness diverse talent and perspectives and ensure their initiatives are grounded in the needs of real-world communities.

The journey to the Purpose Goals: Tackling the UK's biggest challenges in partnership with the Purpose Coalition

The Purpose Coalition measures organisations against a set of sector-relevant social impact criteria. The Purpose Goals outline 15 interconnected impact barriers to opportunity. By drawing on expertise provided by academia and business, the goals are designed to specifically address some of the unique challenges facing the UK.

The Coalition's cross-party work brings together the UK's most innovative leaders, Parliamentarians and businesses to improve, share best practice, and develop solutions for improving the role that organisations can play for their customers, colleagues and communities by breaking down barriers to opportunity.

The Purpose Coalition is chaired by Rt Hon Justine Greening, the UK's former Secretary of State for Education, Transport and International Development. It is led by Nick Forbes CBE, who served in Sir Keir Starmer's Shadow Cabinet when in opposition, who now leads the Purpose Coalition's work with the Labour Party and chairs the Breaking Down Barriers Commission; and Rt Hon Anne Milton, former Minister for Apprenticeships and a Minister in the Department for Health and Social Care.

The Goals were designed following Justine's experience - as Secretary of State for International Development - leading the UK's delegation to the convention of the United Nations (UN) that established the 2015 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Purpose Goals apply the SDGs in a UK context.

The SDGs as interlinked goals emphasise the interdependent environmental, social, and economic aspects of development and centralise the role of sustainability.

At the time, Justine recognised how transformative a common set of accessible but ambitious goals could be in spurring action to effect change. After leaving Government in 2019, Justine established the Purpose Coalition and Social Mobility Pledge with the intention of galvanising UK economic and social actors to improve social mobility in the UK.

The Purpose Goals focus on key life stages and highlight the main issues that need to be resolved to break down barriers to opportunity in the UK. The Goals are intended to guide ambition, provoke action and measure progress.

As a large-scale organisation, we are active across all 15 Purpose Goals but are specifically focusing in this report on 12 areas most relevant to our area of expertise - running a railway that creates prosperity and pride, linking together towns and major cities to create a vital economic artery for the UK.



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