

Social Value Report 2023

AVANTI
WEST COAST



Foreword from Andy Mellors

As a leading train operator, we're not only committed to providing an excellent service to our customers. To us at Avanti West Coast, it's also vital that we're responsible towards the environment and society. We're proud to present our Social Value Report that showcases our efforts towards achieving this goal.

This report provides a comprehensive overview of our current social and environmental initiatives. These include our community outreach programs, environmental sustainability measures and our efforts towards improving diversity and inclusion within our organisation. We believe that by being transparent about our progress and challenges, we can continue to learn and grow as a company.

We're dedicated to making a positive impact in the communities we serve and understand the importance of responsible business practices. This report highlights areas where we have excelled and where we need to improve. We'll use this information to develop plans for future initiatives, ensuring that we continue to make progress towards our sustainability goals set by our Responsible Plan.

In this report, we used the Rail Social Value Tool (RSVT) to analyse our quantitative data. This allowed us to gain a clear understanding of where we're excelling in terms of social value and where we need to improve. By using the RSVT, we were able to objectively assess our performance against key social value indicators and identify areas where we can make a positive impact on society.

We're determined to make a real difference and create a sustainable future for our customers, employees and the wider community. We hope that this report provides insight into our efforts and inspires others to join us in creating a better world.



Andy Mellors

Andy Mellors
Managing Director, Avanti West Coast



"We're determined to make a real difference and create a sustainable future for our customers, employees and the wider community."

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Executive summary

As a major train operator, we at Avanti West Coast are dedicated to making a difference today to look after tomorrow. As a responsible business, we're also committed to delivering social value activities that add significant benefits to the communities we serve. To this end, we've given ourselves a target to create over £1 billion worth of social value by 2031.

This report is a testament to our social impact and positive contributions towards sustainable development. It highlights our achievements in community engagement, reducing environmental impact, creating and sustaining jobs, promoting diversity and inclusion and investing in innovation and technology. It's also an endorsement of our commitment to supporting social development and meeting the needs of the wider society.

Key highlights include:

- Feel Good Field Trips connecting schoolchildren to learning opportunities.
- Popular Euston station mural of Karen Harrison is to remain as part of the campaign to inspire more women to become drivers.
- 'Travel Companion' helps to connect disabled customers with accessible travel experts for instant help during a journey.

Above all, this report shows the positive impact that our business activities can have on the lives of individuals. From 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023, we contributed a total operational, environmental and economic impact worth £212,715,641.55

Why is social value so important to us?

Social value is a priority for us because it helps us achieve our mission of being a responsible and sustainable business that benefits the communities we serve. We understand that we have a duty to create positive social impacts beyond our primary role of providing train services. We can contribute to social, economic, and environmental development too.

Focusing on social value means we can make a positive difference to society by supporting the communities we serve. This can be achieved in a number of ways. These include investing in local employment and training opportunities, supporting local businesses and providing transport services that connect people to education, work and social activities.

Following on the release of our Responsible Plan in 2021, prioritising social value and releasing this report underlines our commitment to the wellbeing of our customers and the communities we serve. We're convinced we can make a positive contribution to society, create a more sustainable future and build a strong reputation as a responsible business.

Our approach

Purpose and context

This report aims to showcase how our operations have positively influenced our community, colleagues and other significant stakeholders. We've aimed to be as transparent as possible in the focus areas for future data collection and reporting. Our intention is to use this report as a benchmark to push for further improvements. Last year, we employed our Social Value and Accessibility Manager, Beth Chambers, to engage stakeholders and to compile this report.

RSSB Rail Social Value Tool (RSVT)

We've used the Rail Standards and Safety Board's (RSSB) RSVT to calculate our social impact. The RSVT is a framework that helps rail companies like us measure and report social value. It also enables us to identify areas where we can improve our impact on communities and the environment.

By using the RSVT, we've been able to quantify the social, economic, and environmental benefits of our operations, such as reducing carbon emissions, supporting local employment and training opportunities and investing in community initiatives. This 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.

The RSVT metrics and indicators

The Social Value Indicators of the RSVT provide a framework for measuring and reporting the social, economic and environmental impact of rail services. The framework comprises 12 indicators, divided into three categories: Economic Impact Indicators, Social Impact Indicators and Environmental Impact Indicators.

Based on research conducted by RSSB, we identified 10 key areas of social impact for evaluation in this report, including:

1. Employment, training and skills
2. Educational attainment
3. Supply chain resilience and capacity
4. Rail accessibility
5. Workforce equality, diversity and customers
6. Community and charity
7. Stakeholder engagement and customers
8. Safety, health and wellbeing
9. Economic development
10. Climate and environment

By measuring and reporting on these indicators, all rail companies can demonstrate their commitment to sustainability, responsible business practices and creating value for all stakeholders. Furthermore, the indicators provide a framework for consistent and transparent reporting, enabling all rail companies to communicate their social value performance to customers, stakeholders and investors.

We took the view to not include Covid-19 recovery in this report as the only relevant metric for us was related to volunteering. While our people have donated lots of time to volunteering, this time wasn't spent on anything connected to Covid-19.



Attribution

Our level of responsibility for the intervention, known as the attribution rate, was maintained at the recommended standard of 0.15 set by the RSSB RSVT. This helps to prevent over claiming by limiting the claimed associated social-economic value to 15%.

Geography

The geographic definition of 'local' has been set as 'GB' for most metrics as the West Coast Mainline covers England, Scotland and Wales. However, for specific projects at certain stations, we were able to define the local area.

Avanti West Coast Social value impact:



Total social, environmental and economic Impact Breakdown

£212,715,728.55

Project value / Turnover

£59,288,997.00

Ratio

1:3:59

Employment, training and skills

£5,473,638.09



Safety, health and wellbeing

£75,616,581.36



Rail accessibility

£2,652,968.46



Stakeholder engagement and customers

£4,620,507.00



Social value highlights:

1. Employment
157 apprentices on apprenticeship programmes
2. Education
Curriculum enrichment talks to over **5000** young people
3. Supply chain
53% of our 691 suppliers are classes as SMEs
4. Accessibility
Completed over **55,000** passenger assists
5. Diversity
35% of new recruits were **female**
6. Community
Donated over **500** train tickets to charities and good causes
7. Customers
72% CSAT score from customers for our general customer service with a **90% CSAT** score for our Travel Companion initiative
8. Safety
Our staff have completed **49** life-saving interventions
9. Wellbeing
Over **500** staff health checks took place
10. Stakeholders and development
Over **£1.3 million** received in match funding and we engaged with over **5800** stakeholders
11. Environment
Over **1000** trees planted

1.0 Employment, training and skills

Social impact: £5,473,638.09.

Employees

At Avanti West Coast, we strongly believe that our employees are our most valuable asset. We're committed to fostering a workplace culture that encourages employee engagement, satisfaction and growth. Regular reviews of colleague engagement and satisfaction help us identify areas of improvement and we're always looking to enhance our reward and recognition programme to help us retain the best talent and attract a diverse workforce. Our goal is to create a supportive and inclusive work environment that empowers our employees to reach their full potential.

Apprenticeships

We understand the importance of investing in the future of our workforce and are proud to have placed 157 people into apprenticeships within the reporting period. Apprenticeships offer a valuable opportunity to gain practical skills and experience in various roles and we're committed to providing our apprentices with the support and training they need to succeed. Our apprentices work in a range of roles, including Level 2 Passenger Transport Operatives, Level 3 Train Driver Apprentices and Level 3-7 Leadership Apprenticeships. Through our apprenticeship programme, we aim to cultivate a skilled and diverse workforce that can help drive the success of our company into the future.

Driving change: commemorating the first female train driver at Euston station



The context

Historically, the rail industry has been male-dominated and there are still relatively few female train drivers. By actively promoting train driving as a career option for women and encouraging them to apply for driver roles, the industry can break down gender stereotypes, increase the representation of women and benefit from a more diverse workforce. Additionally, it can help to address the skills gap and staffing shortages, which will improve services for customers.

Our actions

We wanted to show the world our commitment to recruiting more women to the role. So, in collaboration with Network Rail, we commissioned a giant mural to celebrate Karen Harrison, one of the UK's first female train drivers. Created by street artist Akse for our recruitment campaign, the mural now has a permanent home at Euston station.

The impact

Our driver recruitment campaign saw record numbers of female applicants, with over 1500 women applying for the 100-120 new driver roles. We've updated Karen's mural with new wording to celebrate her legacy, which we hope will continue to inspire women to work in rail. It will be added to the National Railway Museum's collection, along with a photographic record of it, recognising the importance of Karen Harrison's story and her impact on the rail industry.

Find out more about this recruitment campaign. Scan QR code below.



2.0 Educational attainment

Social impact: £20,588,799.43.

Our schools' engagement programme engages with both primary and secondary schools across our network and is led by our Diversity and Inclusion Engagement Consultant, Rachel Jones. Both Rachel and Avanti West Coast colleagues visit our partner schools across the network, helping to connect young people to their local railway.

Schools' engagement is crucial in the rail industry for several reasons. It helps to raise awareness of the rail industry, which can encourage young people to consider it as a career. This is important because the rail industry, like many other industries, is facing a skills shortage and needs to attract new talent to fill a variety of roles, from engineering and design to operations and management. We've engaged with over 5,000 students to open their minds to the possibility of a career on the railway.

Connecting with young people can also help to improve safety. It enables us to raise awareness of the potential dangers of railways and the importance of following safety procedures, helping to reduce the risk of accidents and incidents on the rail network. We've delivered safety talks at three schools to 181 children.

Finally, it can help to promote the benefits of rail travel and encourage more people to use trains. This is important for reducing carbon emissions and tackling climate change, as well as improving mobility and connectivity for people across the country.



Feel Good Field Trips

Social impact: £1,150,259.27.

The context

The pandemic presented immense challenges, especially for school children. Not only was their education severely disrupted, but they also missed out on crucial social experiences. As our network boasts numerous iconic destinations that showcase the cultural diversity of our nation, we saw an opportunity to take young people across the West Coast Mainline to places that they would not usually have access to.

The impact

Working in partnership with Community Rail Lancashire, we've taken 600 students on Feel Good Field Trips, with many more trips booked to take place. A unique opportunity for pupils aged 4-18 to travel by train and experience hands-on learning, culturally

diverse days-out and fun. This is the first time a UK train operator has opened doors for young people in this way.

The trips included visiting a state-of-the-art London recording studio to learn about the science of sound, participating in art workshops in Coventry and cooking on Manchester's famous Curry Mile. The schools benefiting from this initiative are part of our network of partner schools, all of which have high pupil premium rates.

Watch the video and find out more about Feel Good Field Trips. Scan the QR code below.



3.0 Supply chain resilience and capacity

Social impact: £57,887,863.00.

Working with local suppliers is essential for several reasons. Firstly, it allows us to support local businesses, which are often the lifeblood of communities. When we choose local suppliers, we're helping to create and sustain jobs, support local economies and preserve traditional methods of production. What's more, local suppliers often have a unique perspective on the area in which they operate. They can provide insights into local tastes and preferences, which helps us to create tailored experiences that match our customers' needs.

Sourcing from local suppliers also means we can reduce our environmental impact by cutting transportation emissions and supporting sustainable farming practices. We're proud that 53% of our 691 suppliers are classified as small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). SMEs are a vital part of the economy and by working with them, we can help to foster innovation and growth.

By collaborating with local suppliers, we can create unique and memorable experiences for our customers, support local businesses and help to build sustainable communities. It's essential that we continue to prioritise working with local suppliers to create meaningful connections with the regions we serve.

Wigan's finest delicacy: collaboration with local suppliers to serve traditional recipes on trains

The context

We value collaboration with local suppliers to create unique and memorable experiences for our customers. That's why we partnered with Flintshire bakery, The Pudding Compartment and traditional sweet company Uncle Joe's, to produce a bespoke bake for our latest seasonal First Class Menu.

Preston based Train Manager, Helen May, created the Uncle Joe's Mint Balls Brownie to celebrate the popular sweet that's been made in Wigan using traditional methods since 1898. As a Wigan resident, Helen wanted to create something that reflected her local community and so incorporated Uncle Joe's Mint Balls into her brownie. We're delighted we were able to bring her recipe to life.

The impact

Our collaboration with the Pudding Compartment, Uncle Joe's and Helen resulted in a unique dish that celebrates local heritage and showcases the best of the region. Helen's recipe was up-scaled to 15,000 portions, allowing more customers to enjoy it. We were also very privileged that Uncle Joe's shared their secret recipe for the sweet, which has been passed down through several generations of the family.

Our partnership not only resulted in a delicious dessert, but has also helped to support local businesses and preserve traditional methods of production. We're proud to celebrate local heritage and showcase the best of the region through collaborations like this.

Helen said: "Mint and chocolate go together perfectly, so with the renowned Wigan sweet being local to the West Coast Main Line I thought it was a great idea to use the unique mint taste in my brownie. I'm delighted it was selected as the winning recipe and have loved seeing my bake come to life thanks to the efforts of The Pudding Compartment and Uncle Joe's. I feel so proud my Uncle Joe's Mint Balls brownie has been made into a product for customers across our route to enjoy and hope they like the taste of the popular traditional sweet."

Steve West, Managing Director of The Pudding Compartment, said: "Working with Uncle Joe's to bring Helen's vision and product into reality was exciting. Many people in North West England are familiar with the taste of Uncle Joe's so making sure we could capture that flavour while up-scaling the winning brownie recipe was a challenge we thoroughly enjoyed. To see how appreciative and pleased Helen was with the result made it all worthwhile. We love what we do and it's fantastic to work with Avanti West Coast who like to champion local produce and flavours. We hope customers along the West Coast enjoy this latest bake."

Antony Winnard, joint Managing Director of Wm Santus & Co who make Uncle Joe's Mint Balls, said: "We are very proud that people up and down the West Coast will get to sample our Uncle Joe's Mint Balls in Helen's excellent brownie."

"We're flattered that as a Wigan resident, she's chosen to include this Wigan delicacy in her winning bake and I'm sure those travelling on an Avanti West Coast train will love it."

"It tastes great, and we are delighted to support The Pudding Compartment, which is another small business on the West Coast route, with a supply of our secret ingredients so they could turn Helen's bake into something everyone onboard can enjoy."

Watch the video and find out more about this collaboration. Scan the QR code below.



4.0 Rail accessibility

Social impact: £2,652,968.46.

Breakdown:

Disability awareness training: **£59,434.65**

Stakeholder engagement in design of assets and services: **£1533.81**

Value of improved accessibility: **£1,680,000**

Value of inclusive design features: **£912,000,000**

We have a responsibility to prioritise accessibility so all our customers can enjoy a seamless end to end journey. This can improve people's quality of life by connecting individuals and communities. Our Accessibility Manager, Brandon Peat, leads this area and works with our partners to provide an excellent journey experience, with a focus on improving the integration of transport. To support this commitment, we've completed over 55,000 Passenger Assists. We've also introduced the Travel Companion, the Be My Eyes app and refreshed wheelchair space on the refurbished Pendolinos.

We recognise the importance of making our services accessible to all and we regularly engage with our accessibility panels for feedback. In this reporting period, 358 staff members received disability awareness training. We also take pride in having all our stations considered completely step-free, with all Avanti-managed stations being Category A (full step-free) or Category B1 (step-free access to all platforms - may include long or steep ramps).

Helping the deaf community feel positive about the railway

The context

In September 2022, the gate line and ticket office teams at Birmingham New Street had the opportunity to interact with pupils from Birmingham's Braidwood School for the Deaf. This was part of an educational day focused on railways, held in collaboration with HS2.

The impact:

This experience was mutually beneficial as it allowed for a two-way exchange of knowledge. We were able to showcase the range of careers available and promote Avanti West Coast as an inclusive employer. We also gained valuable insight from the deaf students. The students shared their

experiences as deaf customers and provided suggestions for how our front line staff could better accommodate their needs and provide a smooth journey.

[Watch the Braidwood School visit here.](#)
[Scan the QR code below.](#)



Travel Companion:

Social impact: £159,516.05.

The context

We launched a communication channel called Travel Companion that provides instant assistance to disabled customers during their journey. It aims to provide reassurance and enable independent travel by connecting customers to accessible travel experts who can offer specialist support at the time it's needed. The channel is staffed by specialist members of our social media team, who have knowledge of, and passion for, accessibility and disability awareness.

The Travel Companion channel is designed to be a safety net for disabled customers travelling with us. Customers can use WhatsApp to message our Travel Companion team and get support in the event of unexpected events or assistance

needs. The service allows customers to chat with someone who truly understands their needs. This means they don't have to explain things in detail and so get the right support quickly. The team also works with technology provider, Be My Eyes, to offer video support at a moment's notice from sighted volunteers and professionals who lend their eyes to solve tasks.



5.0 Workforce equality, diversity and customers

We're working hard to establish a diverse and inclusive workforce and environment that represents all of the communities we serve. During the reporting period, we were awarded Investors in Diversity Award Foundation Status from the National Centre for Diversity, with a view to gaining formal accreditation in April 2024. This highlights our commitment to ensuring a workplace that is accessible and equitable to all individuals, irrespective of their background or circumstances.

The impact

The Travel Companion channel is the first of its kind in the UK rail industry and is designed to offer extra help when customers cannot find assistance from a member of staff themselves. The service is ultimately designed to build a stronger relationship with disabled customers and give them the confidence to make journeys independently. The channel is accessible to anyone, anywhere on the West Coast Main Line through WiFi at stations, onboard or through mobile data. The service has been welcomed by industry experts, including our external Accessibility Panel.

Statistics so far:

- 08 people helped
- 29 video calls via Be My Eyes
- Intervened in 3 failed passenger assists
- 90% CSAT customer satisfaction rate

Find out more about our Travel Companion app in this video. Scan the QR code below.



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. Here are some highlights of our initiatives during Black History Month:

Honouring Asquith Xavier at Coventry station

Asquith Xavier was a trailblazer who fought against the colour bar in the rail industry in 1966 to become the first Black guard at

Euston station. We paid tribute to Xavier's legacy creating a display on the platform in his honour at Coventry station. Some of Xavier's family members were invited to see the tribute, which helps raise awareness of his inspirational story and celebrates Black history on the railway.

Find out more about Xavier. Scan the QR code below.



Celebration event at Euston station

Our Race and Ethnicity Network organised a celebration event at Euston station for Black History Month for our colleagues. The event aimed to bring people together to share their lived experiences, talk about their heritage and learn more about Black history and the achievements of the Black community across the UK and around the world. Over 70 colleagues attended the event, which provided a platform to foster inclusivity and diversity at Avanti West Coast.

Career development for under-represented groups:

We're proud to be part of First Group's STEP and Reach programmes. These are career development programmes for female colleagues and colleagues from an ethnically diverse background. We're happy to report that 40% of attendees for STEP programmes for women have been promoted and 14% of attendees on REACH Development programmes for ethnically diverse colleagues have also been promoted.

Our gender network paved the way for menopause awareness:

Karen Broad, Talent Development Manager at Avanti West Coast, explains why she's helped to create guidance to encourage conversation and increase education around menopause.

"With menopause being important to our staff, and members of the gender network feeling passionately about it too, we've worked to make changes for those going through it and bring to life the support available with the launch of our Menopause Guidance.

The guidance has been shaped by our staff – we held listening sessions to understand their experiences, learn what would help and gather ideas as to what the organisation could do.

We want our staff to feel comfortable discussing menopause as well as being able to provide and offer support. It shouldn't be a taboo subject. This is why the guidance is aimed at everyone.

The guide is just the beginning. We want to get more people talking about the subject. We've launched a menopause group and cafés for colleagues on our internal channels. By creating a private community, we hope to encourage people to talk and share their experiences of menopause and perimenopause."

Avanti West Coast is committed to promoting diversity, inclusivity and equity in the workplace and beyond. We will continue to take steps towards creating a safe and supportive environment for all of our colleagues and customers, regardless of their background, identity, or ability."





6.0 Community and charity

Social impact: £97,152.16.

Breakdown:

Investment in Community and Customer Improvement Fund: **£31,000**

In kind labour: **£12,681.31**

Community volunteering hours: **£1,268**

Community Manager, Jo Buckley, and a network of Community Champions and 20 Community Rail Partnerships (CRPs) are together doing an outstanding job of making a positive impact in the areas where we operate. We're proud to report that colleague engagement in Payroll Giving has increased, allowing our staff to make tax-free monthly donations to charities. In this reporting period, 549 of our colleagues donated over £30k to charitable causes through Payroll Giving. We also continue to issue complimentary rail tickets to families and individuals who need specialist care and medical treatment at hospitals across our network, which they cannot access within their local community. We also collaborate with local communities and charities and support local fundraising efforts.

Creating a buzz: Manchester school children learn about bees with a local charity.

Social impact: £230,051.85.

The context

Avanti West Coast partnered with the Bee Sanctuary Movement, a registered charity in Manchester, to mark World Bee Day. The aim was to inspire young people to become bee-friendly and make a positive difference in the community. Two schools in Beswick and Rusholme were invited to participate in interactive sessions at the Bee Sanctuary to

learn about bees and the importance of wild flowers in the ecosystem.

Our actions

Avanti West Coast's Community and Sustainability Champions at Manchester Piccadilly and Stockport stations identified World Bee Day as an opportunity to join forces with the local charity and connect young people with local initiatives. The sessions included activities like making wild flower seed balls, building bee hotels and talks on how to care for wild flowers and the environment.

The impact

The event was a success and pupils from Ashbury Meadow and Claremont Primary schools had a great time learning about the importance of bees and how they can make a difference by caring for these vital insects. The event also allowed us to connect young people to opportunities and support the work of local charities. The Bee Sanctuary Movement was pleased to have the opportunity to work with our Community and Sustainability Champions and plan to continue collaborating with them in the future.

Runcorn station's community room: bringing locals together.

Social impact: **£8,658,527.07**

Breakdown:

Jubilee weekend: **£125,100.64**

Live support session: **£7,506,038.54**

HIV support session: **£26,807.28**

Ukelele group: **£17,871.52**

Church group: **£35,743.04**

Mental health group: **£750,603.85**

World Book Day: **£71,261.56**

Art event: **£125,100.64**

The context

Community spaces at train stations provide a safe and welcoming environment for people to come together. They help create a sense of community and enable social cohesion, particularly in areas such as Runcorn where people don't have access to many other community facilities. They also serve as a hub for local events and activities, such as music performances, art exhibitions and charity fundraisers. Plus they provide a place for local businesses and entrepreneurs to showcase their products and services, which can help to support the local economy.



Taking all this into account, it's easy to see how community spaces at train stations can help to strengthen the social fabric of a community and create a more vibrant and connected society. We're committed to creating social value and ensuring that the local communities where we operate benefit from our services. So, as part of our Responsible Plan, we actively sought an opportunity to improve the wellbeing of our staff and community at Runcorn station.

Our actions

In November 2022, we opened a community space at Runcorn station following a successful trial period earlier in the year during the Queen's Jubilee. Laura Warwick, Team Leader and Community Champion at the station, identified the space as a perfect location for community use. The community space is now available for use seven days a week and can be booked by members of the local community. This initiative is aimed at improving the quality of life of those in the surrounding areas, providing them with a place to gather and socialise.

The impact

The community space at Runcorn station has been used by various groups since its trial period for the Jubilee weekend earlier this year. It's been the location for weekly streamed live support sessions, a HIV support session, a ukulele group, a church group, mental health peer support sessions and an engagement session for World Book Day. While a Train of Thought art event attracted around 70 people. The space is available seven days a week for community use and is just one of many initiatives we have taken to support the well-being of our communities. We'll continue to look for opportunities to make a positive social impact and improve the quality of life for those around us.

The Dick Kerr Ladies

Social impact: **£2,200.00.**

The context

Following the success of the England Lionesses in the Euro 2022 final, we helped to tell the story of the most successful women's football team in history: the Dick Kerr Ladies. This unique project, in partnership with Community Rail Lancashire (CRL), aimed to raise awareness of the record-breaking team for a new generation. The project follows the release of a short film, *Granny*, which commemorates Lizzy Ashcroft, one of the members of the team.

The impact

To build youth engagement and document an important part of history in a new way, CRL partnered with a group of young people on a supported internship programme called DFN Project SEARCH. This programme is designed for young people with learning disabilities and autism, providing them with a transition to work. The interns worked alongside community artist Karen Allerton in workshops to create a series of

specially made postcards that celebrate the achievements of the Dick Kerr Ladies and give some historical background to put the story into perspective.

To inspire the young people and give them a better understanding of the team, we provided them with transportation to visit the National Football Museum. There, they took part in a workshop about the Dick Kerr Ladies and enjoyed a tour of Preston North End's stadium, followed by a talk from researcher and author Gail Newsham, who has spent nearly three decades bringing the story of the team to a wider audience.

Initiatives like these demonstrate our commitment to supporting local communities and promoting social value. By partnering with organisations like CRL, DFN Project SEARCH and the National Football Museum, we can make a positive impact on young people's lives and ensure that important parts of history are not forgotten.

Watch the video and find out more about this collaboration. Scan the QR code below:



7.0 Stakeholder engagement and customers

Social impact: £4,620,507.00.

We facilitate millions of customer journeys each year, connecting people across England, Scotland and Wales. Engaging with our stakeholders and partners is crucial to the success of our operations and we're working hard to establish and maintain strong regional relationships.

In the most recent reporting period, we're proud to say that we engaged with 5826 stakeholders through our consultation and engagement events. This demonstrates our commitment to hearing the views of those who matter most to our operations and to ensuring that we provide the best possible service to our customers.

Our stakeholders include local communities, businesses, transport authorities and other organisations who have a stake in our operations. Through our engagement events, we gain valuable insights into the needs and priorities of these stakeholders, which helps us to make informed decisions about our services and infrastructure.

By working closely with our stakeholders, we can identify opportunities to improve our services, address any concerns or issues and deliver a better experience for everyone who travels with us. We recognise that our success is built on the strong relationships we have with our stakeholders and we remain committed to engaging with them in meaningful and impactful ways.

[Catch up on Avanti's stakeholder conference here. Scan the QR code below.](#)



8.0 Safety, health and wellbeing

Social impact:

The social value generated through safety, health and wellbeing was: **£75,625,214.33.**

Staff interventions to prevent harm: **£71,992,579.68.**

Staff training to prevent harm: **£8,632.97.**

Workforce health and wellbeing: **£3,624,001.68**

Safety is our top priority. During this reporting period, a significant safety improvement was made through the implementation of the new Amulet contract and the addition of 20 full-time Safeguarding and Security Officers who are now based in small groups at Coventry, Crewe, Stockport and Carlisle. As a result, we've added 3,200 extra security hours each period, providing increased coverage both at stations and onboard our trains. These officers are trained to provide support in the event of security and safeguarding incidents. Their presence has made a significant difference in supporting the safety and wellbeing of both our colleagues and customers.

For reasons of sensitivity and commercial confidentiality, we've decided not to include the monetised value of some areas of workplace safety. We have collected this information, but are reporting on a non-monetised basis wherever possible. We reported 0 fatalities, 4 major injuries, 20 reportable minor injuries and 1 shock/trauma injuries in terms of workplace safety performance. These metrics were not included in our social value analysis because we're not comfortable assigning a value to these impacts on the lives of our colleagues.



Health and wellbeing

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. Our health and wellbeing partner, Kelly Burton, prioritises the health and wellbeing of our staff as we recognise the importance of this issue. To further support our workforce in this financial year, we ran two additional mental health training courses, training over 50 more staff in mental health.

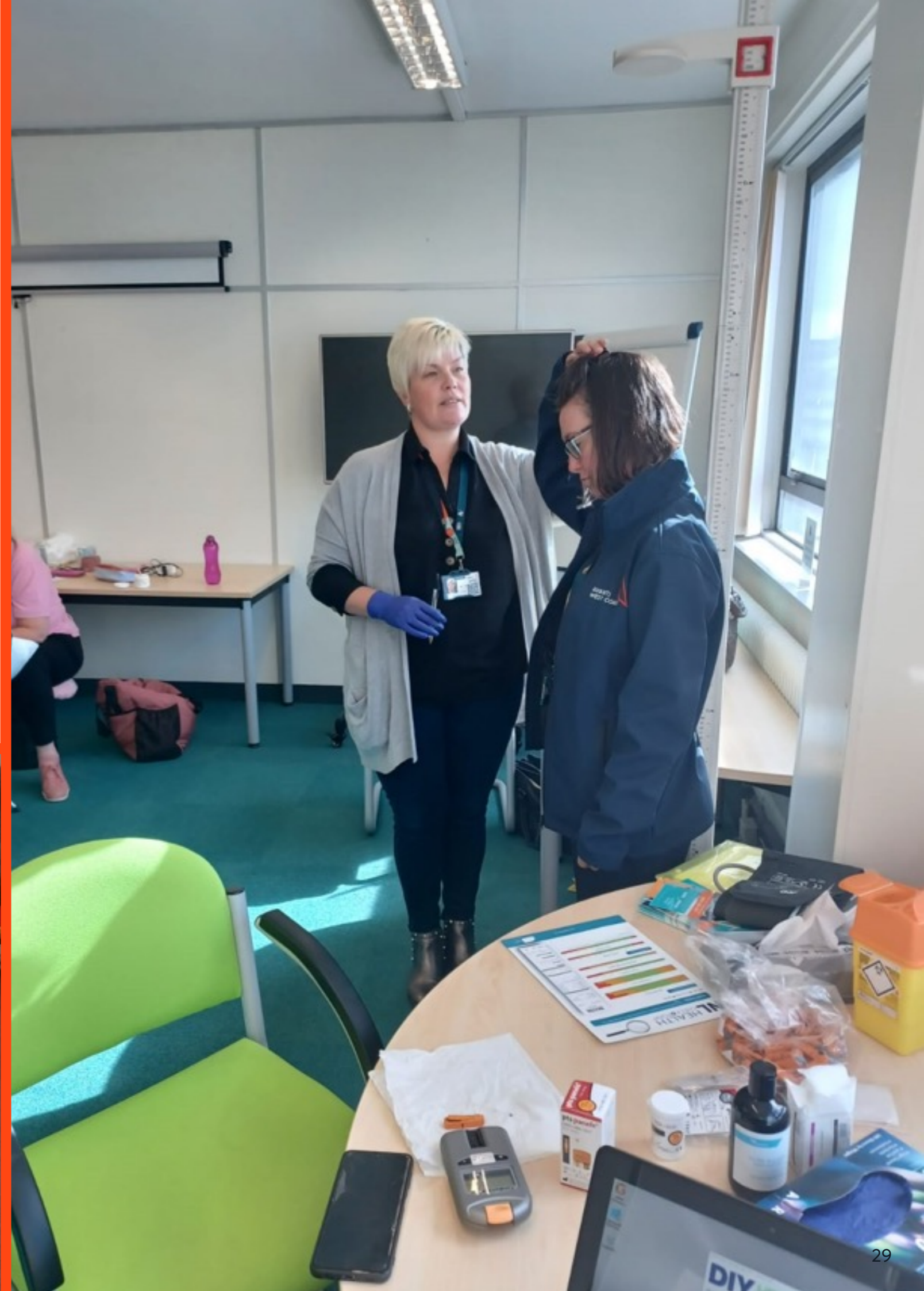
Ensuring the health and wellbeing of employees is crucial in maintaining a happy and productive workforce. It not only benefits the individual, but also the organisation. That's why at Avanti West Coast, we place a great emphasis on promoting our health and wellbeing days for our employees.

A health wellbeing day is an opportunity for our staff to take a break from their daily routine and focus on their physical and

mental health. The health check provides a valuable insight into areas that may need attention and highlights any potential risks. The advice and tips provided during a health check help to encourage healthier habits.

We also partnered with Boots in 2022 to provide a free flu vaccination benefit to all of our employees. Giving a free flu jab at work is a great way to protect our employees and those around them from the flu virus. It demonstrates further our commitment to the health and wellbeing of our employees, which is an important aspect of creating a positive work environment. This simple measure can go a long way towards keeping our workforce healthy and reducing the number of sick days taken during the flu season.

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.



9.0 Economic development

Social impact: £3,166,152.04

Breakdown:

Match funding: £1,379,000

Oxenholme Post Office £1,787,152.04

Infrastructure is vital for connecting people and communities as it provides more equitable access to jobs, education, housing, services and people. The RSSB RSVT has helped us demonstrate the significant impact rail and associated infrastructure improvements can have on the economic development of an area. It also enables us to provide tangible evidence that public funds are being spent appropriately. We work with local and national government, businesses, the wider rail industry and communities to provide services that support economic vitality, growth and quality of life.

Dedicated Regional Growth Managers from Avanti West Coast are working in collaboration with our communities and partners to develop and deliver projects to increase rail use. Together, we work closely with the Department for Transport to maximise opportunities for third party funding, supporting schemes that promote economic development, housing, active travel and a switch to sustainable, integrated public transport.

Post Office revival: Avanti restores community Post Office services at Oxenholme station

The context

We've helped the community in rural Cumbria by restoring a Post Office service after a gap of two years. The only Post Office in the area was closed in February 2020, depriving locals of access to essential

services. Working with local Postmaster Phil Ballantyne and MP Tim Farron, we set up a pop-up outreach Post Office service at Oxenholme station. The initiative is believed to be the first of its kind on the West Coast Main Line and one of the few Post Offices operating at a railway station in the UK.

Our actions

We provided the venue for the outreach Post Office service at Oxenholme station, which will operate for limited hours every Monday and Thursday. Phil Ballantyne, a familiar face to the locals, will run the service, providing a range of essential products and services. These include sending letters, returning parcels, banking, bill payments, withdrawing cash and changing currency. The pop-up counter will be available in the station's Ticket Office. The service was initially trialled for two days a week to assess the demand for a more frequent service.

The impact

The initiative will bring back access to essential Post Office services for the community, which will have a positive impact on their lives. The pop-up service will also provide a welcome sense of community and companionship. It will facilitate everyday errands and connect people, helping to overcome the sense of isolation that people in rural areas often feel. The initiative is a significant example of our commitment to making a difference in the communities we serve and supporting causes that matter to them. It will also benefit the station's buoyant visitor and leisure market during peak seasonal travel periods.



10.0 Climate and environment

Social impact: £32,461,591.82.

Breakdown:

Trees planted: **£109,350**

Litter picking event: **£993.34**

Carbon-PPN 06/20: **£6,055,096.08**

Carbon-embodied greenhouse gas emissions- materials: **£169,111.20**

Carbon-operational greenhouse gas emissions: **£26,236,391.20**

It's widely acknowledged that climate change is a global issue that affects us all. The impact of climate change on our network is evident as we've faced severe weather events such as heavy rainfall, floods, high winds and extreme temperatures. These have had an adverse affect on rail infrastructure, delaying passengers and disrupting freight operations nationwide.

Our initial target of achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2031 is a significant step towards our ultimate goal of achieving absolute zero carbon emissions by 2050, in line with the UK government's objectives. While we're looking to decarbonise our operations as quickly as possible, we recognise that it will take time and commitment to achieve this goal.

From trash to treasure: the journey of our waste

We're looking at new and innovative ways to incorporate circular economy thinking into our business structure. Using the waste hierarchy, we're prioritising the reduction of single-use materials, re-using equipment and materials where possible and recycling what we can't re-use. Our Segregation Officer at Crewe station plays a crucial role in this process by ensuring that the waste is properly sorted at the station itself, which makes the processing of waste much

easier and more efficient. By identifying and segregating the different types of waste, such as plastics, paper and organics, our Segregation Officer helps to divert a significant amount of waste from landfill. This is not only environmentally beneficial, but also cost-effective for the waste management company.

Overall, having a Segregation Officer at a train station can help to significantly reduce the amount of waste that ends up in landfills, while also promoting better waste management practices among commuters and staff.

See more about the journey of our waste. Scan the QR code below.



Smartly cutting carbon

Our commitment to maintaining high environmental and energy management standards is demonstrated by our adherence to ISO 14001:2015 and ISO 50001:2018 certifications. Below are some initiatives we have introduced in the last financial year that have helped and will help us reduce our carbon footprint:

Voltage optimisation project: Wigan North Western and Warrington Bank Quay

This has helped us to adjust our incoming electric supply to match our current usage at stations. By optimising the voltage supplied to electrical equipment and appliances, this project has significantly reduced our energy consumption and lowered our electricity bills. This is achieved by regulating the voltage to match the specific needs of the equipment, thereby preventing energy wastage and reducing wear and tear on appliances which helps them last longer.

Building management system (BMS): All stations

We've installed BMS at the majority of our stations and we're working in phases to install it at all of them. We're taking this approach because it means we can work around each station's needs and make sure each system is installed to the best possible standards. BMS enables us to optimise the energy efficiency of our stations by monitoring and controlling various building

systems, such as lighting, heating, ventilation and air conditioning. It's lead to a lower energy consumption, reduced operating costs and a smaller carbon footprint.

Teamwork in action: our staff making a clean sweep with a litter pick!

Our staff members have donated their time to litter picking, making a tangible impact in their local communities. By removing litter from streets, parks, and waterways they're preventing the spread of pollutants that can harm the environment and the wildlife that depend on it. Furthermore, they are making their local communities a much lovelier place.

The litter pick events have also have a positive impact on the morale and sense of community among staff members. Our staff's donation of over 70 hours of their own time to litter picking is an excellent example of how we are making positive impact on the local environment and the communities that we serve. By organising and participating in litter pick events, we're taking steps towards creating a cleaner, healthier and more sustainable environment.



A forward thinking approach to achieving net zero

New Hitachi fleet

Dynamic testing of the new Hitachi fleet has started ready for their launch in 2023/2024. This fleet replaces the current Voyagers – a diesel-fuelled train. The new Hitachi fleet is bi-mode, which means trains can switch between electrical power from our overhead wires and diesel power where the railway isn't yet electrified. As nearly all of the Avanti's network is electrified, with the exception of 121 miles of track in north Wales, this means that most of the time our new hybrids will operate in electric mode, cutting down our diesel consumption, reducing our carbon footprint and supporting the UK's commitment to reaching Net Zero by 2050. Hitachi trains are designed to be more fuel-efficient than the older trains they're replacing, which means they emit less carbon dioxide and other harmful pollutants into the environment. This is an important factor in reducing our carbon footprint and the rail industry's too, as well as supporting the UK's commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.



Summary and future opportunity

We're pleased with the progress that we've made and our commitment to social responsibility and sustainability. Through the emphasis on working with local suppliers and charities, we're supporting our local communities, fostering innovation and growth and reducing our environmental impact.

In addition to the emphasis on local suppliers, initiatives such as Feel Good Field Trips and the Community Rail Partnerships demonstrate our dedication to creating positive social value. These initiatives have the potential to leave a long-lasting impact on the communities that we serve. For example, Feel Good Field Trips provide young people with access to enjoyable opportunities, which will enrich their lives beyond the classroom.

While we have made great strides, there is still more work to be done. We're exploring partnerships with external consultants to review our social impact and to advise us on how we can further our commitments. We want to help address social issues and create meaningful change. Such partnerships will help us to leverage our resources and expertise to support our local communities.

Overall, we're encouraged by the £212,715,641.55 worth of social value that we have set against £830 million passenger revenue in the reporting period. By continuing to prioritise our social impact and sustainability, we have the potential to create even more positive impacts on the communities that we serve.

*This information in this report is correct at the time of print. If you have any queries around the values reported, please contact RSSB <https://customer-portal.rssb.co.uk/>



Appendix

The Four Capitals

We would like to highlight the importance of considering the Four Capitals when assessing social value. The Four Capitals, which include Natural, Social, Human, and Financial Capital, offer a more holistic approach to evaluating the impact of initiatives and projects. By aggregating data across these themes, we're able to highlight the value generated for each of the Four Capitals. This approach not only allows for a more nuanced understanding of social value but also helps to identify areas for improvement and further investment.

The inclusion of impact breakdowns for each of the Four Capital themes is particularly valuable as it allows for a clearer understanding of the specific impacts generated in each area. This level of detail helps to demonstrate the extent of our commitment to social value across all Four Capitals and showcases the diverse range of value generated by our initiatives and projects.



Natural

£32,570,941.82



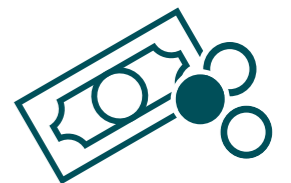
Social

£17,685,610.52



Human

£97,716,388.12



Financial

£64,740,501.09

1.0 Natural Capital

Capital	Indicator	Stakeholder group / Unit of measurement	Output number	Total value
Natural Capital	Biodiversity	Trees – number	1350	£109,350.00
Natural Capital	Carbon	Carbon - PPN 06/20	24415.71	£6,055,096.08
Natural Capital	Carbon	Embodied greenhouse gas emissions – materials	681.9	£169,111.20
Natural Capital	Carbon	Operational greenhouse gas emissions	105791.9	£26,236,391.20
Natural Capital	Waste	Litter picking event	70.5	£993.34

2.0 Social Capital

Capital	Indicator	Stakeholder group / Unit of measurement	Output number	Total value
Social Capital	Charitable & community volunteering	Community volunteering hours	90	£1,268.13
Social Capital	Charitable & community volunteering	In-kind labour	900	£12,681.31
Social Capital	Community use of space & facilities	Users (Community Rail)	4735	£8,462,164.87
Social Capital	Community use of space & facilities	Users (general)	1000	£1,787,152.04

2.0 Social Capital - Continued

Social Capital	Community use of space & facilities	Value of space / facilities for community use	1100	£1,100.00
Social Capital	Fundraising	Cash donations	11420	£11,420.00
Social Capital	Fundraising	Investment in Community & Customer Improvement Fund (CC(F))	31000	£31,000.00
Social Capital	Fundraising	Payroll giving £	34482.72	£34,482.72
Social Capital	In-kind donations of goods and	In-kind donations	5200	£5,200.00
Social Capital	Inclusive design features	Value of improved accessibility	700000	£1,680,000.00
Social Capital	Inclusive design features	Value of inclusive design features	380000	£912,000.00
Social Capital	Participation in & access to heritage & art	Participation or visits to community & social events and community arts & heritage project(s)	100	N/A
Social Capital	Participation in & access to heritage & art	Regular participation	70	£125,100.64
Social Capital	Stakeholder engagement & consultation	Stakeholder engagement	5826	£4,620,507.00
Social Capital	Stakeholder engagement in design of assets & services	Stakeholder engagement	2	£1,533.81
Social Capital	Station adoption initiatives	Station adoption group (volunteers)	9	N/A
Social Capital	Support for people to travel	Engagement (number of activities/ interventions)	129	N/A

3.0 Human Capital

Capital	Indicator	Stakeholder group / Unit of measurement	Output number	Total value
Human Capital	Early engagement interventions	Careers Information advice and guidance	3500	£12,470,772.04
Human Capital	Educational/ curriculum support	Curriculum enrichment talks (general)	2101	£7,486,026.31
Human Capital	Educational/ curriculum support	School safety talks	181	£644,917.06
Human Capital	Educational/ curriculum support	STEM Mentoring	4	£14,252.31
Human Capital	Staff disability awareness training	Disability awareness training	358	£59,434.65
Human Capital	Staff interventions to prevent harm	Interventions made to prevent harm	49	N/A
Human Capital	Staff interventions to prevent harm	Life-saving interventions	48	£71,992,579.68
Human Capital	Staff training to prevent harm	Number of employees trained to intervene	52	£8,632.97
Human Capital	Work experience, taster sessions & work	Site visit	743	£1,424,404.39
Human Capital	Workforce health & wellbeing	Health, wellbeing & welfare support	483	£1,890,185.90
Human Capital	Workforce health & wellbeing	Workplace medical service	672	£1,725,182.81
Human Capital	Workplace safety performance	Fatality	0	£0.00

Human Capital	Workplace safety performance	Major injury	4	N/A
Human Capital	Workplace safety performance	Non-fatal injuries (= 6 days absence)	13	N/A
Human Capital	Workplace safety performance	Non-fatal injuries (= 7 days absence)	25	N/A
Human Capital	Workplace safety performance	Reportable minor injury	20	N/A

4.0 Financial Capital

Capital	Indicator	Stakeholder group / Unit of measurement	Output number	Total value
Financial Capital	Apprenticeships created or retained	Number of apprenticeship opportunities (Level 2, 3,	157	£5,473,638.09
Financial Capital	Match funding	£ value of match funding received	1379000	£1,379,000.00
Financial Capital	SMEs	The value of contract opportunities awarded	57887863	£57,887,863.00

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