

Social *Impact* Report



June 2026

AVANTI
WEST COAST

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Foreword

from Andy Mellors

I am pleased to introduce our Social Impact Report for 2025/6. The West Coast Main Line is a key route connecting many of the UK's busiest, vibrant and diverse cities and communities and we play an essential role in enabling economic growth and supporting social and environmental initiatives. The opportunities and benefits the railway, our services and our people bring to life are why the railway has always been much more than connectivity.

For this reason, our report has been produced using the new Rail Social Value Framework. Developed collaboratively across the rail industry and facilitated by RSSB, the framework provides a shared structure and common language for understanding, measuring and growing social value in rail.

Ensuring social value is embedded alongside environmental sustainability and responsible business practices, the new framework better captures all outcomes. By providing a stronger foundation for decision making the new approach ensures the contribution rail makes to society is clearly understood.

Throughout this report there are examples of how social value is being delivered across our route and communities. From investment in education and skills for young people to partnership working with Community Rail Partnerships, charities and local organisations we have focused on safety, inclusion and community.

This comprehensive approach has been recognised externally and in 2025, we received the Private Sector Leadership award at the Social Value Awards. This recognition reflects the commitment of our colleagues to embedding social value into day-to-day activities, strengthening our supply chain approach and working collaboratively with partners across the industry to shape the future of social value measurement and delivery.

As Great British Railways is established, the Railway Bill reinforces the importance of a publicly accountable railway that delivers not only reliable services, but wider economic, social and environmental benefit. We will continue to respond to that challenge and build on the opportunities our service brings.

I would like to thank our colleagues, partners and stakeholders for their continued commitment and insight. Together, we are helping to ensure Avanti West Coast delivers a railway that is not only efficient and reliable, but one that makes a positive and lasting difference to the customers and communities we serve.



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 Robbarts-Salt

Avanti West Coast Social Impact Lead

Every day, the West Coast Main Line connects millions of people to jobs, families, education and opportunity. But the impact of the services we run extend well beyond the journeys taken. This report is Avanti's account of that wider impact and of its commitment to making it count.

Social value is a lens Avanti applies to the decisions it makes every day about how it invests, who it partners with, how it trains its people and how it shows up in the communities along the West Coast Main Line. This report captures a year of that work: the programmes, the partnerships and the moments that, taken together, show what a railway can be when it takes its responsibilities seriously.

The breadth of what is in these pages reflects the extent of what the railway touches. Avanti supported 18 community-led projects through its Customer and Communities Improvement Fund, addressing everything from mental health and youth development to social isolation and environmental sustainability. Avanti's Community Rail Partnerships brought creativity, education and local pride to stations the length of the route. Avanti's colleagues raised money, picked up litter, built bee hotels and gave up their lunch breaks to make their communities a little better not because they were asked to, but because that is the kind of organisation Avanti West Coast is.

Investment in its people runs through every chapter. Skills, training, educational attainment, equity, diversity and inclusion. These are not separate workstreams but parts of the same commitment to build a workforce and a railway that works for everyone. International Women's Day, Pride, Black History Month: are opportunities for genuine learning, celebration and conversation that make its workplace more inclusive and its customer experience more reflective of the communities it serves.

Safety and wellbeing underpin all of it. Avanti's safeguarding partnerships with Samaritans, Railway Children and others alongside its ongoing White Ribbon accreditation show how far it has moved from simply raising awareness to building real capability and confidence in the moments that matter the most. A colleague who can recognise a young person at risk, or step in to support someone in crisis, is doing something no policy document can fully capture. That is social value at its most human.

This year also marks an important milestone in how Avanti measure and report its impact. Avanti has transitioned to the updated Social Value Standards and adopted the new Rail Social Value Framework. This is a rail-specific, industry-led structure developed collaboratively across the sector and facilitated by the Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB). It aligns with HM Treasury's Green Book principles and the RSSB Sustainable Rail Blueprint, and it gives Avanti a consistent,

transparent way to understand and communicate its contribution alongside the rest of the industry. Crucially, it balances the numbers with what numbers alone can never convey: lived experience, community feedback and the human stories behind the data.

Avanti is proud of what this report contains, it is also clear about the fact that delivering social value is never finished. It keeps learning, listening and raising the bar because the communities along the West Coast Main Line deserve nothing less.

To every colleague, partner and community organisation who made this year's work possible, *thank you.*



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Theresa Robbarts-Salt'.

Dr Theresa Robbarts-Salt
Social Value Lead,
Avanti West Coast

The Rail Social Value Framework

This is the first year Avanti West Coast has structured its social value reporting around the Rail Social Value Framework. There is now a common language for understanding, measuring and growing social value across the rail industry, developed collaboratively and facilitated by RSSB.

The Framework is deliberately flexible, recognising organisations are at different stages in how they approach social value. It aligns with the RSSB Sustainable Rail Blueprint, ensuring social value sits alongside and not separate from environmental and economic sustainability.

Its pillars guide and structure every chapter in this report, connecting local activity to wider industry ambitions for a sustainable, people centred railway.

Avanti's Approach

How it delivers social value:



Embedding social value into everyday decision-making, informed by HM Treasury's Green Book principles.



Using the Rail Social Value Framework to provide a consistent, rail-specific structure for planning and reporting impact.



Delivering social value through partnerships-led activity, working closely with community organisations, charities and Community Rail Partnerships.



Balancing monetised social value metrics with qualitative insights, lived experience and community feedback.



Using insight, evaluation and learning to continuously improve how social value is delivered across the business.

Introduction

What this report is and why it matters

A railway's function is to move people. But the best railways do something more than that, they improve the places they go through, strengthen the communities they serve and create opportunities that would not exist without them. This report is our account of how Avanti West Coast is doing exactly that.

Social value is the term used to describe the wider benefits an organisation creates through how it operates not just what it produces or sells, but how it invests, who it employs, who it buys from and how it engages with the world around it. For a railway, that means everything from helping a young person into their first job to funding a community mental health project, from making a station accessible to a disabled passenger to partnering with a local charity to keep vulnerable people safe.

These outcomes are not optional extras. They are increasingly central to how success in rail is defined and measured and they are integral to what it means to be a publicly accountable organisation.

How we measure our impact

Avanti West Coast's approach to social value is grounded in the principles of HM Treasury's Green Book, the framework used across public sector organisations to assess the full range of social, environmental and economic impacts of investment and activity. The Green Book recognises that real-world value cannot always be captured in financial returns alone, and our reporting reflects that principle.

During the year, Avanti transitioned from the Social Value Standards 2022 to the updated 2024 standards. The updated standards bring greater clarity, consistency and transparency to how social outcomes are defined and reported. Crucially, they strengthen the balance between monetised metrics and qualitative evidence ensuring that the numbers reported are accompanied by the human stories and community feedback that give them meaning.



The Rail Social Value Framework

This report is the first to be structured around the Rail Social Value Framework developed collaboratively across the rail industry and facilitated by RSSB. It gives the industry a common language for understanding, measuring and growing social value, while remaining flexible enough to work for organisations at different stages of their social value journey.

The Framework mirrors the structure of the RSSB Sustainable Rail Blueprint, grouping activity under four key themes that connect local impact to the industry's wider sustainability ambitions:

- **Rail at the Heart of Communities**
 - Investment, partnership and local engagement that strengthens the places the railways serve.
- **Inclusive and Accessible Rail** – Removing barriers so that everyone can travel with confidence and independence.
- **Responsible Business** – Ethical procurement, fair employment and a supply chain that creates opportunity.
- **Emissions and the Natural Environment**
 - Practical action to decarbonise operations and protect the environment along the route.

These pillars run through every chapter of this report, providing a clear line of sight between what Avanti does on the ground and the broader ambitions of the rail industry as a whole.

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



Introduction

This year in brief

The range of activity captured in this report reflects the breadth of Avanti West Coast's social value work, but it represents only part of what was delivered across the network. Highlights from the year include:

Educational Attainment

 **2,119** Young people reached through educational initiatives

Supply Chain Capacity

 **70%** of supply chain partners are Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs)

Rail Accessibility

 **30%** increase in Passenger Assistance usage

Community and Charity

 **290** community initiatives logged, up from 176

By continuing to align with the Rail Social Value Framework and the Sustainable Rail Blueprint, Avanti is committed to raising the bar each year: planning better, measuring more honestly and delivering more for the communities that rely on the West Coast Main Line.



01 Community and charity

The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals linked to this section:



Rooted in the communities we serve

The railway does not just pass through communities it is part of them. Avanti West Coast's 18 Community Rail Partnerships, its network of Community Champions and its Customer and Communities Improvement Fund together represent a sustained, practical commitment to the people and places along the route. This year, the number of community initiatives logged through the Rail Social Value Tool grew from 176 to 290 a sign of how deeply that commitment has taken root.



Social Value Impact:
£276,177,958.00



290
community
initiatives
logged, up
from 176

18
CCIF projects
funded this year

15
Community Rail
Partnership
projects supported

£4,800+
raised by
colleagues for
charity

Colleagues making a difference every day

Across the network, station and office teams delivered a wide range of community activities from foodbank collections in Rugby, Runcorn, Birmingham and London, to bake sales and coffee mornings for Macmillan Cancer Support, book share schemes at stations, and Christmas collections from Age UK, Cheshire Without Abuse and Railway Children. Together

colleagues raised more than £4,000 for causes they care about.

Community rooms at stations continued to provide free shared spaces for charities, voluntary organisations and community groups, small but meaningful contributions that matter enormously to the people who use them.



Colleagues making a difference every day

Through CCIF, Avanti West Coast provided flexible, targeted funding to 18 grassroots organisations during the year, each responding to locally identified needs and delivering real impact for people facing disadvantage or barriers to opportunity.

Mental Health and wellbeing

Targeted support for people experiencing distress, isolation or crisis combining place-based station activity with specialist services to raise awareness and improve early intervention.

Samaritans • Missing People •
Teens Unite Fighting Cancer

Children, young people and families

Early intervention, mentoring and inclusive education for children in areas of high deprivation, building confidence, resilience and raised aspirations.

Children First • ReachOut • Dame Kelly Holmes Trust • Diversity Role Models

Community connection and tackling isolation

From intergenerational music groups to food support hubs, these projects created welcoming spaces where people could connect and feel supported through the cost-of-living crisis.

Ukes on Track • The Pantry •
Community sports organisations

Inclusion and accessibility

Adapted equipment, safe infrastructure and inclusive programming enabling people with disabilities or additional needs to participate fully in sport, training and community life.

Metro Blind Sport • Sea Cadets

Environment, culture and place-based pride

Climate action, skills development and cultural exchange empowering young people, supporting active travel and strengthening local identity.

Young Green Britain Challenge •
Fairfield Cycle Hub • Menai Bridge Band •
Make it Glasgow



Community Rail Partnerships

Avanti's 18 Community Rail Partnerships are among its most powerful tools for local impact. Working with community organisations, local authorities, artists, educators and volunteers, CRPs transform stations into genuine community assets and make the railway feel like it belongs to the people who use it.

Fifteen CRP projects were supported during the year, spanning five themes.

1. Inclusive travel and confidence

Sensory bags supported first journeys and inclusive creative projects helping neurodivergent passengers, disabled people and young learners experience rail travel safely and independently.

2. Creativity, culture and placemaking

Public art, murals, photography and creative writing transforming station spaces into welcoming cultural assets that celebrate local stories, heritage and identity.

3. Education, skills and heritage

Interactive exhibitions, travelling classrooms and heritage storytelling connecting communities especially young people to the railways' past, present and future.

4. Environment and biodiversity

Pollinator friendly planting, station greening and sustainability education encouraging communities to take positive action for the environment around their local station.

5. Community resilience and safety

Projects tackling violence against women and girls, supporting grassroots organisations and creating safe, respectful public spaces demonstrating how stations can host important conversations and drive genuine social change.

The Poppy Train – remembrance the length of the route

In one of the most moving initiatives of the year, Avanti West Coast partnered with the Royal British Legion and Poppyscotland to deliver a Poppy Train, a tribute that

travelled the full length of the West Coast Main Line, gathering momentum and meaning at every stop.



Glasgow to London Euston *Unknown Soldier, a journey of remembrance*

A specially decorated Pendolino service, named Unknown Soldier and adorned with a poppy design developed in collaboration with Alstom, departed Glasgow ahead of Remembrance Day. As the train made its way south, veterans, reservists and volunteers joined at 13 stations along the route each adding posies on a poppy wreath assembled during the journey itself, creating a collective tribute that grew with every mile.

The journey concluded at London Euston, where the completed wreath representing communities from Glasgow to London

was carried in procession to the station memorial and laid as part of a short service. A replica wreath was later laid at the cenotaph on Remembrance Sunday, extending the reach of the tribute beyond the railway.

By bringing together colleagues, veterans, industry partners and local communities at stations along the route, the Poppy Appeal Train showed how the railway can be a platform for something far bigger than transport uniting people around shared values of respect, reflection and gratitude.



RAILWAY
MUSEUM



Railway 200

Celebrating 200 years of the modern railway

2025 marked 200 years since the birth of the modern railway and Avanti West Coast played an active role in bringing that milestone to life for customers, communities and schools the length of the route. Through performances, exhibitions, interactive experiences and national events, the Railway 200 programme combined heritage, culture and education into something genuinely memorable.

A travelling classroom for the next generation

The Inspiration Train called at key stations along the West Coast Main Line, offering interactive exhibitions and hands-on activities for schools, families and the wider public. More than 50 schools and over 1,000 students engaged with the programme exploring railway innovation, engineering and careers across 200 years of history. Feedback highlighted increased interest in railway careers and STEM subjects among participants.

37
performances
of Railway 200:
The Show

1,340+
audience
members engaged

50+
schools visited the
Inspiration Train

1,000+
students engaged
with railway careers
and STEM

Music, storytelling and 200 years history brought to life

Avanti supported Gare du Nord Theatre's touring production, led by Geoff Baker, an Avanti West Coast Customer Service Assistant, which brought railway history to life through original music, storytelling and performance. Approximately 37 performances were delivered between April 2025 and March 2026 at stations, heritage sites and cultural venues across the west coast route from Birmingham New Street and London Euston to Edinburgh Waverley, Crewe and Stockport, as well as The Greatest Gathering and fringe festivals across the UK. Several performances were accompanied by an art exhibition by Lily Mullan, an Avanti West Coast Customer Service Assistant, exploring railway heritage through a contemporary artistic lens and creating space for reflection, conversation and creative interpretation alongside the show.



Our stations are gateways to the communities they serve. By listening and engaging locally, we identify where we can make the greatest impact, supporting community and charity-led initiatives, providing space and resources, working with Community Rail Partnerships, delivering school engagement activities, and empowering colleagues to make a difference that adds value and creates lasting social impact.



Jo Buckley, Community Manager

The Greatest Gathering ***A national moment and Avanti was there***

Avanti West Coast was represented at The Greatest Gathering, a flagship Railway 200 event that attracted global media coverage and millions of viewers worldwide. Participation in these high-profile celebrations helped amplify the reach of the programme and reinforced the railway's cultural significance as a connector of communities, opportunity and national identity.

From a foodbank collection in a station's Booking Office to a community mural at a rural station, Avanti West Coast's community work is as varied as the route itself. What connects it all is a genuine belief that the railways' job doesn't end at the ticket barrier it extends into every community the West Coast Main Line touches.

02 Health and wellbeing

The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals linked to this section:



Social Value Impact:
£18,165,626.00

Looking after the people who keep the railway running

A railway runs on its people, Avanti West Coast recognises that looking after colleagues across every dimension of their health and wellbeing is not just the right thing to do, it is fundamental to delivering a great service. In 2025-2026, that commitment translated into a comprehensive programme of initiatives spanning physical health, mental wellbeing, financial resilience and social connection.

The approach was designed around early intervention and open conversation creating a workplace culture, where asking for support is normalised and where wellbeing is woven into everyday working life rather than treated as a separate agenda.

Physical Health

Health and Wellbeing Days • foot clinics • chair yoga • health kiosks

Impact: Supported early intervention and healthier lifestyle choices, particularly for frontline colleagues on their feet all day.

Mental and Emotional Wellbeing

Stress Shops • Mental Health First Aider Training • Mental Health Awareness Week • Brew Monday

Impact: Increased awareness, reduced stigma and strengthened peer support across the organisations.

Safety and Prevention

Wellbeing presence at safety forums • preventative health checks during Safety Week

Impact: Reinforced the connection between wellbeing and workplace safety, supporting a more proactive approach to health management.

Social Wellbeing

Peer-led engagement events • wellbeing conversations across teams

Impact: Encouraged openness and connection, building a more supportive culture across different locations and roles.

Financial Wellbeing

Mortgage advice and financial wellbeing support, delivered in partnership with Radcliffe and Newlands

Impact: Helped colleagues make better informed decisions, supporting long-term stability and reducing money-related stress.

By embedding wellbeing into the rhythm of working life and not as a one-off campaign but as a sustained, visible commitment Avanti West Coast is building a healthier, more resilient workforce and a workplace where people genuinely feel valued.



Throughout the year, we focused on making health and wellbeing support more visible, accessible and relevant for colleagues ensuring people feel supported to look after both their physical and mental health.

Kelly Burton, Health and Wellbeing Partner

03 Stakeholder engagement

The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals linked to this section:

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



Social Value Impact:
£3,562,341.00



Building partnerships that matter

Rail doesn't exist in isolation. The connections Avanti West Coast makes off the track with local authorities, elected representatives, community organisations and industry partners are just as important as the journeys made on it. Stakeholder engagement is how the organisation ensures that the people and places it serves have a genuine voice in its priorities.

Political and parliamentary engagement

Over the past year, Avanti has been active at the national and regional political level attending the Labour Party Conference, hosting the West Coast Partnership Stakeholder Conference, and running targeted engagement events for Members of Parliament and Members of the Senedd.

By contributing to All-Party Parliamentary groups focused on economic growth and transport, Avanti is helping to keep rail at the centre of conversations about regional opportunity and connectivity.



Investing in infrastructure together

Some of the most meaningful improvements happen when organisations pool resources and expertise. At Coventry station, a £600,000 partnership between Avanti, Network Rail and the Railway Heritage Trust replaced the skylights on Platform 1, flooding the space with natural

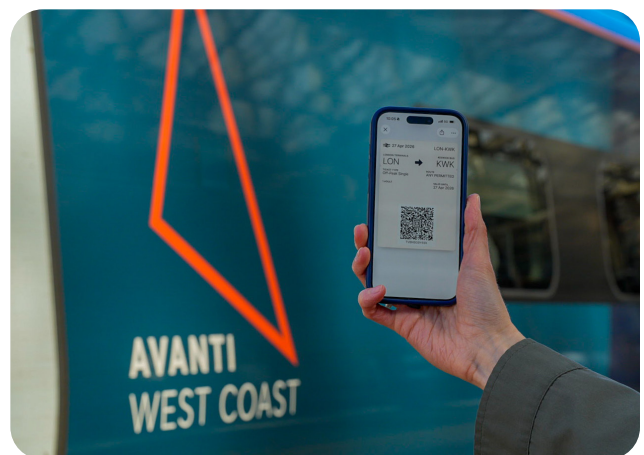
light and creating a noticeably more welcoming environment for passengers.

It's a practical example of how collaborative investment can improve everyday customer experience while respecting the heritage of the building we steward.

Read more about the Coventry station skylight project: [Avanti Media Centre](#).

Smarter journey to the North Lakes

Now in its third year, the Keswick integrated travel initiative developed with Stagecoach and Cumbria Tourism offers a combined rail and bus ticket that effectively creates a seamless gateway to the North Lakes. By making car-free travel the easier option, the scheme has increased visitor numbers while supporting more sustainable tourism.



It's the kind of joined up thinking that makes a real difference: simpler for passengers, better for the environment, and stronger for local business.

Read more about the Keswick initiative: [Avanti Media Centre](#).



Celebrating regional identity

When Stoke-on-Trent marked the centenary of its city status, Avanti was there. Through a partnership with the Stoke 100 campaign, the organisation joined local MPs, the Lord Mayor and civic leaders in celebrating the city's heritage and history.

It's a reminder that the railway's role extends beyond transport, it's part of the fabric of the communities along the route, and Avanti takes that responsibility seriously.



Breathing new life into Carlisle station

A former waiting room at Carlisle station has been transformed into The Scott & Brassey, a heritage themed pub. Created through a £400,000 partnership with Network Rail and the Railway Heritage Trust. The space serves passengers and the wider local community, with a deliberate focus on local suppliers and regional produce.

Beyond the renovation itself, the project supports local economic activity and gives the station a renewed sense of character and place.

Read more about The Scott & Brassey at Carlisle station: [Avanti Media Centre](#).





Across every one of these initiatives, the thread is the same: Avanti West Coast working alongside others, not just for passengers, but for the communities, economies and places that the West Coast Main Line connects.



Stakeholder engagement is at the heart of how Avanti West Coast delivers social value bringing together partners from across government, industry and local communities to shape and support the future of rail.

**Richard Braham,
Head of Stakeholders and Public Affairs**

04 Employment, training and skills

The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals linked to this section:



Social Value Impact:
£104,782,118.00



Staff training and development across Avanti West Coast

Avanti West Coast's commitment to its people sits at the heart of its Responsible Plan and reflects the values of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. The focus is simple: create a culture where colleagues feel listened to, supported and inspired to grow.

That commitment shows up in the numbers. In the past financial year alone:

3,138 colleagues participated in training.

100,671 hours of learning completed.

Multiple formats: in person, online, e-learning and safety briefings.

Training was delivered across a range of formats to ensure colleagues across the entire network could take part regardless of their role or location.



Our employees are our most valuable asset.
By investing in their development, we empower them to deliver exceptional service for our customers, while enabling them to build rewarding and fulfilling careers.



Cheryl Jackson,
Learning Operations Manager

Better equipped to serve customers

Avanti believes a well-trained team is the foundation of a great customer experience. Avanti's training programmes are designed to be practical and directly applicable building the knowledge, confidence and communication skills colleagues need to handle real life situations with care and consistency.

The result is a workforce that can adapt to changing circumstances, respond thoughtfully to customer needs and deliver a service that genuinely reflects its values.

A safer, more inclusive railway

Creating an environment where both customers and colleagues feel safe and respected is the priority. Over the past year, Avanti has invested significantly in conflict management training, delivered through workshops, practical scenarios and digital learning.

The skills developed: effective communication, empathy and the ability to de-escalate challenging situations benefit colleagues well beyond the workplace. The same capabilities that help someone manage a difficult moment on a busy platform can support healthier interactions in everyday life, strengthening the communities our colleagues live and work in.

Find out more about Avanti West Coast's conflict management and safeguarding training, visit: [Avanti LinkedIn](#).

Through sustained investment in learning and development, Avanti West Coast is building a skilled, confident workforce and in doing so, delivering real social value for the communities that rely on the West Coast Main Line.

05 Rail accessibility

The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals linked to this section:



A railway open to everyone

For many people, the ability to travel independently is life changing. At Avanti West Coast we are committed to ensuring that disability or additional needs are never a barrier to that freedom and the numbers show that confidence in accessible rail is genuinely growing.

Passenger Assistance: more people, more confidence

Usage of Passenger Assistance grew by approximately 30% over the past year. That figure isn't just an operational metric, it reflects something more meaningful: more disabled customers choosing rail, trusting that the support they need will be there. Working with industry partners, Avanti has continued to strengthen the consistency and reliability of assistance across the full journey, from the moment of booking through to arrival.



Social Value Impact:
£18,490,167.00

30%
increase in
Passenger
Assistance usage

1,500+
customers
using the
GoodMaps app

751
customers
supported via
Travel Companion

55%
year-on-year
growth for Travel
Companion

Improving stations for everyone

Physical accessibility improvements across Avanti's stations have made a real difference to the day-to-day experience of passengers with disabilities. This year's developments include dedicated Passenger Assistance meeting rooms, a new Changing Places Toilet, and the rollout of tactile maps to support visually impaired customers. Each one a practical step towards stations that work for everyone.

We are continuing to improve the experience for our disabled customers, The number of people using Passenger Assistance has increased by nearly 30% showing more and more disabled customers are choosing to travel by rail.



Brandon Peat, Accessibility Lead



Digital tools making a real difference

Digital support

Travel Companion

A WhatsApp based service providing real-time support throughout a customer's journey. Simple to access and available on a platform millions already use, it has become a trusted lifeline for passengers who need reassurance or assistance on the move.

Navigation

GoodMaps

An app providing audible and visual directions to help customers, particularly those with visual impairments navigate stations independently. Over 1,500 customers used GoodMaps across Avanti stations this year, finding facilities and making their way with confidence.

Listening to customers who know best

Avanti's approach to accessibility is shaped by the people it is designed to serve. Through national online panels, social media groups and industry events, disabled customers and partners contribute directly to how services evolve.

A more accessible railway is a better railway for everyone. Through investment in infrastructure, technology and human support, Avanti West Coast is steadily removing the barriers that stand between disabled customers and the freedom to travel.

06 Safety and safeguarding

The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals linked to this section:



Social Value Impact:
£13,532,748.00

Keeping people safe on the railway and beyond

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility at Avanti West Coast. The organisation's approach is built on strong partnerships, proactive training and a shared commitment to protecting those who may be vulnerable or at risk whether that's a young person travelling alone, a woman leaving a dangerous situation, or someone in a mental health crisis on a busy platform.

Over the past year, the focus has shifted from raising awareness to building a genuine capability, equipping colleagues with the confidence and skills to act when it matters most.

White Ribbon Accredited

committed to ending violence against women and girls

We travelled from Glasgow ► Euston with a day of action for

Railway Children

"Your Presence Is Present Enough"

our Christmas film raising awareness of runaways on the rail network

Supporting people in crisis – Samaritans

Avanti's partnership with Samaritans goes beyond awareness campaigns. Alongside promoting their 24/7 services across the network and supporting Brew Monday, the organisation has equipped frontline colleagues with Suicide Prevention training ensuring that when someone needs help, the person standing closest has the confidence to step in.





White Ribbon, from awareness to action

As a White Ribbon accredited organisation, Avanti's commitment to preventing violence against women and girls is long-standing. This year, that commitment moved firmly from awareness into behaviour change using Avanti's platform, its people and its stations to challenge harmful attitudes and support communities.

Birmingham International and Rugby Murals that carry a message

White Ribbon murals were unveiled at both stations. Permanent, public reminders of the everyday actions men can take to be part of the solution in ending violence against women and girls.

Birmingham International and Crewe The Avanti Choir and a community moment

The Avanti Choir performed at Birmingham International Station, building on our White Ribbon artwork at Birmingham International and other stations along the route. The mural reinforces White Ribbon's message, that everyone can be a positive changemaker, promoting equality, respect, and the prevention of violence against women and girls. Following a workshop with local young people exploring self-expression, unacceptable behaviour towards women, and healthy relationships, artist Emily Kaye Illustration used the Rugby Colour Palette to produce an impactful artwork visible both from the platforms and passing trains.

All colleagues have also received training on sexual harassment in the workplace, equipping them to respond appropriately to incidents both on the network and within the organisations.



Railway Children, turning awareness into action

Avanti's partnership with Railway Children has evolved significantly over the past year, moving from raising awareness of child vulnerability to strengthening how colleagues actually identify and respond to young people at risk. The 'At Risk, Right Here, Right Now' campaign has been central to that shift.

Day of Action

Glasgow to London Euston, the whole route, one message

A day of action travelled the length of the route from Glasgow to London Euston via Birmingham New Street, engaging colleagues and customers at every stop and reinforcing the role the railway plays in early intervention for vulnerable young people.

Christmas Campaign Your Presence is Presents Enough

Over the Christmas period, Avanti partnered with Railway Children to highlight the growing crisis of runaways on the rail network. The campaign centred on a short film written and directed by BAFTA award-winning filmmaker Daisy-May Hudson encouraging passengers to look up during their journey and recognise the signs of a runaway child. A powerful piece of storytelling in service of a vital cause.

Local partnerships making a real difference

National campaigns matter but so does what happens at a local level. Avanti West Coast recognises that meaningful safeguarding work is rooted in the communities along the route.

HER Place Women's Services at Crewe

Supporting the SafeHer Crewe initiative, focused on creating safe spaces and clearer support pathways for women and girls in the local area.

Red Rose Recovery at Preston

Working alongside Red Rose Recovery to support vulnerable adults at Preston station who may be struggling with addiction or homelessness.

By connecting national campaigns with local delivery, investing in colleague training and building partnerships that go beyond the railway, Avanti West Coast is embedding safeguarding into the fabric of everyday operations and helping to ensure that every journey, for every passenger, is a safe one.



Safeguarding is something our colleagues live every day. From a frontline colleague recognising a young person at risk, to a White Ribbon mural changing the conversation in a community, we're moving beyond awareness into real, lasting impact. That's what it means to make the railway a safe place for everyone.

Natalie Richbell-Beer,
Safeguarding and Crime Manager

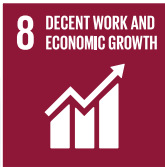


07 Educational attainment

The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals linked to this section:



Social Value Impact:
£23,262,490.00



Opening doors for young people

Avanti West Coast's ambition to be a railway for everyone extends well beyond its own workforce. Through partnerships with schools, charities and industry organisations, the company is working to broaden horizons, build skills and create clearer pathways into employment for young people across the communities it serves.

31

schools engaged through Feel Good Futures

8

STEM events delivered in secondary schools

772

students reached by Feel Good Futures

432

young people engaged through STEM days

915

students enrolled in virtual work experience



We believe the railway should be open to young people, not only as a way to travel, but as a meaningful and accessible career path.

Karen Broad, Talent Development Manager



Feel Good Futures

Launched in April 2025, Feel Good Futures formerly known as Feel Good Field Trips is a fully funded programme combining classroom learning with real-world industry experience for students aged 14-18. The aim is straightforward: raise awareness of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) subjects, introduce young people to the breadth of careers available in rail, give them the confidence and accreditation to take their next steps.

In partnership with Network Rail, Alstom and the London Transport Museum

Engineering days, depot visits and a CREST Award

Students took part in Inspire Engineering Days in the London Transport Museum completing hands-on challenges and earning a British Science Association CREST Discovery Award, a recognised accreditation that strengthens future academic and career applications. Industry visits to rail depots brought engineering environments to life, with students engaging directly with current apprentices and professionals to understand what a career in rail actually looks like day to day.

Student feedback

It inspired me to look more towards jobs in the railway industry.

Railway 200 Inspiration train Curiosity sparked at stations across the route

The programme was further enriched through engagement with the Railway 200 Inspiration Train, which visited London Euston, Stockport, Glasgow, Edinburgh and Crewe. The interactive exhibition carriages explored railway innovation, engineering and future careers reinforcing classroom learning and sparking curiosity about what the industry can offer.

**Fantastic!
Engaging, knowledgeable
and highly informative.**

Teacher feedback

The King's Trust

Working alongside other train operating companies, Avanti has continued its partnership with The King's Trust to deliver programmes combining work experience, one-to-one mentoring and real routes into employment. Supporting up to 12 young people at a time, the programme equips participants with employability skills and confidence and introduces them to the full breadth of careers available across the rail sector.

Arkwright Engineering Scholarships

Avanti supports the Arkwright Engineering Scholarships, widely regarded as one of the most prestigious awards of their kind in the UK. Awarded to high-potential 16-year-olds, the scholarships, combine financial support, mentoring and hands-on industry experience. For Avanti, sponsoring these scholars is an investment in the engineers who will shape the future of rail.

STEM days in schools

In partnership with the Smallpiece Trust, Avanti delivered eight immersive STEM days in secondary schools between April 2025 and March 2026, reaching 432 young people. The sessions brought engineering principles to life through practical, hands-on activities and alongside technical knowledge, students developed teamwork, leadership and problem-solving skills they can carry into any career.

Work experience: in person and online

Avanti offers work experience placements across its stations and offices, ranging from a single day to two weeks. Every placement includes a full induction and access to e-learning resources, giving participants a genuine window into how the business operates.

Recognising that not every young person can attend in person, Avanti has also developed a free virtual work experience programme open to anyone aged 13 or over featuring more than six hours of interactive content covering engineering, customer experience and office-based roles. Over the past year, 915 students enrolled, completing the course at their own pace and earning a certificate to support future applications.

Read more about the virtual work experience programme:

[Avanti Media Centre.](#)

From scholarship students to school pupils discovering engineering for the first time, Avanti West Coast is helping to build a generation that sees rail not just as a way to get somewhere, but as somewhere they could build a future.



08 Equity, diversity and inclusion

The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals linked to this section:



Social Value Impact:
£1,269,050.00

6

new inclusion
networks
launched this year

4+

major awareness
campaigns
delivered

A Railway Where Everyone Belongs

A diverse, inclusive workforce is not just the right thing to build it makes the railway better. Broader perspectives lead to better decisions. Inclusive teams are more creative, more resilient and more reflective of the customers and communities they serve. At Avanti West Coast, EDI (Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion) is not a separate agenda it is woven into how the organisations recruits, develops and supports its people at every level.

That means understanding the real barriers that different colleagues face across their careers through inclusive recruitment, flexible working, mentoring, career development and workplace policies that recognise people's different needs and experiences.

Strong attendance at My Son Charlie trans awareness sessions



Inclusion for Avanti is a culture.

Everything we do in this space is about making sure every colleague feels they belong here, and that every community we serve can see themselves reflected in who we are and what we do.



Sarah Emerson, Equality Diversity Inclusion (EDI) Manager

Five new inclusion networks

This year marked a significant step forward: the launch of six new inclusion networks, each designed to elevate the voices of underrepresented groups and give colleagues a community within the organisation where they feel seen and supported.

These networks are active communities that feed directly into how Avanti develops its policies, programmes and culture. They give colleagues a platform and give the organisation an insight into their experiences.

01

**Armed
Forces**

02

Carers

03

Disability

04

Gender

05

LGBTQ+

06

**Race and
Ethnicity**

International Women's Day – Give to Gain

Built around the theme of 'Give to Gain', Avanti's International Women's Day programme celebrated the achievements of women across the organisation while opening up conversations about development and progression. The campaign combined digital content, colleague participation and personal storytelling to reach a wide audience across the business.

All Aboard Podcast Real careers, real voice

A series of podcast episodes shared the personal career journeys of women at Avanti, alongside a 'Women of Avanti' video showcasing the breadth of roles from stations and trains to offices undertaken by women across the business. The response from colleagues spoke for itself.



Creating space for understanding

An online session titled 'My Son Charlie: A Mum's Journey' gave colleagues a safe and supportive space to learn about the experiences of trans individuals and their families. Well attended and warmly received, the session helped build empathy, understanding and confidence across the workforce.



Black History Month – Standing Firm in Power and Pride

Black History Month was marked with high impact events at London Euston and Birmingham New Street, both aligned to the national theme of 'Standing Firm in Power and Pride'. Each event brought together colleagues, customers and community organisations in spaces designed for learning, celebration and connection.





London Euston **Culture, community** **and conversation**

Guest speakers shared personal experiences and provided health advice and support, while food and music celebrating African and Caribbean heritage created a vibrant, welcoming environment. The event combined cultural celebration with wellbeing and education.

Birmingham New Street **Community champions,** **real impact**

Organised by local community champions and supported by colleagues from across the railway, the Birmingham event fostered strong engagement and raised funds for a local sickle cell charity, a reminder that cultural celebrations can deliver real, lasting benefit for the communities around them.

Educational Engagement **Asquith Xavier and the railway's** **role in social change**

Young people were introduced to the story of Asquith Xavier, whose successful challenge to racial discrimination within the rail industry helped shape a more inclusive future for the sector. Connecting that history to present day inclusion efforts, these sessions encouraged the next generation to see themselves as part of the railway's story.



An inclusive railway is a stronger railway, better at attracting talent, better at solving problems and better at serving the full diversity of the communities along the West Coast Main Line.

By building networks, marking moments that matter and keeping the door open for honest conversations, Avanti West Coast is creating the conditions for a railway that works for everyone.

09 Supply chain and sustainable procurement

The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals linked to this section:



Social Value Impact:
£10,913,124.00

Spending wisely, spending well

Every pound Avanti spends is a choice. By being deliberate about how it buys from suppliers, the organisation turns its procurement activity into a genuine force for social good supporting small businesses, strengthening local economies and creating opportunities for enterprises that are doing things differently.

This year, Avanti's contribution to social value through procurement grew by **+19% compared to the previous year** and **+76% compared to two years ago**, a sustained trajectory that reflects how deeply this thinking is now embedded in commercial decision making.

70%

of supply chain partners are Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs)



60%

of suppliers paid within 30 days

These aren't just commercial relationships they are direct contributions to regional economic growth, local employment and community resilience along the route.

Collaboration is at the heart of how we work, and we love sharing the stories behind the products and services we deliver. Together with our suppliers, we are building more than a supply chain; we are creating partnerships that drive innovation, deliver shared value, support communities, and contribute to a more sustainable future.

Avanti Catering Proposition Team



Supplier Spotlight

The Pudding Compartment a decade of partnership

Based in Flint and sitting directly on the Avanti route, The Pudding Compartment has been supplying hand-wrapped cakes, traybakes and bespoke biscuits since 2015. Over that decade, the business has grown, launched its own brand **Creative Bakes** and expanded its team through direct employment and apprenticeships. Their ingredients are ethically sourced, often from other Welsh businesses, and their products are made with genuine care.

"Being a long-term SME supplier to Avanti adds credibility to our business. Over the years we have increased our team through direct employment and apprenticeships supporting a number of full-time positions that would not exist otherwise."

The Pudding Compartment

Paying fairly, paying promptly

Cash flow is critical for smaller businesses. More than 60% of Avanti's suppliers benefit from payment terms of 30 days or less, a straightforward but meaningful commitment that helps businesses plan, grow and stay resilient.

Making space for diverse suppliers

Avanti has strengthened its work with GoDiverse and its supplier assurance platform to improve visibility and access for voluntary, community and social enterprises (VCSEs) and diverse suppliers. The aim is a supply chain that reflects the communities served, inclusive, varied and genuinely open to new entrants.

Pitch Social: a new idea becomes reality

Our Supplier Forum 2025 and Supplier Sustainability Contest 2025 invited suppliers to bring forward ideas to improve sustainability and social impact with the best progressing into real pilot projects. The standout outcome was Pitch Social: a Dragon's Den-style event co-hosted by Avanti and a strategic partner, created specifically to give micro-businesses, SMEs, VCSEs (Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprises) and minority-owned enterprises a platform to tell their story and compete for a place in Avanti's food and beverage offer.





Pitch Social Winner

Half The Story: biscuit with a bigger purpose

Half The Story is an award-winning biscuit bakery with a mission: creating life-changing employment opportunities for people facing significant barriers to work, including homelessness. They won Pitch Social and from May 2026, their products became available onboard Avanti services, giving every customer the chance to directly support that mission with every purchase.

Avanti's supply chain is more than a list of contracts. It is a network of relationships with small businesses, social enterprises and community-rooted suppliers that turns everyday commercial decisions into lasting social value for the communities along the West Coast Main Line.



10 Climate and environment

The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals linked to this section:



Taking care of the places we serve

For the railway industry climate change is not a future problem it is a present one. Extreme weather events, flooding, high winds and temperature extremes already affect infrastructure, trigger landslips and disrupt services across the network. Avanti West Coast is responding on two fronts: driving down its own emissions while also preparing its operations to withstand the changing climate ahead.

The organisation is committed to reaching net zero carbon emissions across its operations by 2031, an ambitious target, backed by decisive action to decarbonise and embed sustainability across every part of the business.

2031
target year for net
zero operations

127.3t
Co2e saved through
LED upgrades at
two stations

5
community litter
picks delivered

40+
bags of rubbish
collected



Social Value Impact:
£801,283.00



Switching to LED: measurable progress on emissions

Decarbonising the railway means making practical changes across every part of the estate. In 2025 – 2026, Avanti began a programme to replace halogen lighting with LED technology across all stations where it is the station facility owner. Work started at Birmingham International and Coventry, with further sites to follow in the years ahead.

The combined estimated carbon savings from Birmingham International and Coventry alone amount to 127.3 tonnes Co2e. As the programme rolls out across further stations, those savings will grow, a straightforward but significant contribution to Avanti's net zero commitment, one site at a time.



Stations as hubs for biodiversity

Beyond litter picking, Avanti stations became unlikely centres for environmental education and conservation using recycled materials, creative partnerships and community connections to support local wildlife.

Manchester Piccadilly **Art, bees and a call to action**

Working with platform team members, artist and Avanti West Coast Customer Service Assistant, Lily Mullan, and alongside The Bee Sanctuary Movement, the station used its public spaces to celebrate pollinators and inspire environmental engagement among passengers and the wider community.

Find out more about **The Bee Sanctuary Movement**

Stoke-On-Trent **World Bee Day –** **bug hotels for a local nursery**

Colleagues recycled old ticket rolls to build bee and bug hotels, gifted to a local nursery to mark World Bee Day. A small gesture with a clear message: protecting pollinators starts with the youngest members of our communities.

Glasgow Central **Blooming inventors –** **pupils build bee hotels**

Station colleagues partnered with a local primary school on a pupil-led project that turned used till rolls and recycled materials into bee and bug hotels. The project combined hands-on environmental learning with practical conservation, encouraging young people to see themselves as stewards of their local environment.



Colleagues taking pride in their communities

Across the network, Avanti colleagues rolled up their sleeves and took direct action to improve the local environments around their stations. Five litter picks were organised during the year, collecting more than 40 bags of rubbish and contributing to cleaner, safer public spaces in the communities our network serves.

In Action: Birmingham Lunch break, nine bags of litter, one team

Colleagues from across the business gave up their lunch break to join a litter pick around Great Charles Street Queensway and the surrounding streets. Despite strong winds, the team collected nine bags of rubbish.

From a net zero target to a lunch-break litter pick, Avanti West Coast's environmental commitment shows up at every scale. The goal is the same throughout, to leave the places and communities along the West Coast Main Line in better shape than we found them.



Sustainability isn't just about our carbon target; it's about the culture we're building across the business. From colleagues volunteering for litter picks on their lunch break to stations partnering with schools on biodiversity projects, we want everyone at Avanti to feel they have a role to play in protecting the communities and environment we're part of.

Melanie Hockenhull, Head of Sustainability

Summary and future opportunity

What this year has shown us

The chapters in this report tell a story about what a railway can be when it takes its wider responsibilities seriously. From a student earning their first engineering accreditation to a wreath carried in procession at London Euston, from a colleague giving up their lunch break to pick up litter to a supplier winning the chance to put their award-winning biscuits on Avanti's trains. Social value at Avanti is the sum of thousands of decisions, actions and partnerships across the year.

This year those actions added up to something significant.



Total Social Value
Delivered in 2025-2026
£470,956,905

Measured against the Rail Social Value Framework, aligned to HM Treasury's Green Book principles



Social value by framework pillar

This year's report is the first to be structured around the Rail Social Value Framework, an industry-led structure that gives the sector a consistent way to plan, measure and report social value. The table below maps our activity to its four pillars, showing where impact has been delivered and at what scale.

Rail at the Heart of Communities	£297,905,925
Community and Charity	£276,177,958
Health and Wellbeing	£18,165,626
Stakeholder Engagement	£3,562,341

Inclusive and Accessible Rail	£161,336,573
Employment, Training and Skills	£104,782,118
Rail Accessibility	£18,490,167
Safety and Safeguarding	£13,532,748
Educational Attainment	£23,262,490
Equity, Diversity and Inclusion	£1,269,050

Responsible Business	£10,913,124
Supply Chain and Sustainable Procurement	£10,913,124

Natural Environment	£801,283
Climate and Environment	£801,283

Social value figures have been calculated using the Rail Social Value Tool against the Social Value Standards 2024, aligned to HM Treasury's Green Book principles. Figures reflect monetised estimates of social outcomes and should be read alongside the qualitative evidence presented throughout this report.

What comes next

This report is a point on a journey. The Rail Social Value Framework gives Avanti West Coast a stronger foundation than ever before for planning, delivering and measuring what comes next. The ambition is to keep raising the bar: more rigorous measurement, stronger measurement, stronger partnerships, and an ever-clearer connection between local action and the wider ambitions of the rail industry.



Stronger planning

Using the Framework pillars to guide investment decisions from the outset, so social value is built in rather than reported after the fact.



Deeper partnerships

Build on the relationships with communities, charities, CRPs and industry partners that have driven this year's impact.



Richer evidence

Balancing monetised metrics with qualitative insight and lived experiences, so the numbers are always grounded in real-world change.



Industry alignment

Connecting local activity to the RSSB Sustainable Rail Blueprint, ensuring Avanti's work contributes to the sector's wider sustainability ambitions.



None of what is in this report happened in isolation. It happened because colleagues showed up, partners committed their time and expertise, and communities trusted us to be part of their story.



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.





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.



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



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