

# Chiltern Railways grow Social Value contributions to £1.3 billion in 2023

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Train operator **Chiltern Railways** has released its latest **Social Value Report** for 2023. The report measures the impact that Chiltern's operations have on the communities it serves through contributing to economic activity, providing social connections and protecting the environment through promoting public transport use.

The independent assessment was undertaken by transport consultancy Steer using a quantitative methodology known as an Economic Impact Assessment.

The latest analysis shows that Chiltern grew its social value contribution by £284.5 million in 2023, now totalling £1.3 billion. This includes £41.8 million from colleague salaries, £181.6 million in supply chain spend and £155.5 million from wider economic impact.

The report also factors in £963.8 million of 'catalytic impact', which captures the longer term social, economic and environmental impact resulting from Chiltern's rail services, both to customers that use those services, and wider society. This includes faster journey times, avoided congestion and lower CO2 emissions compared to alternative modes of transport.

The significant increase in social value contributions this year illustrates that the operator is a growing organisation. Chiltern colleagues live and contribute to the economies of 58 of the UK's 121 postcode

areas. Supply chain activity is also spread across the width and breadth of the country, from the northeast of Scotland to the West Midlands.

Last year, Chiltern also launched a new Community Investment Fund to support not for profit organisations and charities across the route, focusing on projects that deliver economic benefits to local people, social benefits such as volunteering opportunities and environmental benefits such as promoting active travel links or biodiversity.

The operator has provided £126,000 to twelve projects this year, including rail confidence sessions for refugees and survivors of modern slavery in the West Midlands, and new active travel trails at Bicester North and Banbury stations.

HR and Corporate Affairs Director Vanessa Russell said: “I am proud of the economic and social impact Chiltern is delivering across communities on our route and the rest of the UK. We care passionately about delivering easier, greener and better services for our customers, as well as delivering projects that provide economic and social opportunities for local people.

“This is exemplified in our community activity, from delivering £120k of funding through our Community Investment Fund in 2023 to actively engaging with over 100 volunteers to deliver gardening, artwork and wider community engagement projects at our stations.”

As part of the Social Value Report, Chiltern has also modelled the potential social value benefits of achieving its **Right Route 2030 Vision** of a modernised and decarbonised fleet of trains. The analysis focused on the replacement of 33-year-old diesel trains with low carbon battery or hybrid alternatives and showed that Chiltern could deliver up to £25.3 million of additional social value benefits, while preventing over 16,000 tonnes of Co2 being emitted each year.

A new fleet of trains that boosts capacity could allow Chiltern to increase their customer numbers from 20 million in 2023 to around 30 million, potentially contributing a further £477.7 million in economic, social and environmental impact.

Chiltern says it is committed to generating economic growth, encouraging social interactions, and reducing its environmental footprint to achieve net zero status by 2050, and its Social Value Report highlights that the operator is taking steps in the right direction as it works towards delivering easier, greener, and better services for customers.