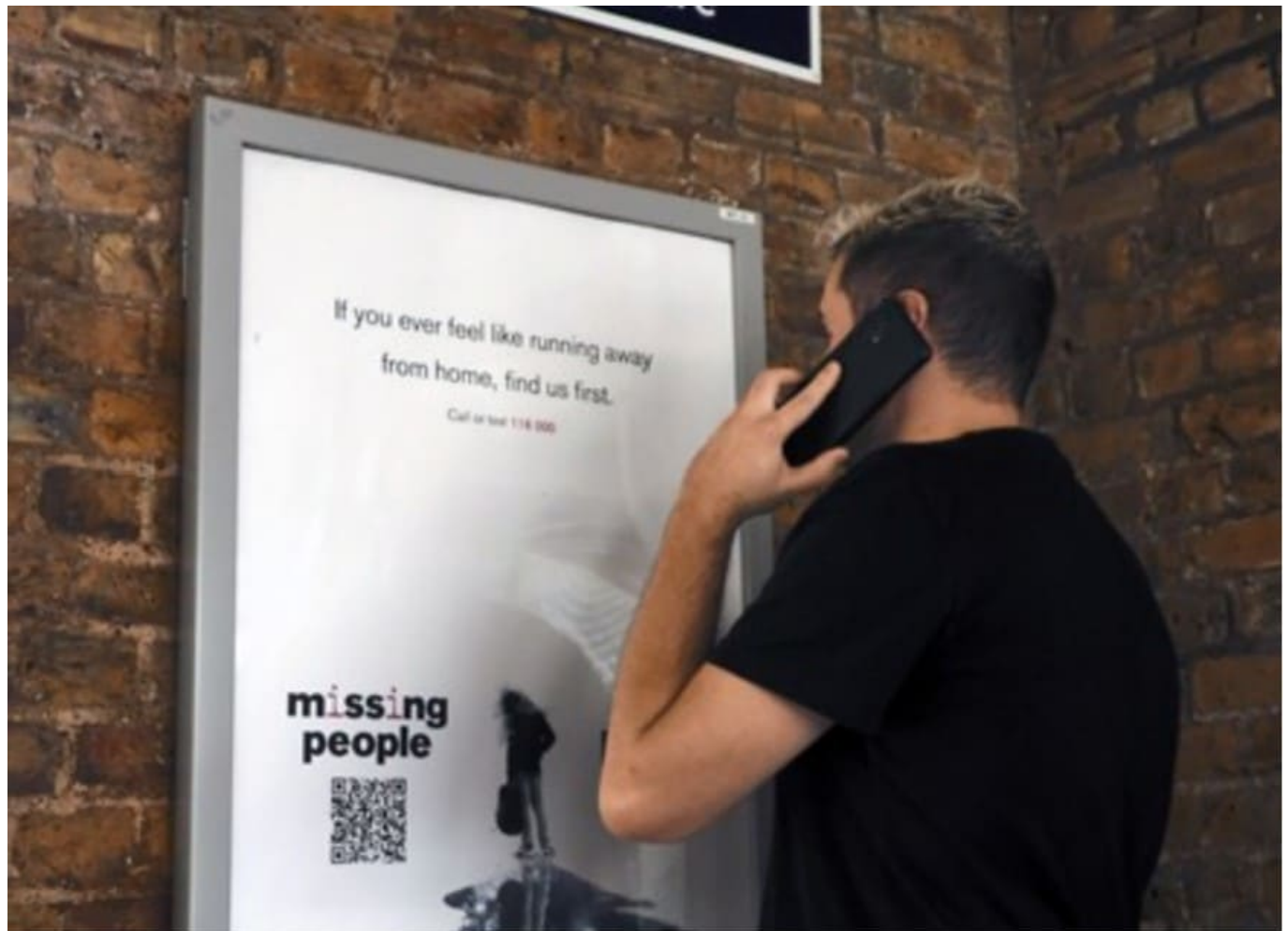


South Western Railway partners with Missing People on a new campaign to help people in crisis

October 13, 2023



South Western Railway (SWR) has partnered with the charity Missing People on a new 'Safe Way Home' campaign to encourage anybody who is thinking of going missing, or is already missing, to contact the Missing People helpline.

Somebody in the UK goes missing every 90 seconds, with almost 170,000 people reported missing in the year 2021-22, of which nearly 70,000 were children. As not all missing people are reported, the true figure is likely to be higher.

Throughout October, posters across SWR's network, one of the largest in the UK, and announcements at many of the operator's biggest and busiest stations, are directing people in crisis to call or text 116 000 for free, non-judgemental, and confidential support.

There is a strong link between transport and missing people. Trains are a means by which people can go missing, taking one-way journeys away from home. Stations and trains can also be safe havens, with shelter and amenities such as Wi-Fi.

Moreover, the transport network can attract people who are at their very lowest. Recent research by Missing People showed that 4 in 10 missing adults have tried to take their own life while missing.

There are many reasons why people go missing, with the most common reasons for adults being financial problems, mental health issues, domestic abuse, relationship breakdowns, homelessness, and conditions such as dementia.

In 2021, SWR became the first train operator in the country to **partner** with Missing People. Since then, the cost-of-living crisis has been exacerbating many of the reasons why people go missing, making the partnership even more important.

It is hoped that the new campaign will help prevent people in crisis going missing and help people who are already missing find a safe way home to their loved ones or another place of safety, keeping people in crisis from harm and reuniting family and friends.

The partnership with SWR allows Missing People's message to be read and heard by SWR's hundreds of thousands of customers every day. A video about the 'Safe Way Home' campaign can be watched [here](#).

Peter Williams, Customer and Commercial Director of South Western Railway, commented: "We are committed to safeguarding vulnerable people on the railway, so we are proud to partner with Missing People on this important campaign.

"The cost-of-living crisis is putting an even greater strain on many across society, including in the communities we serve. This campaign encourages anyone on our network who is missing or thinking of going missing to contact Missing People for support.

"By partnering together, I hope that more people in crisis get the help that they need, keeping people safe and reuniting them with their loved ones."

Jo Youle OBE, Chief Executive of Missing People, commented: "Missing People is delighted to partner with South Western Railway to reach people who may be in crisis, and to let them know confidential support exists. The links between mental health and going missing are clear. The risk of harm is acute for many whilst they are missing.

"Together, we hope to help less people come to harm. The support of SWR, with awareness and vital funding, gives us the best chance of providing a safe way home for missing people."

SWR, along with all its partners, is committed to playing an active role in safeguarding vulnerable adults and children across its network. More information about SWR's approach to safeguarding can be found on its website [here](#).

Last year, SWR became only the second train operator in the UK to **achieve** the British Transport Police's Safeguarding in Rail accreditation, demonstrating its support for the most vulnerable members of society on the railway.

Photo credit: South Western Railway