

KEY POINTS ARISING

1066 Hastings to Tonbridge Line Steering Group

4th December 2025

- **Mobile Operating Depot** now established at Robertsbridge Station: has improved response times from c 1 hour 45 min to c 20 mins. (for more detail see minutes)
- **Update on Rail Closure for 9 days in October/November**
9 day closure = £9m investment on 25 projects over 5 sites
Successful due to detailed project management. (for more detail see copy or presentation by Laua Rondon)
- **Southeastern Railway Customer and Community Fund**
Grant funding from £1k to £50k available to community groups, local councils and charities for projects to benefit the local community. (for more detail see minutes and copy presentation)
- **General Update**
For more detail see minutes and copy presentation.

David Todd

13th January 2026

1066 Hastings to Tonbridge Line Steering Group Meeting minutes

Thursday 04 December 2025

Robertsbridge Village Hall



AGENDA

1.		Welcome to all members and speakers.	James Abbott 1066 Line Chair SCRP
		Attendees: James Abbott, 1066 Line Chair SCR Yolanda Laybourne, 1066 Vice Line Chair SCR Andy Pope, Line Officer Team Manager SCR Jenni Jones, Community Rail Network Danny Turner, MOM Network Rail Laura Rondon, Network Rail Shane Harrison, Network Rail Gavin Sage, Stagecoach Kevin Boorman, Director SCR Cllr Alan Bullion – High Brooms David Todd, Salehurst Parish Council Cllr Susan Prochake, Rother Matt Fraser, Southeastern Railway Sonia Plato, Crowhurst Environmental Group Dominic Steel, Parchment Trust Gertie Burgess, Explore the Arch Dr Sarah Jacques, Sussex Outreach Support Lesley Lambeth – Rother Voluntary Action Chris Davidson, Chairman Crowhurst Neighbourhood Plan Group	
		Guest Speaker Danny explained that the Mobile Operating Depot was set up at Robertsbridge Station in April last year to allow engineers to deal with track issues faster. The Robertsbridge Depot looks after the track from Hastings to Frant, Hastings to Rye and Hastings to Cooden. He said that every day was different, and duties could include anything from dealing with slippages, track failure and icy conditions. He said they regularly supported colleagues dealing with signal problems and track deaths. The team also make regular trespass and vandalism visits. The new depot has improved their response time from about 1hr 45 mins to 20 minutes.	Danny Turner Mobile Operating Manager Robertsbridge

2.		Stakeholder Update Laura gave a detailed account of the recent rail closure between Hastings and Tonbridge Wells, and Hastings to Bexhill. She said that over the 9 days, they had invested £9million in 25 projects across 5 sites. She emphasised that the Victorian infrastructure presented structural challenges, particularly at the Bo Peep Tunnel and Hastings tunnels. The team strengthened and waterproofed the tunnels using a method that they had innovated themselves. <i>See the whole story, with photos, in the attached presentation.</i> During discussions that followed, Kevin Boorman and Kanna Ingleson both acknowledged and commended William Knighton from Network Rail on his excellent communication and quick responses to issues recently raised by the public. Both agreed that it has been exceptional.	Laura Rondon Public Affairs Manager Network Rail Southern Region
3.		Stakeholder Update Matt highlighted the Southeastern Railway Customer and Community Fund, for 2026/7, which closed on December 31st 2025. He said that sums from £1,000 to £50,0000 of grant funding was available to community groups, local councils and charities, etc for projects which will benefit the local community. Matt also spoke about some upcoming celebrations next year, including the Exhibition Train that will be visiting Hastings in March, and visits to the Bayeaux Tapestry at the British Museum around September. <i>See full details of the SRCC Fund, including examples of previous awards, in the attached presentation.</i>	Matt Fraser Community Relations Manager Southeastern Railway
4		Line Officer Update and Forward Plan Kanna provided updates on projects at individual stations and Try a Train activities. Forward planning includes trips and activities associated with the Innovation Train, Bayeaux Tapestry and the 40th anniversary of electrified services between Tonbridge and Hastings. Other activities in the works include a gardening project, two murals, a poetry exhibit, guided environmental walks and a heritage display.	Kanna Ingleson 1066 Line Officer SCRIP

5		General Updates Dr Sarah gave a update updated on the delivery of her purpose-built mobile clinic which will soon be branded and fitted out. It will then be available to offer a range of services in rural areas, including drug and alcohol support, sexual health clinics, and help with benefits and finance. Dr Sarah emphasised the need for funding going forward. Currently she is carrying a lot of the costs herself.	Dr Sarah Jacques Sussex Outreach Support (SOS)
6		Chris re-opened a discussion about getting approval to build a small housing development on redundant land near the station. Main issue arose due to Station Approach Road being a NR asset, and uncertainty over who would maintain the road if the housing development went ahead. Andy Pope said he will pick this up and re-start communications with NR and others. <i>Here is a ink to a comprehensive report on all aspects of the proposed build.</i> CNDP 2018_28 Review Final 5apr25.pdf	Chris Davidson Chairman Crowhurst Neighbourhood Plan Group
		Cllr Prochak was especially interested in engaging with Dr Sarah Jacques about both the funding and use of the new mobile clinic that will soon serve rural areas. Cllr Prochak also talked about the new demands on the local area once the Kent and Rother Valley Railway opens. This new heritage line will restore the historic link between Robertsbridge and the existing Kent and East Sussex Railway, allowing heritage train services between Robertsbridge and Tenterdon/Bodiam once completed.	Cllr Sue Prochak Rother District Councillor
7		AOB Meeting close	James Abbott
8		The following updates have been provided, but were not included in the formal meeting due to time constraints: Community Rail Update, sent as a separate attachment. Cllr Todd confirmed that the Parish council have taken over the old telephone box at Robertsbridge station. It will be refurbished and used as a point of information for the Village. This will be especially important with the new connections being made with the Kent and East Sussex Railway.	Addendum Jenni Jones CRN Cllr David Todd Robertsbridge Parish Council
9,		Our next meeting will be a joint AGM with the Marshlink Line. Tuesday 10 March 2026, 2:30-4:30pm Central Hall, 6 Bank Buildings, Station Road, Hastings TN34 1NG	1066/Marshlink AGM

Community Rail Network – Support & Development update for CRP meetings



This is a summary of our Community Rail Network news, for the very latest news relevant to community rail visit <https://communityrail.org.uk/category/community-rail-news/> or subscribe to our fortnightly bulletin at <http://eepurl.com/gAKbKH>

November 13th 2025

- Last week brought a major development for the future of our railways: the Transport Secretary introduced the **Railways Bill**, a long-awaited step towards establishing Great British Railways (GBR). This is a significant milestone to create a more integrated, accountable and community-responsive rail system, one that better serves people and places. Alongside the Bill, the DfT published its **Accessibility Roadmap**, setting out commitments to make rail more inclusive and accessible for all. We have published briefings on both of these - <https://communityrail.org.uk/railways-bill-consultation-response-and-accessibility-roadmap-welcomed-by-community-rail-network/> and are working with GBR, DfT Operator, Network Rail and others to ensure community rail is understood, respected, supported and embedded in the new rail landscape.
- The Bill also highlights the important role of Mayoral Combined Authorities. We are planning a members' webinar to explore together how community rail can engage with regional leaders, influence transport planning and ensure community voices are heard to shape rail and integrated mobility. More details soon.
- At our summer Parliamentary Reception, we launched a 'Policy Asks' post card covering Integrated transport, Station buildings, Accessibility & inclusion and Rail reform & devolution. Download a copy from <https://communityrail.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/CRN-policy-asks.pdf>. Also see our other consultation responses <https://communityrail.org.uk/resources/policy-papers-and-consultation-responses/>
- Thank you to those who attended our recent AGM. We were delighted to publish our **2024-25 Impact Report** and welcome Faye Keane and Paul Goddard to our board, with Marion Atkinson re-elected.
- Our Small Grants Fund (England) and Community Rail Development Fund (for DfT accredited CRPs only) are open for applications. CRDF can support applications up to **£25,000** (subject to match funding). See - <https://communityrail.org.uk/member-services/grants-funding-and-bursaries/funding-available-through-crn/> There have been changes to the amounts, forms and processes this year based on feedback from members so please check the latest guidance. Local funding is also available for members in the SWR and TfGM areas.
- Key **dates** to add to your calendars are:
 - The shortlist for the 2026 Community Rail Awards will be announced on 10th December on our awards hub <https://communityrail.org.uk/events-and-campaigns/community-rail-awards/awardsentry/> Bookings are open to attend the awards being held at Derby Arena on **19th March 2026** with East Midlands Railway our headline sponsors. Plans for the evening entertainment and various fringe events are underway - also listed on the awards hub.
- The **training & events** section of the website contains many learning opportunities for **our members** (<https://communityrail.org.uk/events-and-campaigns/training-networking-webinars/>). These include:
 - Project Outcomes & Planning – **19th November, 27th November, 1st December (On-line)**
 - Station adoption projects – making them work – **26th November (On-line)**
 - A range of specialist on-line networks with their next meeting dates shown, including:
 - Integrated Sustainable Transport – **No sessions currently scheduled,**
 - Education – **19th November (the third Thursday of the month)**
 - Tourism – **16th December**

If you missed any public webinars, you can watch these again by following the links from our website.

- Many of our members have visited or co-hosted the **Railway 200** exhibition train “Inspiration” over the last six months and will be taking part in 2026 too (see <https://railway200.co.uk/inspiration/>) We are keen to build a visual archive of members involvement, so if you have a short video clip or a set of images for your involvement please send the m to alice@communityrail.org.uk so we can include them. If you still have local events planned, they can be uploaded to <https://railway200.co.uk/get-involved/share-activity-or-event/>. Our member Q&A webinars with the Railway 200 team will be publicised, or you can watch back here - <https://communityrail.org.uk/events-and-campaigns/railway-200/>
- Our regional **Support and Development** team led by Sam Agnew (Director of support and development) continues to provide support to members through Colin Burcombe (East, South-East and South Midlands), Jenni Jones (SWR & GWR), Ian Davis (Northern) and Rhiannon-Jane Raftery (Wales). Paul Webster leads the regions team and provides support for members in the East and West Midlands. Specialist member support is provided by Gary Shipp (Projects development and Integrated sustainable transport), Karen Bennet (Education & youth engagement) and Alex Peel (Training & Development).
- We have two projects supported with grants from Motability Foundation. **Travelling with Confidence** works with four CRPs (CR Lancashire, GO CRP, Severnside CRP & Southeast Communities RP) engaging and empowering disabled people, promoting independent mobility to use rail and connecting modes. **On Track** is working with RNIB and two of our members to explore the effectiveness of disability training received by rail staff across the UK and develop innovative new models of raising disability awareness. A second dedicated grants pot will be available in 2026 for other members to access, and resources will be developed to raise awareness of this important topic.
- **Bespoke training** for members is available – recent sessions have helped CRPs think about their governance structure, overall aims and visions and their marketing & communications messages. Members can also apply for **Training Bursaries** of up to £200 for courses of their own choosing that will help CRP Officers in their role. Contact Alex Peel first for more details.
- As part of our Tourism Strategy we support each CRP to have a space on <https://scenicrailbritain.com/>, so please check your pages and contact us with any revised inks, pictures or text you’d like including. We also have tourism related resources here <https://communityrail.org.uk/member-services/tourism-network/>.
- To help your work visit our [Member Resources](#) webpage offering a collection of guides and toolkits or consider the offer from our rail industry **Corporate Partners** who can support and help your activities here - <https://communityrail.org.uk/member-services/how-our-corporate-partners-support-our-members/>.
- Our **Value & impact of Community Rail** report and summary fact sheet shows through research and case studies the social value of community rail activities. <https://communityrail.org.uk/community-rail-movement-delivering-social-return-on-investment-of-nearly-18-for-every-1/>. Headline figures include:
 - A social return of **£17.89 for every £1.00 invested**
 - An annual social value of **£129 million from funding of £7.2 million**
 - Directly engages with over **125,000 people** per year
 - Works with 65,000 young people from more than 2,000 schools and youth organisations
 - Each year **8.250 volunteers give 380,000 hours** of time with a social value of **£30.9 million**
- Please continue to send Erin (news@communityrail.org.uk) your **good news** stories to share with the wider community rail family through our social media channels or twice monthly e-bulletin ‘**Community Rail News**’ which now reaches over 1000 subscribers. We are always looking for interesting examples of what you do across the country and to amplify to a national audience. [Sign-up if you don’t already receive it](#)

Network Rail update for 1066 line steering group

**Laura Rondón
Public Affairs Manager
Southern Region**





9-day closure

Tunbridge Wells to Hastings and Bexhill to Hastings





Please check before you travel
and allow more time for your
journey.





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£9M investment



25 projects



5 sites



9 days

- 
- A vertical decorative graphic on the left side of the slide, consisting of a series of blue horizontal bars of varying lengths, creating a stylized railway track effect.
- Coordinated effort between South Eastern Railway (NR+SE) and GTR
 - Addressed structural challenges dating back to the line's original construction in the 1850s, ensuring safer, more reliable journeys for years to come
 - Delivered track upgrades, tunnel strengthening, structures repairs, landslip prevention to give passengers better journeys
 - Closing the line for 9-days allows us to do a lot more work and much more quickly when compared with weekend only working

Track Renewal

Replacement of nearly 1km of old rails, 1,176 low-carbon sleepers and ballast (the stones that form the track bed) between Etchingam and Mountfield.

Refurbished sidings at Robertsbridge, and fixed sections of track at Castle Bridge and Battle.

Good quality track means trains can run at their full line speed. Poor quality track means speed restrictions and delays.

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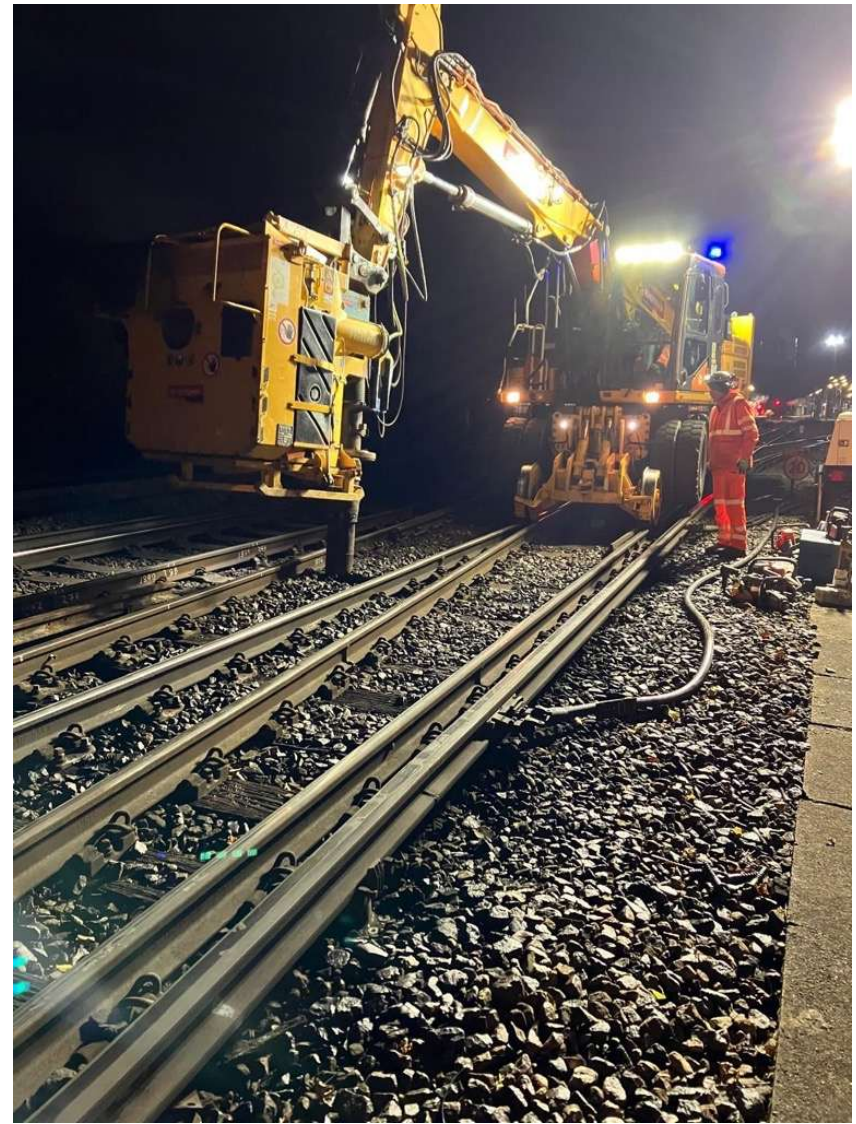
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Signalling and switch upgrades

At Frant and Wadhurst, engineers improved reliability by refurbishing the moveable rails known as switches, which allow trains to change path, as well as track circuits, the part of the signalling system that detects a train's location.

On the busy Brighton Main Line at Three Bridges, we also installed new switches & crossings to improve train movement.

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A decorative vertical line on the left side of the slide, composed of a series of blue horizontal bars of varying lengths, resembling a train track.

Slope and embankment stabilisation

On the approach to the Mountfield tunnel (opened in 1851), engineers stabilised 1,000m² of cutting with 337 soil nails, mesh and erosion matting. The steep cutting on the approaches to the tunnel has been a landslip and debris risk for many years. This work massively reduced the risk to trains and passengers.

Embankments and cuttings were also stabilised and strengthened at Frant and near Wadhurst, reducing the risk of landslips and delays.

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Emergency Works

By the River Brede, Rother, engineers stopped an active landslip and allowed speed restrictions to be lifted. Ground monitors detected movement the week before the line closure began, meaning teams had to mobilise quickly to prevent a closure of the line. The embankment is now reinforced with 236 12-metre-long soil nails.

This was a very challenging job, with numerous ecological challenges. The team had to build a ½km temporary road just to get to site!

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Vegetation Management

Between Strawberry Hill and Frant, and from Crowhurst to Mountfield, overgrown vegetation was cleared to keep track safe from debris and falling trees. Rock anchors were added to the cutting slope on the approaches to the Mountfield tunnel.

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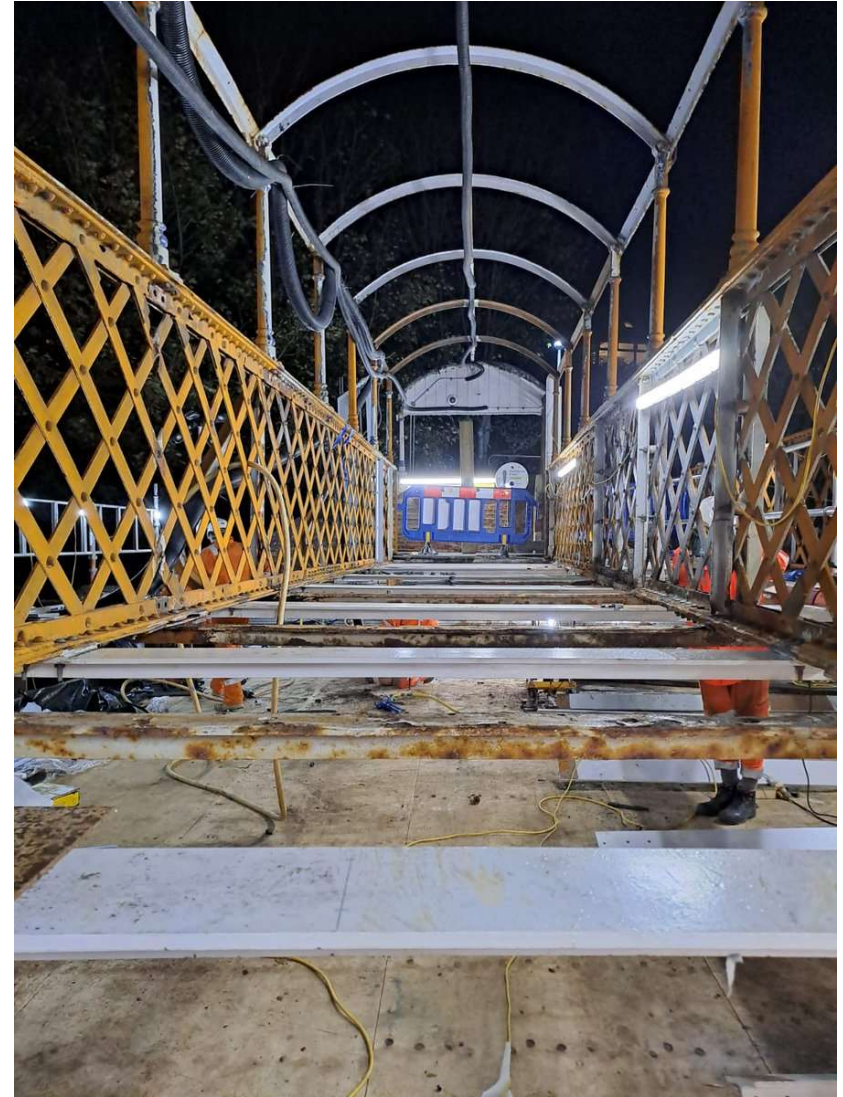
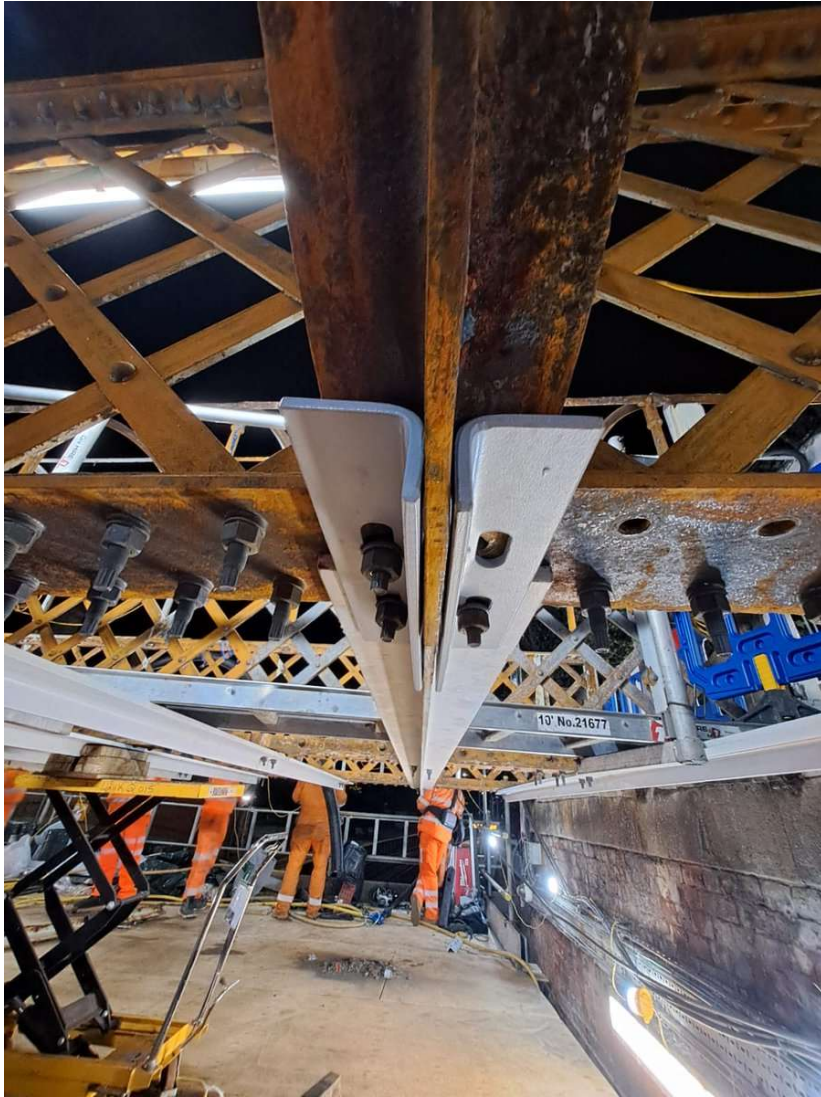


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Station improvements

The footbridge at West St Leonards, in service since the 1870s, got a full refurbishment. The metal was treated, surfaces were replaced, and the bridge was completely repainted.

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Bo Peep & Hastings Tunnels

Nearly 1,000m³ of concrete sprayed in the Bo Peep and Hastings tunnels to strengthen and waterproof.

These Victorian tunnels date back to the 1850s and require a lot of care and maintenance.

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Thank you

Laura.Rondon@networkrail.co.uk





CCIF - Background

- Award of £1,000-£50,000 of grant funding to community groups, local councils, charities, etc. for projects which will benefit the local community.
- Part of Southeastern's **Business Plan** agreed with the government
- Design of the scheme has been approved by the DfT who oversaw the process last time
- Invited applications for funding last year for funding in FY24-25 **and** FY25-26
- Currently in the **first full year** of CCIF – learning as we go!
- Process for this year is largely the same, except no Railway 200 category

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Rail staff offer missing people 'route to safety'



SOUTHEASTERN RAILWAY

| Many people in distress seek help at railway stations

Bob Dale

BBC News, South East

27 July 2025

A train operator and a charity are working together to help people who have gone missing.

Southeastern Railway, which serves Kent, East Sussex and South East London, has partnered with Missing People to give vulnerable passengers "a route to safety".

Southeastern unveils £380k boost for good causes



- Grants of up to £50,000 awarded to 11 charities and community groups
- Funding supports vital services, including domestic abuse support and youth mentoring
- Part of Southeastern's ongoing commitment to advancing social mobility

Southeastern is providing a £380,000 boost to community projects as part of its Customer & Community Improvement Fund (CCIF), reinforcing its commitment to supporting the people and places it serves.

CCIF - Background

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The proposed project should fall into one or more of the following categories:

- **Local skills and employment** – promoting growth and development opportunities for all within a local community and ensuring that everyone has access to opportunities to develop new skills and gain meaningful employment.
- **Healthier, safer and more resilience local communities** – building stronger and deeper connections with the local community. Promoting well-being and mental health, reducing anti-social behaviour, and fostering relationships and encouraging active collaboration within communities.
- **Sustainable railway** – ensuring the places where people live and work are cleaner and greener, and helping secure the long-term future of our planet.
- **Inclusion and diversity** – improving the rail experience of people with disabilities and other specific needs. This includes both infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects.

CCIF 2025-6

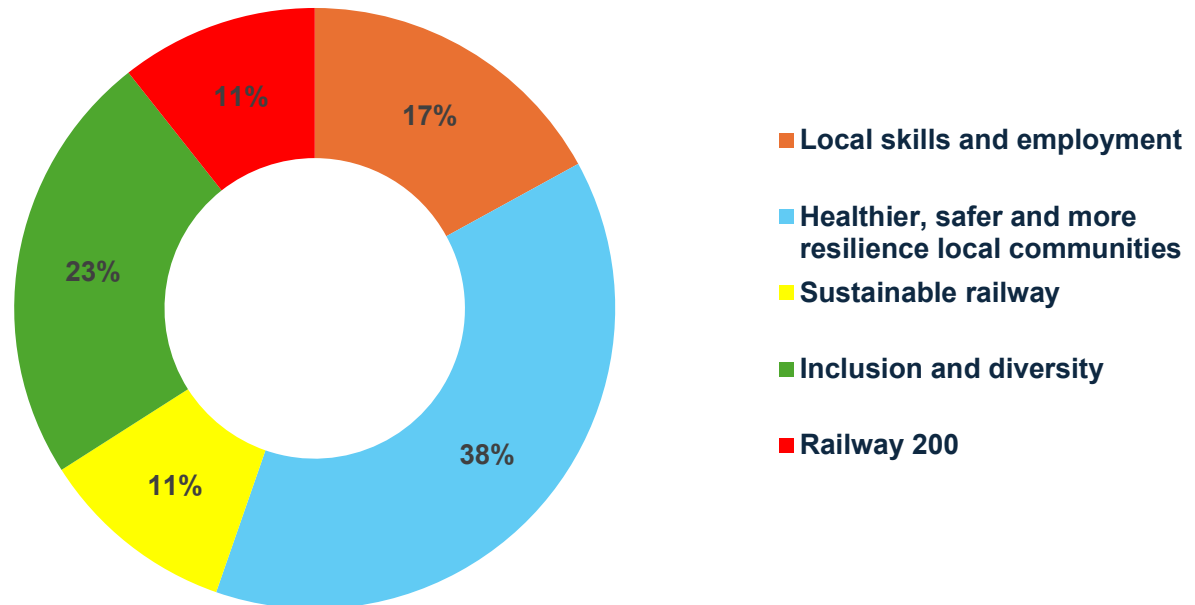
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Number of bids assessed by category



- 51 bids received for FY 25/26
- 11 approved projects totalling £382,548
- Over last two FYs, we invested over £500k in local community projects

CCIF 2025-6

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Name of the project and organisation	CCIF category
Safe Routes: Partnering for Prevention - Missing People	Healthier, safer and more resilient communities
Safe Families South East - Safe Families UK	Healthier, safer and more resilient communities
Making Connections - Involve Kent	Inclusion and diversity
Disabled access trips, training and stories - Touchbase Care	Inclusion and diversity
Prospects - Refocus Project Ltd	Inclusion and diversity
Youth, Arts, Wellbeing and Community Joy - Gravesham Network Development CIC	Healthier, safer and more resilient communities
Early Childhood Development – Small Steps, Big Imprints! - Children & Families	Healthier, safer and more resilient communities
Specialist counselling for survivors of domestic abuse - Rising Sun Domestic Violence and Abuse Service	Healthier, safer and more resilient communities
Unity Rail Safe Program (U.R.S) - Youth Unity CIC	Local skills
Future Pathways - Sports Connect Community CIC	Local skills
Bemix café - Bemix	Inclusion and diversity

CCIF 2026-7 Application process

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Bids will be accepted via online form until 2359 on 31 December. Applications will then be reviewed in the new year and proposed for funding for delivery from April 2026.

What should be included in the bid?

- Brief Project Summary – 1500 characters (no spaces)
- Project Scope – 3000 characters (no spaces)
- Project objectives, activities, and outcomes
- Success metrics
- Total cost of the project. All requests are required to submit a high-level breakdown of the total cost of the project, even if our funding won't cover the full amount
- Key beneficiaries
- Project timeline. Month by month breakdown of key activities over the timeframe of the project
- Risks and mitigations

CCIF 2026-7 Application process

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What cannot be supported?

- Projects that provide a commercial return to SER or the bidding organisation
- Projects that create a direct revenue for SER or develop something that SER is expected to deliver as part of its service agreement with the government
- Feasibility studies into new services, new railway lines/routes or new stations
- Require ongoing funding beyond FY 26/27, unless committed from elsewhere
- Support organisational overheads that are not directly related to project delivery

Additional considerations

- For funding requests between £10-50K please advise what other funding has been secured in the last two years, how it has been spent and what has been delivered.
- Funding can't be used for general running costs or salaries of the organisation.
- Staff costs will be considered, but they must relate to the application submitted. These costs should not equal more than 40% of the overall funding amount requested. The funding can't be used for pay rises.

2026-7 Application process

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What makes a great bid? (The absolute best possible...)

- ✓ The proposed project will benefit a **wide range of people** in the community
- ✓ The project clearly demonstrates a high level of **community ownership** or participation
- ✓ A clear, itemised budget (Estimates are acceptable)
- ✓ The bidder demonstrates they have relevant **experience and expertise** to successfully deliver the project
- ✓ The project is **achievable** within the timeframe (1 April 2026 – 31 March 2027)
- ✓ The bid identifies reputational risks if the project is delayed or fails to meet objectives **and** proposes mitigations for how these will be dealt with if they occur
- ✓ The project offers a clear **long-term benefit** to the community
- ✓ The project will create **lasting change** even after its completion
- ✓ The project can be supported or **maintained** after the delivery window has closed
- ✓ There are plans to **promote the benefits** of the project to the wider public

2026-7 Application process

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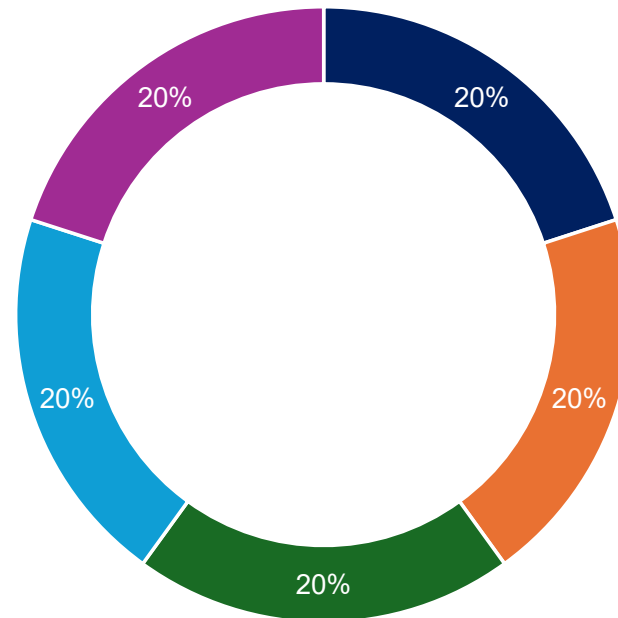
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How are applications scored?

- Assuming bid meets essential criteria, it will be assigned to an internal reviewer
- Scoring matrix – each criteria is worth 20%
- Each bid will be assessed by a minimum of 2 reviewers
- All reviewers will meet to discuss bids and agree final shortlist
- All applicants will be notified of outcome in Feb/March 2026 – unable to give individual feedback



■ Addressing social value

■ Community support/engagement

■ Accurate costings

■ Deliverability

■ Legacy

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Any questions?

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