

Southeast Communities Rail Partnership

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Officer, Sussex Coast





Your Community Cares Campaign

25th November 2025

Background

- The “Your Community Cares” campaign was developed by the Southeast Communities Rail Partnership (SCR) in collaboration with West Sussex County Council, Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR), and the West Sussex Library Service.
- The initiative was inspired by a shared commitment to promoting kindness, connection, and awareness within local communities, particularly around the issue of violence against women and girls (VAWG).
- The campaign was designed to coincide with White Ribbon Day—an international day held annually on 25th November, dedicated to ending violence against women and girls. The White Ribbon movement encourages men and boys to take a stand against gender-based violence and to promote equality and respect in all relationships.



Aims and Objectives

The aim of the “Your Community Cares” campaign was twofold:

- Raise awareness of support available to those affected by violence or abuse, in a gentle and compassionate way.
- Foster community connection through a shared creative activity that brings warmth and hope to railway users.

What Happened

- In the months leading up to White Ribbon Day 2025, West Sussex County Council put out a county-wide call to local knitting and crochet groups to create small white hearts—a symbol of care, peace, and solidarity.
- Participants were invited to drop off their handmade hearts at any West Sussex library up until 10th November 2025. From there, the SCRP and County Council teams collected the hearts and prepared them for distribution at local railway stations.
- On 25th November 2025 (White Ribbon Day), volunteers and Station Partners were present at stations across the county. They handed out the white hearts along with small “Your Community Cares” cards. These cards featured QR codes linking to the Samaritans and other local and national organisations offering help and support for anyone in need.
- The approach was intentionally gentle and uplifting—sharing care and compassion rather than direct campaigning—ensuring the message of support reached people in a positive and approachable way.



Results

- Over 7,500 handmade hearts were donated by knitters and crocheters across Sussex and beyond
- More than 40 partner organisations got involved in the campaign
- Hearts and cards were distributed at more than 20 stations by volunteers and Station Partners, engaging with hundreds of passengers and staff.
- The campaign successfully combined creative community involvement with public awareness, showing how local collaboration can have meaningful social impact.

Impact

- The “Your Community Cares” campaign brightened the day for many passengers and staff, sparking conversations about kindness, community, and support.
- By aligning with White Ribbon Day, the initiative helped draw attention to the issue of violence against women and girls, while also sharing practical information about where people can turn for help.
- The partnership between SCRP, West Sussex County Council, GTR, and the Library Service demonstrated the power of cross-sector collaboration. It showcased how transport hubs can serve as important spaces for community engagement and wellbeing, not just travel.

Feedback

Feedback from volunteers, station partners, and members of the public was overwhelmingly positive. Participants praised the inclusive and caring tone of the campaign, noting that it felt “hopeful rather than heavy.”

Many passengers expressed appreciation for the handmade hearts and the messages of support; while knitting and crochet groups shared their pride in contributing to something that made a visible difference in their community.

Volunteers commented:

“It was lovely to see people’s faces light up when they received a heart. It showed how small acts of kindness can make a big impact.”

“We gave out a lot of the beautiful knitted and crocheted hearts. Most were very well received, and we had some really interesting conversations”

Heart Recipients commented:

“This has made my day”

“Can I please have a hug”

“What a wonderful idea”

“I am going to put this heart on my husband’s grave”

The campaign leaves a lasting legacy of compassion and collaboration—reminding everyone that **“Your Community Cares.”**

