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Surrey’s prettiest railway station litter blight

25 July 2026



A Surrey train station that was once voted the county’s prettiest station by Surrey Live readers is now stewing in litter after the rail operator took away all the bins on its platforms.

Box Hill & Westhumble station, serving a popular spot for visitors looking to enjoy picturesque country walks, had its bins removed by Southern rail to bring it into compliance with new recycling regulations.

A Southern rail spokesperson told the Local Democracy Reporting Service (LDRS) this is because the small station does not have “secure space for the large wheelie bins we would need to store rubbish from the bins ready for collection”.

They are encouraging passengers to use bins on board their trains or taking their litter home to dispose of appropriately – while increasing the number of staff picking up rubbish from platforms.

But residents are furious at the changes, with several writing to MP Chris Coghlan to voice their anger at the growing mountains of rubbish accruing on their local station’s platforms.

Pictures shared with the LDRS show piles of litter building up on the platforms, including plastic wrappers, coffee cups and beer bottles. These photos were taken on July 5, 2026.

Westhumble resident David Farmery told the LDRS he thinks Southern Rail is “abrogating its responsibility” to ensure the station is clean and tidy.

“They seem to think that Boxhill and Westhumble is a small station but we receive an incredible amount of visitors over the weekend.

“So I really do wonder if they did a proper assessment of our situation rather than imposing a company wide no bins policy to their unstaffed stations,” he said.

In a post on Facebook, Chris Coughlan said he had jointly raised concerns to Southern rail along with residents, imploring the rail operator to fix the problem.

While he said Southern had subsequently deployed more staff to carry out cleaning at the station, he added: “I’m glad they’ve listened, but I will be asking them to provide a more permanent solution.”

Box Hill & Westhumble station was last year voted the prettiest railway station in Surrey by our readers, narrowly beating out Godalming for the top spot.

A Southern spokesperson said: “We take concerns about litter at Box Hill & Westhumble station seriously and have increased the frequency of staff attending the station to carry out cleaning. The changes were introduced to comply with new Simpler Recycling regulations.

“We are keeping the change under review, as well as listening to feedback from our communities.”

The LDRS understands that the rail operator recently installed segregated bins at its staffed stations to bring them in line with up to date regulations and encourage recycling, while a trial of removing bins from unstaffed stations on the Wimbledon loop did not see an increase in littering.

James Moules Local Democracy Reporter

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Image: Google map capture Boxhill and Westhumble station and insert of platform litter (Credit: David Farmery)

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