

RMNews

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Railway Mission
Support on life's journey



BOLTON



Railway Mission

**Support on
life's journey**

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Railway Mission



Cover photo by R Allen of 73156 at Loughborough:

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GBR livery representation by Department for Transport

GBR: working with transition

As the vision of Great British Railways begins to take shape, the railway community stands on the threshold of significant change.

This transition brings both opportunity and uncertainty for those who serve and sustain the network every day. For many railway staff, questions around structure, identity, and future working practices may feel daunting, even as the promise of a more integrated and efficient system offers hope.

In times like these, the human dimension must not be overlooked. Change, however necessary, can place strain on wellbeing, morale, and community. This is where the Railway Mission continues to play a vital and compassionate role. By offering a listening ear, pastoral care, and a steady presence across depots, stations, and offices, the Mission provides support that goes beyond policy and planning.

The coming of Great British Railways is not simply an organisational reform; it is a moment of cultural transition. It calls for resilience, understanding, and unity across the industry. Railway Mission is uniquely placed to walk alongside staff during this journey, supporting individuals through uncertainty, fostering connection, and reminding all that they are valued not just as workers, but as people.

As the railway moves forward, the Mission's commitment remains unchanged: to be present, to care, and to serve. In doing so, it helps ensure that amidst transformation, the heart of the railway, its people, remains strong.

Liam Johnston MBE
Executive Director
Railway Mission

Announcing our new Chaplain for Wales:

Mags Farrow

Railway Mission is delighted to welcome Reverend Mags Farrow as our new Chaplain for Wales and the Marches.

Mags brings more than 13 years of ordained ministry and wide experience in chaplaincy, pastoral care, education, and church leadership. An accredited Baptist Union minister since 2011, she has served in a range of demanding and compassionate roles.

Most recently, she was a prison chaplain, supporting staff and prisoners of all faiths and none, including during times of trauma, bereavement, and crisis. She also has significant experience in educational chaplaincy, providing pastoral care, wellbeing support, and staff training within an academy setting.

Her wider ministry has included senior and associate leadership roles in Baptist churches in Huddersfield, North Bristol, and South Bristol. She holds a BA in Theology, a PGCE, and additional training in trauma and mental health-informed practice.

Describing herself as a “pastoral evangelist,” Mags is passionate



about sharing the love of Christ through care, compassion, and relationships. She is known for her calm and supportive presence, particularly in difficult circumstances.

Following her family's move to South Wales in September 2025, she felt called to continue her chaplaincy ministry through the Railway Mission.

In her new role, she will offer pastoral support across the railway community, including to those affected by trauma, bereavement, and critical incidents, serving people of all backgrounds and beliefs.



Meet us at Stand M60a at

RAIL LIVE

17-18 June

Porterbrook's Long Marston Rail Innovation Centre

Grab your Hi-Vis vest and safety boots and head on down to the next Rail Live event at Long Marston where we'll once again be exhibiting along with stacks of rail industry folk.

Don't forget your sun hat, and maybe a brolly, just in case, for a day out with some of the most amazing people, equipment, stands, banter, networking and info sessions amongst the rail fraternity.

We'll be looking out for you from **Stand M60a** to let you know about the amazing support work provided by Railway Mission chaplains, and you'll maybe have an opportunity to chat with some of our staff as they drop in between traversing the networks, looking after rail workers in the field.

Looking forward to meeting up with you once again at this year's show.



Former Network Rail CEO Sir Andrew Haynes meets up with Railway Mission's Claire Keville and Andrew Hall at the 2025 event

Business Manager
Claire Keville interviews
our new Finance
Administrator...

Introducing...

Anita Buswell



We are delighted to announce that Anita Buswell has joined us after Biljana Nenadovic, our previous valued and much-loved Finance Administrator, moved onto a full-time role after four years with Railway Mission.

Originally from the local area near our HQ in Rugby, Anita has recently moved back from Jersey where she had been living with her husband and working as an accounts assistant at her local church.

She is keen on crochet and in her spare time is involved in voluntary roles with the British Heart Foundation and at motorsport events.

Now she has had a couple of months to settle in, we asked her a few questions so you can get to know her better:

What drew you to apply for the role of finance administrator at Railway Mission, and what key skills and experience do you bring with you to the role?

I was drawn to the role because it combines my finance and administration experience with the opportunity to support a charity that makes such a difference to people's lives. Having worked on a church staff team I value being part of a team and organisation where the work has a purpose beyond just the numbers. I have been in banking or finance most of my working career and happy to bring that experience with me to the role.

What excites you about working for Railway Mission and what do





I value being part of a team and organisation where the work has a purpose beyond just the numbers.

you hope to achieve during your time with the charity?

I had never heard of Railway Mission before I applied, and I have often thought while sat on a train that it can be a very lonely lifestyle, and while some may enjoy and thrive from that, some may not. Finding out that there are chaplains available to this hard working network of railway employees excited me. Knowing that people are there for this community inspires me to do my little bit behind the scenes, and I hope my contribution to ensure the smooth running of the finances is support for the wider team.

What key things have you learnt about Railway Mission since joining and how do you describe the charity to those you meet outside of work?

Since joining, I have learnt how wide-reaching the support provided by Railway Mission really is, and how important it is to those in the industry. Incidents happen, and the news following any incident can become like chip paper, but the chaplains support is constant, to all in the industry.

When I describe the charity to others they, like me, were unaware of the charity. I am pleased that I can widen the net of knowledge and awareness just a little further

for the charity and remain hopeful that I meet that one (or ten!) people who would become a supporter of the work.

Can you share a little about how your background and values align with those of Railway Mission.

I have been around church most of my life, but when I moved to Jersey I got more involved with serving on teams and volunteering where I had availability. I then got the opportunity to apply for the finance administrator role within the staff team and got to learn and grow an appreciation for organisations that are value-driven and focused on supporting people.

Since moving back to the UK, I have been volunteering with the British Heart Foundation in a retail charity shop and any motorsport event I could get to – I am a secret petrol head and love to be able to ‘stand in a field’ for a few hours to allow the competitors to drive like loons. This reflects my desire to contribute to the community and support others, which I felt aligned with The Railway Mission.

We are delighted to have Anita on the team at Railway Mission, she is already a great asset, and we hope she will enjoy a long career with us.





Friends! Sandy Patience (right) pictured with Railway Mission Chaplain Dereck Grant

A real life story of support - Sandy Patience

Sandy has Huntington's Disease, an inherited degenerative brain disease. He has experienced multiple family tragedies, sadly losing his sister and mother to the disease and his brother to cancer.

The disease causes a gradual loss of control over physical movement, emotions, and thinking. Sufferers experience uncertainty, anxiety and low mood which can deeply affect relationships and daily life. Eventually they can lose speech and mobility, often deteriorating significantly over a short period of time.

Sandy has been supported by our Railway Mission Chaplain, Dereck Grant, over recent years. Over this

time, they have also developed a deep friendship.

Sandy spoke to us about the support that Dereck has provided and what it has meant to him. The disease has an incredibly high suicide rate and Sandy says that without his own strength, the love of his wife Laura (*pictured together, next page*), his faith and the support of Dereck, he would not be here.

He says that the disease robbed him of a normal childhood, with his time instead being spent visiting relatives in hospital or care homes affected by the disease. It has been cruel and difficult to watch those he loves suffering with a disease for which there is no cure and with little support available for them. It

was made even more challenging knowing the genetic risk and that he could be watching his own future.

Sandy and Dereck have both worked on the railways for a long time and Sandy was aware of Dereck's chaplaincy role before he needed support himself. He explains how Dereck would visit everyone along the line, including the more remote signal boxes, always being there and making time for everyone, describing him as "A diamond within the organisation."



Sandy received his own diagnosis of Huntington's Disease in 2017 and over the subsequent years, Dereck has been there to support Sandy in many ways. This includes in-person chats and always being there at the end of a message when needed. Dereck even used to visit Sandy's sister in the care home (above), particularly important when he was working twelve hour shifts as a

signaller. It meant a lot knowing that someone was taking time to be there for his sister at times when he couldn't. Dereck also led the funeral services for the members of his family and Sandy praises the "incredible effort he puts into everything he does for others."



Sandy became a born again Christian in 2013 and his faith gives him strength - although he says that Dereck has given him support that isn't always there within the church community. There is generally a lack of understanding in both Christian and non-Christian communities about Huntington's Disease and its impact on the body, daily life and relationships. He explains that Dereck listens and understands and that his openness with Sandy about his own experiences have really helped to build a bond of trust and friendship between them.

There's more on this story at our website at www.railwaymission.org.





Photos: D Giles

A call to compassion in a time of crisis... **David Giles**

Many of us have watched the events of the Middle East crisis unfold with sadness and dismay.

Whatever views people may hold about the political or religious issues involved, one thing is painfully clear: innocent children are caught up in the bombing, and that is heartbreaking.

Several would willingly volunteer to travel to Lebanon and help alongside international relief agencies. However, because it remains an active conflict zone, that is not usually possible. Yet one of the Railway Mission's trustees is doing just that.

David, who is on a professional roster of disaster responders, has been in Lebanon for several weeks, witnessing the impact of the conflict first hand. He says, "I'm working in Lebanon with a Christian humanitarian team, to support some of the 1 million people displaced by conflict, providing essential aid such as blankets, bedding, hygiene kits, clean water and food."

He explains that many of those forced to flee their homes in the south are now staying in schools, mosques, community buildings, tents, makeshift shelters, or even in their cars and vans, as well as with friends and family members.



“

We are getting aid out to those who most need it, despite logistical challenges.



Recalling the events of Wednesday 8 April, David (left) said, “Wednesday was a very dark day, with 100 targets struck in 10 minutes of pure horror.

The hospitals are still struggling with the numbers presenting with very severe injuries, and supply chain issues. We are getting aid out to those who most need it, despite logistical challenges.”



In the face of such suffering, David's work is a powerful witness of compassion in action.

Please pray for peace in the region, for all those affected by the violence, dialogue between political leaders and for an end to the cycle of war and retribution.

More on this story at our website, www.railwaymission.org.





Mike Roberts

Northwest

"It's like when you're needed you're there." A manager said that to me yesterday, after I popped my head around the office door just as she needed some support.

The truth is I was only there because my train had been cancelled. But if God can use a Persian king or Balaam's donkey, he can use anything.

I'm aware that fruitful chaplaincy often occurs by accident and often despite our best laid plans, not just because of them. God moves in the unexpected, the unintended and the unscheduled moments and sometimes it's handy to remind myself when I've already disregarded plan A and B for a day by 10am that there can be a bigger plan at work. I'm thankful for all those moments that wait for chaplains behind doors we're not expecting and the chance to share a little hope and light there.



Karen Schofield

North Wales & Northwest

My life as a chaplain is measured in miles of track, not time in a church. For the past three years that has been my world, serving as a railway chaplain across Cheshire, Wales and Merseyside.

Many folks think of the role as religious but it's more about presence, about walking alongside staff, metaphorically and physically. Being there after the bad times, yes, but constantly building supportive relationships.

This year has been spent building on the foundations of trust. A quiet joy of mine is recognising people when they've moved roles, or when they are out and about, out of uniform.

So, three years into the role I've learnt that the railway was always more than trains and timetables (although I shocked myself recently at how excited I am for the incoming North Wales changes). It's about a 'family' and individuals carrying invisible burdens, whilst keeping a nation moving.



Michele Ashton

Anglia Route

"What a difference a day makes," I say regularly when the weather changes so quickly; from eating an ice-cream on a platform waiting for a train, to looking for that next warm office.

And what a difference another chaplain makes. Covering the south and central parts of Anglia in one day was something I always dreamt and prayed for, and so was having a colleague working in the same

area. Nigel joined me to work with Anglia at the beginning of the year.

Demands from fatalities continue. It was extremely sad when we lost a track worker who was struck by a train. We were asked by their manager to meet the teams as they returned to work on an emergency embankment which was moving, supporting four train tracks. We joined the teams at 22.00 by the side of the track where they had lost their colleague and stayed until 24.00.



Tony Miller
Southern

No two days are the same. My role often involves supporting members of railway staff during some of the most challenging circumstances, including fatalities and critical incidents. This includes providing care and support to railway and police staff, and at times members of the public who may have witnessed a distressing incident.

One meaningful moment recently was when a member of staff shared how grateful she was for the support I had provided to her over several months and that in personal and professional challenges, the encouragement and reassurance I offered had been a source of strength to her.

She also expressed appreciation on behalf of her colleagues as well. She said that I have consistently been present to support staff members and management teams during difficult situations, and her kind words were deeply encouraging and humbling to hear.



Manuela Mai
North London

Seven months into my chaplaincy role, and each day becomes increasingly interesting. As I travel from one station to another and visit depots and offices, I discover just how wonderfully unique each person is but also how much unites us as human beings.

We all want to be seen, heard, and loved. We all experience joy and pain, and as chaplains, we are in the privileged position of being the salt and light Jesus commanded us to be. I recognise the wonderful opportunities we have in showing kindness in a hurting world. Every interaction is a chance to reflect Jesus and let people know how precious and valued they are.

I was recently involved in supporting staff who lost a colleague in tragic circumstances. There are times when words cannot explain, but if we carry God's presence, just being 'in the room' can be the great source of comfort needed.



Christopher Henley

Wessex Route

As I continue to journey around the Wessex area, I am constantly reminded how deeply the ministry of Railway Mission chaplains is valued across the railway family. Following our southern chaplains meeting, we reflected on the trust, relationships and quiet presence that grow through faithfully visiting and supporting railway colleagues in every circumstance of life.

One of the greatest encouragements in chaplaincy is hearing someone say, "Thank you, you have made a difference." Through conversations on platforms, in depots, offices or mess rooms, we carry the reassurance that God in Jesus Christ is not distant but walking alongside us each day — and in the hardest moments, gently holding us. Please continue to pray for our chaplains, past and present, that we may remain a blessing to those we serve, to our families and to one another.



David Hardy

Gloucestershire

Having been in hospital recently, I have learned the value of care and prayer. The professional medical staff looked after me very well. What really cheered me up was the kind visits and messages from railway and

church friends and the assurances that people are praying for me and for my family.

You might wonder why I value prayer so much but I really find it very encouraging. Of course, there is no proof that it achieves anything. However, I like to remember the words of a former archbishop of Canterbury, William Temple.

He was once asked by a very sceptical journalist if he believed that prayer 'works.' His reply was "All I can say is that when I pray coincidences happen, and when I do not they don't." So please keep praying – and watch out for the coincidences!



Frances Roscoe

Northeast

As I go about on my travels, visiting stations, depots, offices and signal boxes I have been struck by people's desire to converse with me.

It seems people have a need for meaningful conversations. I remember one man recently who had just finished his shift. He talked willingly about his work, his home life and his hopes for his future retirement.

As I was leaving, he said how helpful it had been to have a serious conversation and that it made a change from work banter. I have



found that if people feel safe then they want to tell you about their lives, both the good bits and the painful bits. And once they have done so, they feel lighter and somehow more connected.



Graham Whitehead
West Scotland

I try not to repeat myself when writing some 'words of wisdom' (as Andrew Hall calls them) for the newsletter.

However, I find, when interacting with staff, that one of the things I often need to say is that they are not weaker than or different from other people. Their reactions to stresses and trauma, at work or in their personal lives, are normal.

Some people seem to think that they should be so resilient that they are immune to pain. I spend a lot of time reassuring people that they are not alone in their perfectly normal reactions to their situation.

This seems common both inside the railway family and outside it. Please could you pray that we would all be able to accept that feeling pain is not weakness, but proof that we are human. Jesus wept at hurt, so we all should not be afraid to do the same.

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Angela Levitt-Harwood

York, Northeast

Writing this I'm on yet another train journey.

Many times I know the situation I'm going into, but then there's the other seemingly random conversations with a never before seen staff member who needs some support, or the only available train seat next to a passenger who has to make life-changing decisions, or the person who normally works from home on a Monday but came in today and just needs to be heard - right place, right time, or God ordained encounters?

Probably a mixture of both, I would say.

What I do know is, as a Railway Mission chaplain, I regularly find myself in these situations by either accident or divine intervention. The main thing is that I fully rely upon and trust in the Lord as I listen and support.



Dereck Grant
East Scotland

In January, I had some positive engagements about suicide prevention in Edinburgh during the Samaritans' Brew Monday event. I was also able to support the Cross-Country team in Edinburgh when one of their colleagues sadly passed away.

In February, I was able to visit some of the remote signal boxes in Perthshire to support Network Rail staff.

In March, I was invited to the Avanti West Coast Wellbeing Day in Edinburgh. It was inspiring to hear about a Mount Kilimanjaro climb, raising around £50,000 for the Railway Children.

In April, Bernadette and I met with the BTP Chief Superintendent, D Division, in Aberdeen to provide our regular updates as well as having a few fudge doughnuts!

I really do appreciate the prayers of those who support us because the good Lord always seems to put us in the right place at the right time.



Mags Farrow

South Wales & the
Marches

The last few weeks have brought opportunities to visit several stations, depots and offices, with relationships developing and a warm welcome from those I've met. Give thanks for these developing connections and pray that I will be able to be present in the right places and with the right teams when most needed.

Please pray for those in the industry facing uncertainties about their jobs as restructuring takes place.

For BTP we pray for Andrew Morgan, current Superintendent for

Wales, as he reaches his retirement, and for the appointments process as they discern who will take on this role.

Please pray for a TfW family as they grieve a wife and mother, the two adult sons have continued in their station work, but please pray especially for the husband as he returns to his station duties this week. We give thanks for the support the family has received from the station staff.



**Bernadette
Cendrowska-Salt**

North Scotland

My prayer is really that two men recently involved with a fatality are finding rehabilitation and going back to work after finding it very difficult.

They need our prayers that the effects will become more manageable, and that they feel healed enough to go back to work. Also, a local resident is finding it very difficult to come to terms with what has happened as he had parked in his van outside her house for a while before he decided to end his life. She keeps thinking, 'if only I had...'

Another man had recently lost his job due to being drunk when signing into a signal box. He is now looking for another job. Pray that he will find a new job quickly and help with his drink problem.





Nigel Ashton

Essex, Anglia,

I'm a new kid on the block!

Three months in and I've learned a huge amount about the railway and been in places I didn't know existed. I get Greater Anglia and Great Northern mixed up sometimes, as well as stations and personnel.

The c2c line has taken me to unheard of places. I've seen the inside of offices, depots, signal boxes and somewhere called the ROC.

Acronyms! I've heard enough of these to last a lifetime. I met a MOM (mobile operations manager) in a building I thought had been boarded up to avoid being vandalised. Such are the experiences of a rookie chaplain.

My conversations have, it's fair to say, been routine so far. My introductory lines, though, have come on in leaps and bounds. I'm looking forward to giving a 'word in season,' leading to positive results in people's lives and for God's kingdom.



John Roe

Paddington, South West

It is a particular and special privilege for chaplains to support Christian staff across the rail industry. I come across staff most days who are passionate about their work along with their

expressed calling to serve their colleagues, being witnesses to their faith in their workplaces. Just the other day, I was approached by a GWR manager, who said they would love to set up a Christian prayer meeting at their station, and asking for my help. We pray for the success of this initiative, and we pray for the groups right across the network that meet for fellowship, support, prayer and outreach, that faith will grow and Christ made known.



Alan Thorpe

Bristol

A West Country station in particular has been a focal point for youths to congregate and cause mayhem. The bad behaviour is not seasonal, but is a daily occurrence, more noticeable at weekends, and has been happening for over three years.

I have been supporting staff who feel helpless to intervene as the youngsters 'know their rights.' Even the police are limited in what they can and cannot do. I was recently able to join an on-site collective event with BTP, TOC representatives and some support agencies for a one-off Awareness Day.

Without exception all of the station staff thanked me for the ever present and continuing chaplaincy support they receive. The readily

available and accessible contact with chaplaincy is very much appreciated by those in the front line of things.



Andrew Hall

Area Manager North,
West Midlands

I have just reached a milestone – 17 years as a railway chaplain!

I have no idea where those years went. When I started, I was father to three daughters. I am now also a grandfather to seven teenagers!

We have obviously seen and are experiencing massive changes on the railway too, with those changes impacting staff in so many ways. Please pray for peace to prevail as the new railway emerges.

We have had a few changes staff-wise in the Mission too. Please pray for colleagues as they move on to new pastures and for our new colleagues as they settle in and discover the joys of their new mission field.



Colin Fraser

East Midlands

I routinely visit the East Midlands operational control centre where my visits are always welcomed and appreciated. I made an additional visit recently following a high number of incidents. Introducing myself to three controllers that I had not met before I was received with a collective deep exhale of breath and the response "we know who you are and please pull up a chair." I was both humbled and encouraged by their response.

Give thanks for the opportunity to visit such parts of the railway infrastructure despite increasing security assessments regarding access to these particular buildings.

Please pray for continued wisdom as I support others.

A concern across the rail industry is, there seems to be a growing lack of wisdom from some people when using level crossings and foot crossings and people trespassing onto the railway lines to take a photo.

Please pray for the increase in railway safety awareness.

www.railwaymission.org





Dyllis George

Southeastern

As I continue to serve our railway family with the Lord's guidance and help, I am grateful for every given opportunity to engage and provide meaningful support across my patch.

With immense gratitude for the open doors to chaplaincy in the network, it gives me joy to state that this period I have had more referrals from station managers to support their staff. We continue to pray for our depot and station managers for continued wisdom and direction to manage their team.

During Easter I was called upon by Southeastern Trains Culturail to share on the 'Essence of Easter' as they mark the celebration of Easter in one of their stations. This went very well and it was a worthy celebration.

I was also called upon by the Network Rail station manager of Kings Cross to offer a blessing for the newly refurbished first-class lounge.

I am trusting God for more effective doors to be opened and for His wisdom, grace, and strength upon my life, to continue being a blessing.



Stephen Rowe

Area Manager London & South

A rewarding aspect of rail chaplaincy is the number of friendships built up over time. Going into some facilities has become a pleasure as renewed acquaintances are made and the banter is ongoing. The railway remains one big family.

In the midst of this we deal with people's lives; real, lived lives, where there are ups and downs and we're there to help support staff through them, and, I might add, they support us through our challenges and triumphs.

Being part of something great, belonging, is essential to wellbeing. Added to this, and most important, chaplains are part of God's great family of faith. Our regular meetings as chaplains always include a text from the Word of God and prayer to encourage us on our journey. Belonging is everything.

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Resilience in real life

"What my journey has taught me," with Andy Mitchell

People often talk about resilience as if it only shows up in the big moments — the crisis, the pressure, the unexpected challenge. But for me, resilience has been shaped long before any of those moments arrived. It's been formed through work, through people, through faith, and through the quiet, everyday experiences that reveal what we're really carrying.

My journey with resilience didn't begin on the railway. It began years earlier in the telecoms industry, working in people development for a young organisation finding its feet in the UK and Europe. Asking people how they were doing often brought an "okay" paired with a nervous smile. It raised a question that stayed with me — is that resilience, or simply holding things

together for show? That instinct to project "I'm okay" even when everything inside is saying the opposite. I've done that myself.

Several years followed in self-employment as a learning and development specialist across different industries, delivering sales, service and skills workshops, including one-to-one coaching. Different sectors, different pressures... yet the same pattern appeared everywhere: people quietly struggling, feeling they had to stay strong, believing resilience meant performing rather than seeking support.

A move into the energy sector widened that perspective. Wellbeing shaped everything — how teams functioned, how they



Some events shape us in ways we don't understand at the time

coped, how they supported one another. It was also a special moment personally, because during that time I came to know Jesus, reshaping how I saw people, purpose, and genuine care. If you would like to talk more about this, please feel free to get in contact.

While working in employability, supporting people looking for work brought another lesson. One man walked a mile or so to a job interview after missing the bus and being unable to afford a taxi. His determination still comes to mind whenever resilience is mentioned.

There was also a spell at a local community radio station as Business Development Manager — a world full of creativity and camaraderie. When the station dropped off air due to technical issues and limited resources, the way people pulled together said more about resilience than any training session ever could.

Some events shape us in ways we don't fully understand at the time. More than twenty-four years ago, my mum died in difficult circumstances. I was delivering a training course when the police knocked on the training room door. What they told me affected my mental health in ways I couldn't fully grasp at the time. Reaching out for support became one of the most important decisions I ever made.

Further study, freelance work, leading a community hub with a focus on wellbeing, Mental Health training, and chaplaincy training at Waverley College deepened a lifelong curiosity about mental wellbeing.

Across every setting, one truth remains: with the right support resilience grows long before the crisis — in connection, honesty, and looking out for one another. And hopefully, when you see the path I've walked, you can understand why it feels such a privilege to be involved in Paideia Coaching.

**Andy Mitchell
is the lead trainer
with Paideia Coaching**



**PAIDEIA
COACHING**



A day in the life of a railway chaplain

It was a cold but sunny day on Monday 11 May when Frances Rosco, Railway Mission Chaplain for the North East, met with Kirsty Ware, Senior Social Content Executive for LNER, at York Station.

The purpose of the meeting was to film a promotional video for Railway Mission chaplaincy entitled 'A Day in the Life of a Railway Chaplain.' The video is intended to support LNER staff, as well as being used in external communications, helping to raise awareness of the pastoral care available to the railway community.

Throughout the filming, Frances was captured carrying out many of the everyday moments that make

up chaplaincy on the railway: speaking on the phone, updating her diary, getting on and off trains, sitting on a station bench, and talking with colleagues from security and LNER.

The message of the video is simple but vital: if you need someone to talk to, Railway Mission chaplains are here for the railway community, offering independent, impartial and confidential pastoral support.

The finished video will include a voice-over from Francis, providing insight into her role and clear information about how to contact the Railway Mission chaplaincy team.

Frances hopes the video will help staff see her as friendly and

When you need someone to talk to...

approachable. Reflecting on the filming, she said: “The video really encapsulated my day in a nutshell. I hope it will be memorable enough to encourage people to contact me when they are in need. Putting a face to the name is so important.”

Speaking about her role, Frances added: “You never know what you are going to get, or who you will meet. I love that. I love meeting new people, and I love giving my time to people.”

Liam Johnston, Executive Director of Railway Mission, said: “Frances represents the whole Railway Mission team who support the LNER route with compassion, professionalism and care. Our chaplains are present across the railway network to listen, support and walk alongside staff through the pressures of railway life. This video is a wonderful opportunity to show the human face of chaplaincy and to remind colleagues that they are never alone.”

The video is an important step in helping more people across the LNER route understand the role of Railway Mission chaplains and the confidential support they provide every day.



As time goes by...

The Railway Mission calendar forty years on, with Dudley Clark

2026 marks the Calendar's fortieth anniversary. Whilst there had been calendars before 1986, this was the year when the current pattern of twelve month by month Bible texts and railway themed photographs was first published. The calendar was the idea of the then Midlands chaplain, John Bassett.

The first issue ran to 7,000 copies and by the time of the February 1987 Committee meeting only a 'few hundred remained.' Encouraging reports were received of calendars displayed in offices, signal boxes and other railway workplaces. The next calendar was also such a success that 10,000 were ordered for 1988 and this had increased to 12,000 by 1990.

The photographs for 1986 had predominantly been of the current railway scene, but in 1990 a suggestion was made 'that we might consider making all the photographs steam engines.' This was not adopted; and a varied pattern, now predominantly of modern trains, continues to the present.

By 1993 the Mission had become aware of a conundrum. While declaring that it was 'distributed free to active and retired railway people,' donations were invited from recipients. The solution was found through sponsorship and the 1994 calendar carried thanks to sponsors.

As printing processes have developed more information has been included, along with the switch to colour. Once chaplains only appeared on a printed list, but now the photograph of a chaplain graces each page.

Each November large parcels of calendars are delivered to chaplains across the network. Then the work begins, affording prime opportunities to make contact with railway people. Some will be anticipating the delivery whilst for others it will be an introduction to the Railway Mission. In earlier years chaplains would often enjoy visiting signalmen in remote signal boxes to talk of life and faith, and enjoy a mug of tea.

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with the good news
for 100 years

RailHope centenary

Railway Mission is part of the RailHope International family, with a global mandate to reach out to rail staff everywhere to provide emotional and spiritual support when life throws out problems, difficult issues and challenges.

Just as Railway Mission is celebrating 145 years of service to the rail industry in 2026, so RailHope International is celebrating their centenary—one hundred years of touching the lives of rail staff with hope for the future and comfort for today.

The centenary event will be held in Interlaken, Switzerland in 2026 from August 13-19, so if you'd like to

enjoy glorious scenery and an uplifting rail conference check details at the RailHope website.



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Or maybe you would like to help over a longer period, if so the greatest way for both RM and yourself would be to enrol in payroll giving, whereby your donation is taken before tax, thereby costing you less to donate and meaning our charity benefits too from not having to claim back the tax! A win-win!

As your nominated charity, Railway Mission will benefit from a reliable and regular income stream. You can set up regular donations from as little as £1 per week. Payroll giving is the most tax-efficient way to donate to charity, allowing you to help people struggling with trauma and stress every time you're paid.

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