

Railway Mission Chaplaincy Support 2024

'Support on life's journey'



Railway Mission

Railway Mission is a registered charity in England and Wales (1128024). A company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (06519565)

Introduction from the Chair of the Board of Trustees

It is my great pleasure to present this year's report on the vital work of the Railway Mission and the invaluable chaplaincy support provided across the UK rail industry. The data and stories shared within these pages reflect not only the challenges faced by railway staff in their professional and personal lives, but also the steadfast presence of Railway Mission chaplains offering compassion, guidance, and hope at critical moments.

From January to December 2024, the Railway Mission chaplains offered support to 9,814 people. From issues faced by platform and gateline staff to the tragic incidents of fatalities on the network to their response to the derailment on 21 October 2024, when a passenger train heading westwards from Shrewsbury to Aberystwyth on the Cambrian Line in Wales collided head-on with another train heading in the opposite direction, chaplains have been there to support the railway community.

As Chair of the Board of Trustees, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to our partners across the rail industry, the British Transport Police, and all other stakeholders for their continued trust and support. Your collaboration and encouragement enable us to extend care and resilience to railway staff when they need it most.

In May 2024, using the Rail Social Value Tool, sustainability experts at RSSB calculated the social value that the Railway Mission generates. This was £3.13 in value for every £1 of income Railway Mission receives. The total contribution to society in the last 12 months was £1,848,851.



The continued success and impact of the Railway Mission would not be possible without the commitment of everyone in the rail community. Together, we make a tangible difference in the well-being and morale of railway personnel, contributing to a safer, more supportive, and thriving industry.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, thank you for walking alongside us in this mission.

Alex Volossevich
Chair of the Board of Trustees

Railway Mission Chaplaincy

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by key designation

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Report on the Value of Chaplaincy Support Provided by the Railway Mission to the Railway in 2024

Introduction

The Railway Mission provides invaluable chaplaincy support to the UK rail network employees, addressing work-related and personal challenges.

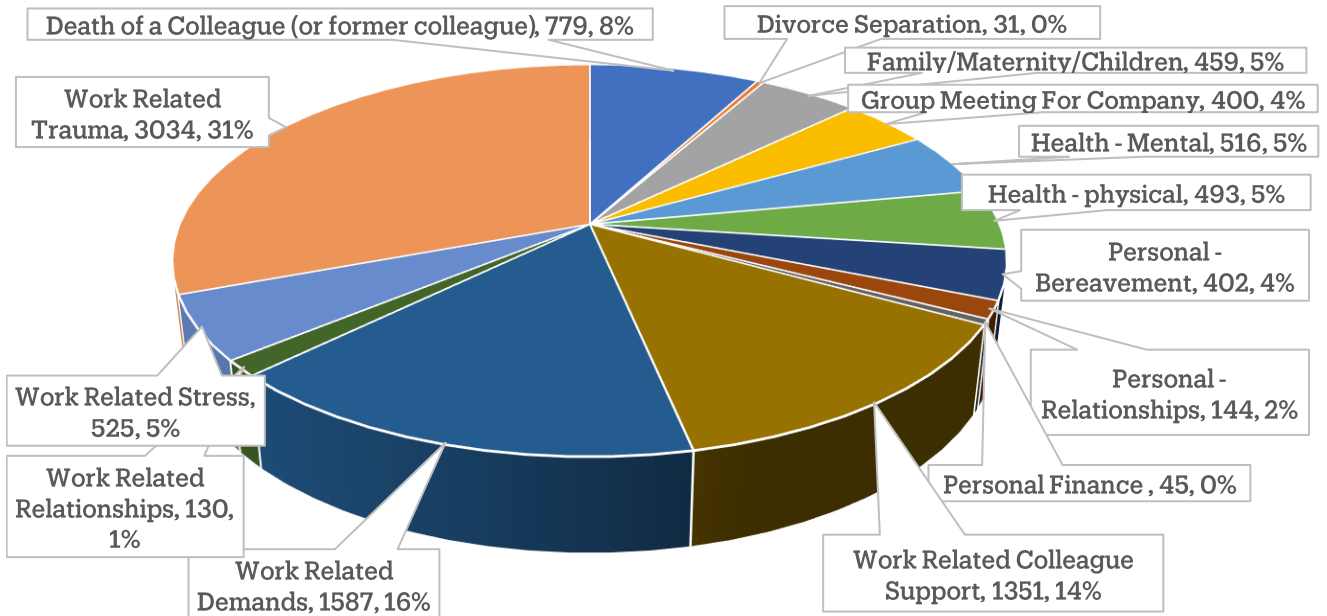
This report highlights the impact of the chaplaincy service, demonstrating its benefits for both individual employees and the companies we serve.

01

Chaplaincy Support: The Railway Mission chaplaincy plays a vital role in supporting railway staff and providing emotional, spiritual, and practical assistance in times of need. This report outlines the chaplaincy support provided in 2024, including an analysis of its value and cost-effectiveness of chaplaincy support.

During 2024, 9,814 support situations were recorded where Railway Mission chaplains assisted rail staff (*excluding members of the public support*). These situations encompassed a variety of challenges, including personal crises, bereavement, workplace stress, trauma from railway incidents, and general well-being support.

Chaplaincy Support to the Railway Industry for 2024 The Number of Support Interactions Was 9896



02 The Value of Chaplaincy Support: The support provided by chaplains is invaluable to railway staff in several ways:

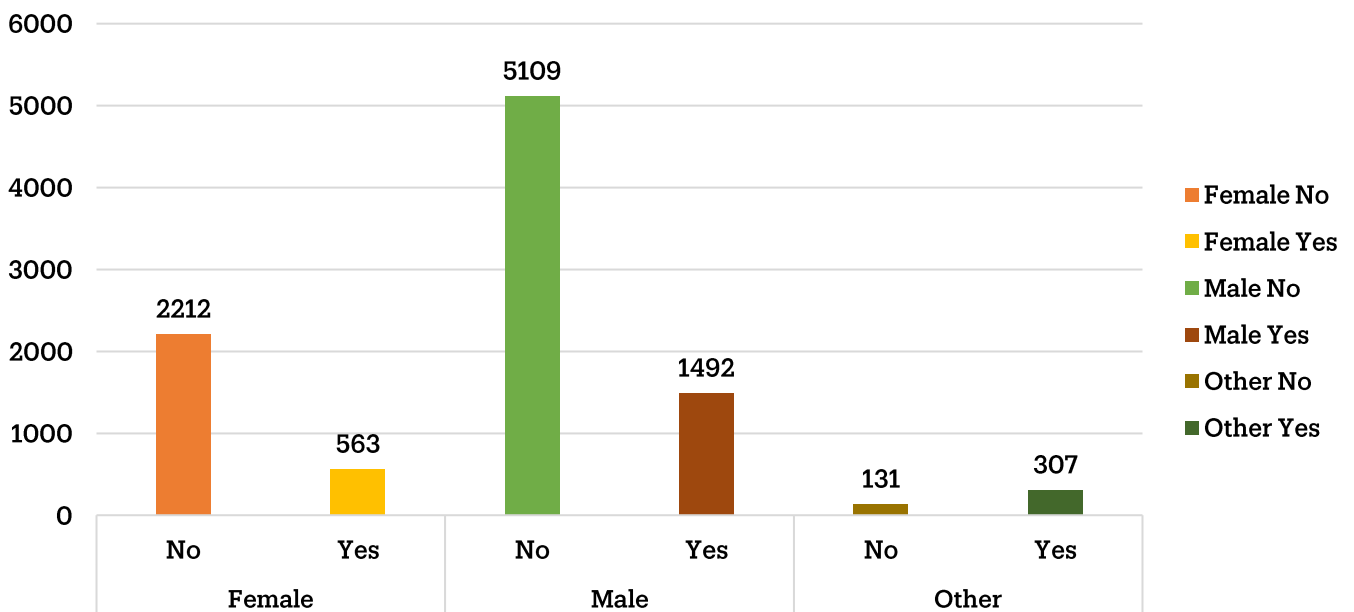
- 1. Emotional and Psychological Support:** Chaplains offer a listening ear and confidential space for employees to discuss personal or professional difficulties, helping to improve mental well-being and reduce stress.
- 2. Crisis Intervention:** In the aftermath of tragic events such as railway fatalities, chaplains provide immediate emotional support to affected staff, helping them process trauma and return to work in a healthier state.
- 3. Workplace Morale and Retention:** Staff who feel supported are more likely to remain engaged and committed to their roles, reducing absenteeism and increasing productivity.
- 4. Holistic Care:** Chaplains provide support for those who seek it, from practical advice, and signposting staff to additional resources and services as needed, to spiritual and emotional support in times of crisis.

03

Cost-Effectiveness of Chaplaincy Support: The Railway Mission chaplaincy provides a cost-effective solution for supporting railway staff in several ways:

1. **Reduction in Sick Leave and Absenteeism and Presenteeism:** Emotional and pastoral support can help prevent long-term sickness due to stress or trauma, reducing costs associated with staff absence and temporary replacements.
2. **Improved Mental Health Support:** By providing a first line of support, chaplains help reduce the strain on NHS mental health services and employer-funded counselling schemes, offering early intervention that prevents issues from escalating.
3. **Enhancing Employee Performance:** A workforce that feels cared for is likely to be more engaged and productive, leading to better customer service and fewer workplace conflicts.
4. **Community-Based, Low-Cost Model:** Chaplains work independently yet in partnership with railway organisations without needing extensive infrastructure, making them a low-cost yet highly effective resource for staff support.

Total Support Interaction Data -
Was there a referral via a Manager?



The 9,814 recorded support situations in 2024 highlight the essential role that Railway Mission chaplains play in the well-being of rail staff. Their presence contributes significantly to employee resilience, mental health, and overall workplace morale. By providing compassionate, practical, and spiritual care, chaplains offer a cost-effective solution that enhances staff welfare and contributes to a positive and supportive working environment within the industry.

04

Examples of support: Railway Mission chaplains provide vital support to railway staff, offering a compassionate presence during both personal and work-related challenges.

The following stories from some of the chaplains illustrate the breadth and depth of their assistance, demonstrating practical help and emotional care in times of need.

- A staff member was undergoing divorce proceedings, and a court date was approaching, so the outcome is still uncertain. They are facing control issues within the family, particularly involving their son, and the prolonged nature of the situation has significantly affected their mental health. During this challenging time, as the local chaplain, I provided essential emotional support, offering a safe space to discuss concerns and help the individual navigate the stress and uncertainty they are experiencing.
- A staff member is experiencing both work-related and personal challenges while undergoing treatment for multiple sclerosis, including stem cell therapy and chemotherapy. With numerous doctors overseeing their care, the physical and emotional aftereffects have become quite difficult to manage. During this challenging time, I was able to provide vital support by offering a compassionate listening ear, helping the individual cope with treatment impacts, and guiding them through work and life obligations.
- A staff member experienced significant stress while permanently relocating from London to a new area and job with another railway company, particularly because the process did not go as planned. They had previously expressed concerns about the move, specifically the logistics, time frames, and lengthy drive, prompting me as the railway chaplain for the area to check in on them. During their conversations, I offered both a listening ear and practical guidance, addressing the individual's welfare and the stress arising from the situation. Although the staff member felt relief when the move eventually worked out, concerns remain regarding the sale of their London property and settling in fully to their new home.
- A staff member experienced a complicated separation from her spouse and sought help through the EAP counselling program. However, the sessions often revisited painful memories from her past, making them more distressing than helpful. Instead, she turned to me as the chaplain for support, finding a compassionate, understanding space where she could process her emotions without feeling overwhelmed.
- A member of staff returned to work after an extended absence due to breast cancer. She found it very helpful to share her experience with me, as it allowed her to receive understanding and empathy, which in turn lessened her feelings of isolation.
- A staff member has been feeling extremely low due to a work-related incident that has caused him many sleepless nights. Although his GP prescribed medication to help, he feels there is little support available during this challenging time. In response, as one of the railway industry chaplains I stepped in to provide compassionate listening and reassurance, demonstrating that he does not have to face this difficult period alone.

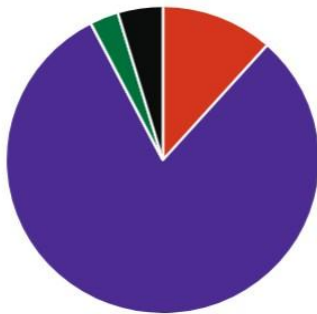
05

The Railway Mission’s chaplaincy work is more than just a service; it is a lifeline for employees in crisis. Below are the last fully audited Railway Mission accounts:

Income and expenditure

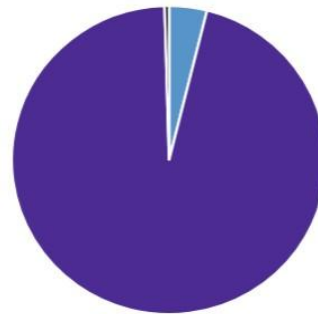
Data for financial year ending 31 March 2024

Total income:
£578,925



Donations and legacies	£66.97k
Charitable activities	£467.98k
Other trading activities	£78
Investments	£17.07k
Other	£26.83k

Total expenditure:
£613,644



Raising funds	£23.84k
Charitable activities	£587.03k
Other	£2.78k

Use the QR Code to view full audited accounts or visit <https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk>




Railway Mission is grateful to our partners and supporters without whom we could not have supported the railway community as well as we have.



We are also grateful to the British Transport Police and Transport for London for their engagement with the chaplaincy service



A photograph of Sir Peter Hendy CBE, Chair of Network Rail, in 2017. He is shown from the chest up, wearing a dark Network Rail jacket over a black clerical shirt with a white collar. He is looking towards the right of the frame, where the back of a person's head with dreadlocks is visible. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a public space with blue signage. The text of the quote is overlaid on the lower part of the image.

“Emotional and spiritual support in a time of crisis is one of the most valuable things you can give to a person. The Railway Mission provides this help to railway staff, the British Transport Police and the travelling public – taking care of the mental welfare of our railway family both day-to-day and following traumatic incidents.”

Sir Peter Hendy CBE, Chair Network Rail (2017)