



Way out



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How to support survivors by raising awareness of Rail to Refuge

women's aid  
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scottish women's aid  
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Cymorth i Ferched Cymru  
Welsh Women's Aid

imkaan

Rail Delivery Group

National Rail

# The importance of raising awareness of Rail to Refuge

Rail to Refuge offers free train travel for those fleeing domestic abuse.

**In the first year the scheme helped get 1,348 survivors, including 362 children over five to safety.**

Survivors escaping domestic abuse are usually advised to seek refuge services far away from their perpetrator, but for many, raising the cash to pay for a train ticket can be very difficult and become a barrier to seeking refuge. This is especially true for women experiencing economic abuse, who may have no access to cash.

We need domestic abuse survivors to be aware of the Rail to Refuge scheme to help them reach safety.

**You can play a vital part by simply helping raise awareness**

If you are worried about someone you know, you can find advice on the [Women's Aid website](#).



“

When I needed help but couldn't afford a train ticket, I was told about the Rail to Refuge program. At that point, I realised I could leave, and I wasn't trapped anymore.

# How to describe Rail to Refuge

It is vital that survivors of domestic abuse are clear on what Rail to Refuge is and how it can help them reach safety. That is why we ask any supporter looking to promote this scheme uses the descriptions below to give clarity to survivors.

**In short** - Rail to Refuge offers free train travel for those fleeing domestic abuse

**The scheme details** - Rail to Refuge is a joint initiative between rail companies and Women's Aid in which train operators cover the cost of train tickets for women, men and children travelling to refuge accommodation.

## **Description on how the scheme works**

1. Survivors contact a domestic abuse service that is a member of Women's Aid, Welsh Women's Aid, Scottish Women's Aid, or Imkaan. This includes Respect's Men's Advice Line
2. If it's appropriate to refer the survivor to refuge, the survivor will be informed once a refuge vacancy has been confirmed
3. Once a vacancy is confirmed, the refuge can book a free train ticket.
4. The survivor can travel to safety using either an e-ticket or by picking the ticket up from the station.



## **Where to direct people**

Those seeking help and those seeking to help should all be directed to [www.womensaid.org.uk/rail-to-refuge](http://www.womensaid.org.uk/rail-to-refuge)

# Rail to Refuge details

## Rail to Refuge background

First introduced by train operators, Southeastern and GWR, the Rail to Refuge scheme became a nationwide initiative in April 2020 when a rise in domestic abuse was reported due to COVID-19 lockdown restrictions.

## Rail to Refuge in stats

It is important that the correct figures surrounding the Rail to Refuge scheme are correctly described.

- Since April 2020 to March 2020 the Rail to refuge scheme has helped 1,348 survivors, including 362 children over five travel to a recognised refuge
- On average the Rail to Refuge scheme helps 4 survivors to safety each day
- 62% of survivors that used Rail to Refuge would not have travelled if the journey wasn't paid for

These figures are updated twice a year in March and November in line with International Women's Day and International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.



# Promotion materials

## Social content

On the Women's Aid webpage you can download social graphics and a video to help raise awareness of the Rail to Refuge scheme. These are available to download in Twitter, Facebook and Instagram formats.

## Social text for posts, tweets, updates etc

- 'Rail to Refuge' is a national scheme - providing free train tickets to anyone fleeing domestic abuse to travel to their place at a safe refuge. Information about the scheme can be accessed at [www.womensaid.org.uk/rail-to-refuge](http://www.womensaid.org.uk/rail-to-refuge)
- Those experiencing domestic abuse can escape with free train travel to a refuge with the 'Rail to Refuge' scheme. Find out more at [www.womensaid.org.uk/rail-to-refuge](http://www.womensaid.org.uk/rail-to-refuge)

## Rail to Refuge digital flyer / printable poster

- For those seeking to share details about the Rail to Refuge scheme a promotional digital flyer / printable poster is available to download on the Women's Aid webpage - [www.womensaid.org.uk/rail-to-refuge](http://www.womensaid.org.uk/rail-to-refuge)



First introduced by train operators, Southeastern and GWR, the Rail to Refuge scheme became a nationwide initiative in April 2020 when a rise in domestic abuse was reported due to COVID-19 lockdown restrictions. In the first year the scheme helped get 1,348 survivors, including 362 children over five to safety.



“When I needed help but couldn't afford a train ticket, I was told about the Rail to Refuge scheme. At that point, I realised I could leave, and I wasn't trapped anymore.”

### Why is Rail to Refuge needed?

This scheme genuinely does save lives. Survivors escaping domestic abuse are usually advised to seek refuge services far away from their perpetrator, but for many, raising the cash to pay for a train ticket can be very difficult and become a barrier to seeking refuge. This is especially true for women experiencing economic abuse, who may have no access to cash.

On average, the Rail to Refuge scheme helps **4 survivors** to safety each day

Help raise awareness

We need domestic abuse survivors to be aware of the Rail to Refuge scheme to help them reach safety. You can play a vital part by simply helping raise awareness. If you are worried about someone you know you can find advice [www.womensaid.org.uk](http://www.womensaid.org.uk)

### How does the scheme work?

1. A survivor reaches out for support from a domestic abuse service which is a member of Women's Aid, Welsh Women's Aid, Scottish Women's Aid or Imkaan (which includes Respect's Men's Advice Line)
2. If it's appropriate to refer the survivor to refuge, the survivor will be informed once a refuge vacancy has been confirmed
3. Once the survivor has a confirmed refuge space, the refuge can book a train ticket for the survivor so they can travel for free
4. After booking the ticket, the refuge can send the ticket and collection details to the survivor via a mobile phone. The survivor can then either use an e-ticket sent to their mobile phone or pick the ticket up from the station using any debit or credit card, they can travel like normal, without having to declare the ticket was free or that they are fleeing from domestic abuse.

Reading online?  
Click on the social icons now to share a Rail to Refuge post.

Download promotional materials at [womensaid.org.uk/rail-to-refuge](http://womensaid.org.uk/rail-to-refuge)

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Thank you

