

ScotRail Alliance joins up with Samaritans to combat the blues with brews

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The ScotRail Alliance and Samaritans are asking people to get together on 'Brew Monday' for a cuppa and help save a life.

Dubbed 'the most difficult day of the year', the charity is turning 'Blue Monday' on its head and is hoping to banish the January blues by encouraging friends, family and work mates to have a chat over a brew.

Volunteers from Samaritans will be handing out teabags and chatting with customers at Aberdeen, Glasgow Central, Edinburgh Waverley, Inverness and Paisley Gilmour Street stations on Monday (21 January) to raise awareness of how a simple conversation can be lifesaving.

Brew Monday continues the theme of the Small Talk Saves Lives suicide prevention campaign, which Samaritans launched in 2017 with the British Transport Police and the rail industry. The campaign carries a similar thread – encouraging people to look out for those around them.

Anyone who spots someone in distress is asked to keep the following in mind:

- Remember that suicidal thoughts, while intense, can be temporary
- Speaking to someone who is suicidal can't make things worse
- It's important to act. If you're not comfortable getting involved yourself: tell a member of staff or a police officer. If you can't, dial 999.

David Lister, ScotRail Alliance sustainability & safety assurance director, said: "Brew Monday provides us with a fantastic opportunity to show support for Samaritans and the great work they do throughout Scotland.

"At the ScotRail Alliance we take suicide prevention very seriously, which is why we have trained more

than 300 of our people to support those experiencing suicidal thoughts.

“Through this campaign, if we can encourage people to talk about their problems over a cup of tea, we will have made a significant contribution to their lives and to the lives of those around them.”

Paul Plummer, Chief Executive of the Rail Delivery Group, which represents the railway, said: “We’re proud to be welcoming Samaritans volunteers into our stations to give people a boost on one of the most difficult days of the year. The railway wants to support and strengthen communities and bringing people together over a cuppa is a great way to combat isolation and loneliness.”

Samaritans’ Executive Director for Scotland, James Jopling, said: “Isolation and loneliness are one of the main reasons people contact Samaritans, so getting together for a brew with friends can provide a lift on what is meant to be one of the most difficult days of the year.

“Samaritans volunteers will be at stations across Scotland today, but you don’t need to be a Samaritan to reach out. Taking that time to listen just might save a life.”