

Lifesavers case study – Sarah Day, James Moore and Tony Jackson



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Station Assistant Sarah Day was recognised for her life-saving actions in three incidents at her Hertfordshire station last year. Two of these also involved Sarah's colleagues, Station Supervisor Tony Jackson and Station Assistant James Moore, who were also recognised for their interventions. Sarah also assisted at two further incidents during the year.

Sarah says: "All five people I helped were women in their 20s, who had sad things going on in their lives. One, we learned later, was just out of rehab. She had got on the wrong train and was lost. My colleague stopped her from taking her own life, and between us we managed to persuade her to sit in the manager's office for safety.

When the police arrived and started to talk to her, she tried to take her life again but the police were able to stop her.

"I tried to engage with another woman who was threatening to take her life, and at least got her giving one-word answers to my questions. But I have to admit I had to resort to a lie to persuade her to come to a safe place with me until the police arrived – I told her that her brother was waiting for her upstairs."

A third woman also made two separate attempts on her life on the same night. At around 8pm, James and Tony together stopped her first attempt. She was taken to hospital but refused help and discharged herself, returning to the station in disguise at about 1.45am.

Sarah recognised her and watched her on the CCTV system. Tony recalls: "I rang the police, but before they arrived, Sarah saw the woman move to a potentially dangerous location. We followed, and between them were able to stop her, before police arrived to take her to safety."

"It was a tough experience," says Sarah, "but GTR had arranged a Samaritans' training course when I started the job, which emphasised that trying to intervene does work, just by engaging and talking. I've also signed up for a new company e-learning course on suicide prevention. All my colleagues have had similar experiences and that brings us very close, almost like a family, so we support each other."