# Serious offences on Britain’s railways surge with smaller stations emerging as crime hotspots



Britain's railways are facing significant safety concerns, as recent data reveals a worrying surge in serious offences such as sexual and violent crimes, reaching unprecedented levels. In a stark statistic, British Transport Police reported over 80,000 incidents for the 2023-2024 period, indicating a dramatic overall crime increase of 55 percent compared to a decade ago. Notably, both violent crimes and sex offences have more than doubled during this timeframe, highlighting a systemic issue with passenger safety across the rail network.

Most alarmingly, this rise in crime is not uniformly distributed across the railway system; while larger, busier stations with high footfall tend to report more incidents, smaller, unstaffed stations have emerged as particular hotspots for criminal activity. For instance, Johnston station in Pembrokeshire saw 10 crimes recorded in 2024, translating to an astonishing rate of 1,440 crimes per million passengers due to its low usage of just 7,000 passengers for the year—a stark reminder that the perception of safety can often fluctuate with foot traffic.

In a troubling recent incident that captured public attention, footage went viral of a man aggressively threatening women on a train travelling from Cardiff Central to Swindon. The threats escalated rapidly, with the man declaring numerous violent intentions towards the women and their partners. The British Transport Police are actively investigating this confrontation, reinforcing their commitment to tackle violent behaviour on the railways.

The situation at London's major stations is equally disconcerting. London St Pancras recorded the highest number of crimes overall last year, with 1,616 incidents. This includes high-profile theft cases, such as that involving Jenson Button's wife, who was robbed of over £250,000 worth of jewellery and personal belongings in broad daylight. The rise in theft on the Underground was underscored early this year, with 909 sexual offences reported between December 2022 and November 2023, alongside an alarming 3,542 violent incidents within the same period.

Amid these troubling developments, it's crucial to contextualise the statistics. For example, even though Johnston station topped the crime rate chart, BTP indicated that this could be misleading due to the low number of crimes in relation to its minimal passenger turnout. This notion is supported by a recent statement from the BTP, which noted that the risk of becoming a victim of high-harm crime on the railway remains low, with violent offences and robberies standing at just 2.2 per million passenger journeys.

Despite the concerning rise in figures, the BTP has reported positive outcomes from proactive initiatives aimed at curtailing crime. In April 2025, there was an 18 percent decrease in robberies on the London railway network, attributed to intensified police operations and enhanced surveillance measures. Such preventative actions are essential in restoring confidence among commuters.

Moreover, an alarming increase in recorded violent crimes against women and girls was recently highlighted, with the figures rising from 9,464 to over 11,000 complaints in one year. This stark rise calls for urgent measures to improve safety for vulnerable passengers. In response, advocacy groups and political parties have called for a comprehensive strategy to bolster safety on public transport systems, underscoring the necessity for increased patrolling, surveillance, and community engagement.

Reports indicate that British Transport Police stations might face closures due to funding constraints, raising further concerns about the future of passenger safety. As evidenced by the looming potential cuts, the situation requires a concerted effort from law enforcement, governmental agencies, and community support to ensure that the railways can remain a safe means of travel for everyone.

With incidents of violence and theft becoming all too common, the pressing need for effective action to combat crime on British railways cannot be ignored. Only through sustained investment in security measures, better reporting mechanisms, and community awareness can this alarming trend be reversed to restore a sense of safety among commuters.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14764559/Where-you-safe-Britains-trains-Maps-reveal-crime-rail-hotspots-sex-offences-violence-soared-time-highs.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[6]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/clyg9mmnewwo)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14764559/Where-you-safe-Britains-trains-Maps-reveal-crime-rail-hotspots-sex-offences-violence-soared-time-highs.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[5]](https://www.timeout.com/uk/news/britains-10-most-crime-ridden-train-stations-revealed-030725), [[3]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/tube-sexual-offence-theft-robbery-underground-london-british-transport-police-sadiq-khan-b1131554.html)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14764559/Where-you-safe-Britains-trains-Maps-reveal-crime-rail-hotspots-sex-offences-violence-soared-time-highs.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.btp.police.uk/news/btp/news/england/london-railway-robbery-rates-drop-by-18following-intensified-police-activity/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[2]](https://www.btp.police.uk/news/btp/news/england/london-railway-robbery-rates-drop-by-18following-intensified-police-activity/), [[4]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/12/28/more-than-100-sex-crimes-a-month-on-uk-trains/), [[3]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/tube-sexual-offence-theft-robbery-underground-london-british-transport-police-sadiq-khan-b1131554.html)
* Paragraph 5 – [[6]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/clyg9mmnewwo), [[7]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/jan/18/dozens-of-uk-transport-police-stations-may-close-despite-rise-in-assaults)
* Paragraph 6 – [[2]](https://www.btp.police.uk/news/btp/news/england/london-railway-robbery-rates-drop-by-18following-intensified-police-activity/), [[6]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/clyg9mmnewwo)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14764559/Where-you-safe-Britains-trains-Maps-reveal-crime-rail-hotspots-sex-offences-violence-soared-time-highs.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[7]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/jan/18/dozens-of-uk-transport-police-stations-may-close-despite-rise-in-assaults)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14764559/Where-you-safe-Britains-trains-Maps-reveal-crime-rail-hotspots-sex-offences-violence-soared-time-highs.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.btp.police.uk/news/btp/news/england/london-railway-robbery-rates-drop-by-18following-intensified-police-activity/> - In April 2025, the British Transport Police (BTP) reported an 18% decrease in robberies on London's railway network, from 1,527 incidents in 2023-2024 to 1,245 in 2024-2025. This decline followed intensified operations, including increased patrols and collaboration with CCTV and intelligence teams. The average time to arrest robbery suspects decreased by two-thirds, leading to fewer incidents. Notable arrests included individuals charged with multiple counts of robbery and attempted robbery. BTP emphasized their commitment to passenger safety and encouraged reporting of suspicious activities.
3. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/tube-sexual-offence-theft-robbery-underground-london-british-transport-police-sadiq-khan-b1131554.html> - In January 2024, figures from the British Transport Police revealed a rise in sexual offences on the London Underground, with 909 incidents recorded between December 2022 and November 2023, up from 866 the previous year. Violent crimes also increased, with 3,542 incidents reported, up from 2,963. Robberies on the Tube network saw a significant rise, with 738 cases reported, up from 442. The Liberal Democrats called for a comprehensive strategy to address the surge in crime on public transport, emphasizing the need for enhanced safety measures.
4. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/12/28/more-than-100-sex-crimes-a-month-on-uk-trains/> - In December 2023, it was reported that over 100 sexual crimes were being reported on UK trains each month, with 1,419 incidents recorded over the past year. Additionally, nearly 4,000 violent assaults were reported on trains in the 12 months to November, marking a 12% increase from the previous year. The Liberal Democrats called for a serious strategy to tackle the problem, highlighting the need for increased safety measures on the rail network.
5. <https://www.timeout.com/uk/news/britains-10-most-crime-ridden-train-stations-revealed-030725> - In March 2025, analysis revealed that Johnston station in Pembrokeshire topped the list of UK train stations with the highest crime rates, recording 10 incidents in 2024. Despite its low passenger numbers, Johnston had a crime rate of 1,437.6 crimes per million passengers. Other stations with high crime rates included Redbridge, Charing, and Tiverton Parkway. The report highlighted the need for targeted safety measures at these stations to address the rising crime rates.
6. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/clyg9mmnewwo> - In August 2024, the British Transport Police Authority reported a 20% increase in recorded violent crimes against women and girls on the transport network, with over 11,000 complaints made in the year to March, compared to 9,464 the previous year. The figures included 1,908 crimes involving sexual harassment and 2,475 sexual offences. The rise was attributed to increased reporting rather than a rise in crimes committed. The government and transport authorities emphasized the need for enhanced safety measures and support for victims.
7. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/jan/18/dozens-of-uk-transport-police-stations-may-close-despite-rise-in-assaults> - In January 2025, it was reported that dozens of British Transport Police stations across Britain faced possible closure due to a hiring freeze and an £8.5 million funding shortfall. This came amid a 17% rise in assaults on passengers and members of the public on the mainline railway in 2023-24, reaching a record 9,542 incidents. The closures raised concerns about the impact on passenger safety and the ability to respond to incidents promptly.