

QTS hosts special industry event as it looks to the future of rail

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National rail contractor, **QTS Group**, hosted a special two-day event to bring together rail industry leaders and local schools to celebrate achievements and discuss the future of the industry.

The event, which was held at the group's headquarters in Strathaven, South Lanarkshire, took place on 31 May and 1 June, in partnership with **AmcoGiffen** and **Carnell Group**.

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Representatives from Network Rail, Scotland's Railway and CECA Scotland were in attendance across the two days, alongside key members of the rail supply chain.

An informative panel discussion on the future of rail took place, where attendees debated on how to better engage younger people in the industry, how to attract and retain talent and how to use innovation to drive decarbonisation.

The panel, moderated by the Chief Executive of CECA, Grahame Barn, featured Kris Kinnear, [Network Rail](#); Alex Hynes, Scotland's Railway; Laura McWilliams, Network Rail; Eva Macinnes, COWI; and Andy Steel, QTS Group.

10 local schools from Ayrshire and Lanarkshire also attended the event as part of QTS Group's wider incentive to encourage more young people to consider careers in the rail industry.

More than 150 pupils visited the site on 31 May where they had the opportunity to see some of QTS' innovative plant fleet in action, but also to speak to some young people from AmcoGiffen, QTS and Network Rail about their routes into rail.

QTS also unveiled a series of some of its new machinery across the two days, including the QTS Baler, another industry first. Live demonstrations of the plant equipment being used on the test track also took place.

Andy Steel, Operations Director at [QTS Group](#), said: "In-person networking opportunities are always fantastic and being able to deliver our Future of Rail event was a real privilege. It felt great to bring together so many like-minded people to share best practice and discuss some exciting plans for the industry.

"The rail sector continues to go from strength to strength and everybody on the panel understood the importance of bringing new talent and machinery into the industry to continue this growth. The importance of events such as this, which celebrates progress and encourages innovation, cannot be overestimated."

Kris Kinnear, Capital Delivery Director for Network Rail Scotland added: "We know there is a real challenge around recruitment, especially when we want to create a thriving and diverse workforce.

"Being able to get together as an industry and discuss some of the issues that we face moving forward has been very beneficial.

"Seeing so many young people from local schools engaged over the first day and to share with them how many opportunities we have across the rail sector has been really positive. Hopefully we've come across some real rail stars of the future."

Photo credit: QTS Group