

# Rail safety competition is back for third year

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The award-winning rail safety competition, *Backtrack: Create it, Share it, Save lives*, which highlights the dangers of trespassing on the railway, is back for a third year.

The 2022 competition was launched at Glasgow Queen Street Station, with colleagues from across the rail industry handing out activity sheets to young people asking them to create content to share with their peers to save lives.

The competition is organised by the Community Rail Education Network, a collective of community rail partnerships (CRPs), train operating companies, station adopters and other stakeholders with an interest in railway education.

This year the group are focusing on challenging people who trespass on our railway for likes and shares on social media. Entrants are being asked to create a simple but powerful message, to make others aware of the dangers of trespassing and to encourage them to stop.

The launch event in Glasgow was organised by ScotRail, who were joined by representatives from Network Rail, Community Rail Lancashire, the Tyne Valley, Highland Main Line, Strathallan, and East Lothian CRPs, and volunteers involved with ScotRail's Adopt-a-Station program.

ScotRail's community development executive, Tracy Stevenson, said: "We have been happy to support the Backtrack competition for the last couple of years and we were delighted to be able to host this year's launch event here in Scotland. It is vital that the rail industry supports and encourages projects that seek to inform and educate young people of the dangers of trespassing on our railways."

Also helping to launch the 2022 event were year 4 pupils from Rainbird School, part of the Excelsior Academy in Newcastle, who took part in a trip to the National Railway Museum in York and provided the competition with its first 30 entries.

Felicity Machnicki, Bishop Line Community Rail Partnership Officer, said: "The pupils enjoyed creating entries and filming their pledges as part of a fun day on the railway. Their trip was part of their project based learning working with LNER and the North East Local Enterprise Partnership where they gained a real life experience of careers in the rail network by meeting LNER staff, as well as greater knowledge of the history of the railways while seeing the fantastic exhibits in the museum. The Backtrack activities added some extra life skills to the day which we hope the pupils will share with their families and friends."

There are two ways to enter this year's Backtrack competition, which is open to two age categories, under 11s and young people aged 12 to 18. Entrants can either create a social media graphic or make a 20 second pledge video. Videos can be submitted by individuals or groups, but they must be filmed in a safe environment.

Entrants can either upload their entries online at [www.backtrackcompetition.co.uk](http://www.backtrackcompetition.co.uk), send them in the post, or tag Backtrack on social media. All details including entry forms, pledge cards, and teaching materials can be found on the website.

The competition closes on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022, after which a selection of videos and graphics will be chosen by a panel of judges to form a montage that will be shown across railway social media, school safety sessions and at selected stations across the UK. Winning entries will receive a Go-Pro hero 9 bundle or rail cards as prizes.

Chair of Community Rail Education Network, Karen Bennett, said: "I am thrilled that Backtrack is back. It concerns me that young people are still trespassing on the railway to take short-cuts or film videos for social media and putting their lives at risk. We need to spread the message 'Keep off the tracks' far and wide so that everyone is aware how dangerous the railway environment can be if used inappropriately."

Backtrack won the 'Involving Children and Young People' award at the 2021 Community Rail Awards.

*Photo credit: Community Rail Network*