

Graffiti artwork tackling anti-social behaviour

– a social performance case study

The project

Following continued reports of trespass graffiti walls on around Edinburgh Waverley and Glasgow Central stations, staff from the Network Rail/ScotRail Alliance team worked on a new strategy to prevent further safety incidents. As it was found to be increasingly expensive to continually clean the walls of graffiti, the team enlisted the help of well-known and respected local graffiti artists. They created tasteful new artwork on the walls in the hotspot locations, covering over the older tagging.



The scheme contributed to a significant reduction in graffiti-related trespass. This was partially attributed to the arrangement made between the station team, the BTP and the graffiti artists, with the artists able to graffiti the wall between specific hours without repercussions. They also continued to self-police the artwork, agreeing not to graffiti over others' work, which resulted in an impressive piece of collaborative art.

The key benefits delivered

Benefit to society: The arrangement between the local graffiti artists and Network Rail/ScotRail Alliance has prevented large amounts of graffiti from being painted on the lineside walls. Instead, the station environment benefits from tasteful locally-designed artwork, resulting in a more pleasant journey for passengers around the stations.

Benefit to the business: The graffiti artwork has contributed to a reduction in trespass incidences around lineside environments, resulting in a safer railway. The initiative also reduced the continued requirement for the hotspot walls to be cleaned at expense to the business; the artwork requires less upkeep and has less of a risk of being tagged by other artists.

Lessons learned

- Through working with respected members of a community, positive relationships can be built which are advantageous not only to the business but to local people.
- Graffiti does not have to be seen as a negative form of artwork. It can be transformative, and have safety benefits if communities are engaged with in the correct way. In asking respected graffiti artists to contribute to the artwork on lineside walls, the project has reduced the amount of ad-hoc anti-social artwork on the same walls.

Who to contact for more information

Mark Henderson – Community Development Manager – ScotRail Alliance/Network Rail

Email: Mark.Henderson2@networkrail.co.uk | Phone: 07515 626 640