

# High Speed Two

## Benefits update February 2024



### HS2 supports 4,000 unemployed people into work

More than 4,000 unemployed people have secured jobs on HS2 as Britain's biggest build continues to fuel economic growth in the infrastructure sector.

New data shows that 4,020 people who were jobless for 26 weeks or more have kickstarted their careers on the high-speed railway. The statistics were revealed as the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) joined with HS2 to invest in three new dedicated recruitment hubs for the project in the West Midlands.

The hubs will promote the exciting job opportunities generated by the railway, which is being built between the West Midlands and London.

Teenager Millie Bayliss became the 4,000th unemployed person to secure a job on HS2, with more roles to come as peak construction progresses.

Millie, 19, of Kingstanding, Birmingham was unemployed for eight months, but within three weeks of applying to HS2, she became a facilities assistant with regional construction partner Balfour Beatty VINCI (BBV). Just six months later, she was promoted to data support analyst.



Millie (pictured above) is part of a team of skilled engineers, updating and maintaining 4D models of BBV's engineering works, keeping records and making sure all works meet safety and environmental standards.

She said: "I've just started out in my career, so progression is really important to me, and thanks to BBV, I've achieved that in just six months."

HS2 is supporting about 10,000 jobs in the West Midlands, with thousands of roles being created on HS2 stations at Curzon Street in Birmingham and Interchange in Solihull, as well as the new network control centre and depot in Washwood Heath, Birmingham.

Nearly 28,500 people are working on HS2 across hundreds of sites.

### Our strategic goals

HS2 represents a significant investment by the UK taxpayer, which is why the HS2 project has always been about building more than a railway. Our strategic goals provide seven areas of focus:

**Sustainability and respect**



**Health, safety and security standards**



**Skills and employment**



**Customer experience**



**Value for money**



**Capacity and connectivity**



**Catalyst for growth**



### HS2 is supporting training, jobs and businesses across the UK

- **3,265** unique UK registered businesses in HS2 supply chain
- **2,354** unique UK SMEs in HS2 supply chain
- **1,432** apprenticeships created across HS2
- **94%** of HS2 supply chain is with UK businesses



## Main works construction keeps hitting major milestones

Three years since the formal start of main works construction, huge progress is being made building HS2 between London and Birmingham.

Nearly 28,500 jobs are supported by the project and a new generation is gaining invaluable expertise in cleaner, low emission construction practices, creating a legacy for the UK's world-class infrastructure sector.

Construction milestones include passing the halfway mark on Britain's longest rail bridge, the 2.1-mile Colne Valley viaduct on the outskirts of London. More than 500 of the viaduct's 1,000 deck segments, weighing up to 140 tonnes each, have been installed.

We've also completed the Victoria Road crossover box, where trains will change tracks on the way in and out of Old Oak Common station in west London. The

structure has been built in a 'caterpillar' shape to use less concrete. Our first two tunnelling machines, Florence and Cecilia, are also approaching the end of their 10-mile journey under the Chilterns.



## Pioneering low-carbon construction

One of HS2's most significant savings in carbon emissions is being made at the Thame Valley viaduct, an 880-metre-long structure near Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire.

In a UK construction first, all the bridge's major elements are being made in a factory, before being slotted together onsite. The innovative approach uses a lower volume of materials compared with pouring concrete elements in situ, reducing carbon emissions by a third.

The viaduct is the second-longest on HS2, with 36 spans of 25 metres each running across the River Thame and surrounding wetlands.



## Cutting carbon emissions: longest green tunnel underway

An expert team in Northamptonshire has started assembling the longest 'green' tunnel on HS2.

The one-and-a-half-mile (2.7-kilometre) Greatworth tunnel will allow the line to blend into the landscape, reducing the impact on wildlife and local communities, and is being built using an innovative 'cut and cover' technique that reduces embedded carbon emissions by half compared with traditional methods.

Once the structure is in place, it will be covered with earth from the excavation, and landscaped using thousands of native trees and shrubs.



# How HS2 is boosting jobs across Britain



**Over 3,000 UK-based businesses have won work on HS2, worth £23 billion.**



## Cardiff, Wales

Demand for recycled steel for use on HS2 is supporting hundreds of jobs and cutting carbon emission in construction.

In the past two years, the steel industry has benefitted from orders worth over £170 million from HS2 construction partners. Over a million tonnes of steel are forecast to be needed for standard construction materials, a further 200,000 tonnes for steel rail, switches and slab track, and an additional 15,000 tonnes for rolling stock.

Some recycled steel is being manufactured by CELSA Steel UK in Cardiff, Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire, with 750 staff employed at the two Cardiff-based sites alone. The firm is the UK's largest steel reinforcement manufacturer, driving new sustainability standards.

In Cardiff, 98% of raw material is from UK-sourced scrap metal and the electric furnace produces 80% fewer carbon emissions than normal steelmaking.



## Hartlepool, County Durham

HS2 is supporting jobs for local people involved in moving tunnel segments by rail from Hartlepool to London.

HS2's contract with STRABAG, the firm manufacturing the pre-cast concrete segments for its next London tunnel drives, has seen more than 100 jobs created, including roles for unemployed people. STRABAG is also using the local supply chain, sourcing aggregate from local quarries and using UK recycled steel.

STRABAG opened a new factory in Hartlepool in 2023, with direct rail network access through a rail head not used in over 15 years. Freightliner runs trains six times a week between Hartlepool and London, carrying up to 20 segments – the equivalent of taking 40 lorry journeys off the roads each time.



## Burscough, Lancashire

A Lancashire geotechnical and foundation engineering company is thriving thanks to the work it has secured on HS2, effectively doubling its workforce to over 400 staff.

Burscough-based Bachy Soletache provides piling and reinforcement work along the route, working on behalf of HS2 construction partners Balfour Beatty VINCI (BBV) in the West Midlands and Balfour Beatty VINCI SYSTRA (BBVS) in west London.

Projects have included piling and ground improvement works for the Long Itchington to north Birmingham section of the line, the section heading into Birmingham Curzon Street station, and ground engineering and foundations at Old Oak Common station.

Through HS2 the firm has also taken on local apprentices and bought new equipment.





## HS2 legacy funding boosts community projects by over £67 million

HS2's legacy funding is continuing to act as a catalyst for wider investment in local communities along the route of the new railway.

A total of 280 projects have received awards from HS2's Community and Environment Fund (CEF) and the Business and Local Economy Fund (BLEF) since they were launched in 2017. The funds were set up to help local people whose lives are being disrupted by construction.

To date, groups and organisations have shared £15.83 million in direct funding from the CEF and BLEF programmes. However, the awards have attracted millions of extra pounds in additional funding from over 240 sources including parish councils, village hall funds, sports and community groups, and many others. This has boosted investment by an additional £67 million to over £82 million so far.

It means every pound invested in communities thanks to HS2 has attracted more than £4 in additional funding.



### Backing the birthplace of Paralympic sport

The British Wheelchair Sports Foundation, based in Stoke Mandeville, Buckinghamshire, benefited from a £75,000 CEF award to replace the ageing sports hall floor at Stoke Mandeville Stadium.

Prior to this award, the hall had to close, significantly affecting the local community as the stadium prioritises disability sport bookings. Many nearby clubs and people were unable to use the facilities at the 'home of wheelchair sport'.

The CEF award was boosted by £117,000 in partnership funding for the new floor, which has allowed a wide range of groups for people with disabilities and other community organisations to enjoy playing sports.

The hall is home to the Stoke Mandeville Maulers Wheelchair Rugby Club and Aces Wheelchair Basketball Club and regularly holds wheelchair sport taster events. It also supports other key organisations including the local cardiac rehabilitation group, sessions for people with learning disabilities and spinal patient rehabilitation activities for the National Spinal Injuries Centre at Stoke Mandeville Hospital.

For more information about the funds, independently administered by charity Groundwork UK, go to: [hs2funds.org.uk](https://hs2funds.org.uk)