

Mini tunnel boring machine named 'Bramble' by school children

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School pupils visiting the HS2 site at Wormwood Scrubs have named a mini tunnel boring machine 'Bramble'.

The children, from Old Oak Primary School, got to see new hoardings that displayed their artwork, after helping HS2's Old Oak Common Station Construction Partner, Balfour Beatty, VINCI, Systra joint venture (BBVS JV). BBVS JV wanted the children to help design the new hoardings to fit in with the surrounding environment, and so began work to create a display featuring drawings of wildlife, insects and flowers.

The site on Wormwood Scrubs is where HS2 will be relocating a number of utilities, including the Stamford Brook Sewer, in order to construct the new super-hub station at Old Oak Common. To carry out this work, two mini tunnel boring machines (TBMs) are being used to create nine micro-tunnels for the utilities and sewer.

The TBM being used specifically for the sewer diversion is a refurbished Iseki Unclemole machine, and is the most versatile single-cutterhead micro tunnelling machine in the world for mixed soft-ground conditions. It has been brought on site by subcontractor Joseph Gallaher. During their visit to the work site,

pupils from a year 3 class at Old Oak Primary School were invited to name the first TBM and chose the name 'Bramble'.

TBMs are traditionally named before they are launched and are given female names. Three names were given to the children to choose from, Bramble, Buttercup and Daisy and the children were asked to select their favourite. The name was chosen to reflect the natural landscape and vegetation on the Scrubs.

Whilst on site, the school pupils learnt more about engineering, High Speed 2 and the works taking place at Wormwood Scrubs, plus the tunnelling process and the tunnelling machinery.

Joe Brown, headteacher of Old Oak Primary School said: "This is a wonderful opportunity for the children of the school both to see their art work on the hoardings, but also to experience the site and learn about the changes taking place in their local environment. I hope the children are able to learn more about the construction as the build progresses. "

The tunnelling will start at the end of April and will run 24 hours a day until August. There will be two mini TBMs completing this work to dig nine tunnels. This will create new routes for diverting the Stamford Brook Sewer and utilities service currently running under Old Oak Common Lane, which will allow HS2 to lower and widen the road at a later date. This will allow double decker buses to run under railway bridges.

Huw Edwards, project client at Old Oak Common for HS2 Ltd said: "With our worksite located at the heart of the Old Oak and Park Royal area, it is great that we are working closely with local schools to inform and inspire young children about the project, engineering and about future career choices that are available. These small TBMs will reduce disruption to the local community as we do the essential work required to deliver Old Oak Common station."