

# New government-backed Recruitment Hubs will help more unemployed people into work on HS2

January 22, 2024



The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has joined forces with [HS2](#) to invest in three new dedicated Recruitment Hubs for the project in the West Midlands.

They will aim to capitalise on continuing employment opportunities generated by the high-speed railway which is being built between the West Midlands and London.

It comes as new figures show that HS2's construction is already changing lives and helping thousands of unemployed people to start new careers with long-term prospects.

The data shows that 4,020 people who were unemployed for 26 weeks or more have gone on to secure jobs on Britain's new railway.

With new stations in Birmingham and Solihull, the network control centre and depot in Washwood Heath,

and the HQ for HS2 Ltd in Birmingham city centre, its little wonder the West Midlands has benefitted from an explosion of opportunities since early works began on the new rail network in 2017.

Over a third of the entire workforce helping to deliver HS2 are based at worksites in the West Midlands, and thousands more jobs are still to be created locally as work to build Curzon Street Station, Interchange Station and the Washwood Heath campus gathers momentum in 2024.

HS2's construction partner for Interchange Station, Laing O'Rourke, has confirmed they will need up to 1,000 people to deliver the project, while Mace Dragados, building Curzon Street, estimate over 1,000 jobs – including an estimated 150 new entrant roles, including apprenticeship positions and opportunities earmarked for unemployed people.

Given the scale of opportunity, the new HS2 Recruitment Hubs are co-located within the Washwood Heath, Birmingham Summer Row and Chelmsley Wood Job Centres – close to the three key sites where HS2 will be bolstering its workforce. The Hubs will be used to advertise new jobs on the HS2 project and provide prospective candidates with the opportunity to meet face to face with recruiters.

Speaking at an event to mark the opening of the new HS2 Recruitment Hub in Washwood Heath, West Midlands Mayor, Andy Street welcomed the investment and subsequent employment boost for the region.

Andy Street, Mayor of the West Midlands and WMCA Chair said:

“I welcome DWP and HS2 joining forces to invest in three new, strategically located, dedicated Recruitment Hubs. I look forward to seeing local people right across our region continue to benefit from the apprenticeship and employment opportunities created from the development of this high-speed rail link between the West Midlands and London. It is a project that is set to boost economic growth here in the West Midlands in the months and years ahead.”

Helene Dearn, West Midlands' Group Director for DWP said:

“These are exciting times for our Jobcentres across the West Midlands. The three dedicated Recruitment Hubs will facilitate recruitment for HS2 employers, supporting residents right across the region.

“I look forward to growing our relationship with HS2 and the variety of employers who make up their supply chain. It is vital we maximise these fantastic job opportunities for the citizens of the West Midlands, giving them the skills they need in the labour market now and for years to come.”

1,414 formerly unemployed people in the West Midlands have now benefitted from training and employment initiatives that have helped them to kickstart new careers, and 499 have benefitted from the 1,432 apprenticeships that HS2 has so far created – putting its overall target to create 2,000 apprenticeships well within reach.

Natalie Penrose, HS2's Head of Legacy said:

“HS2 is all about changing lives and creating new opportunities and years before the first trains arrive in

the region, it's evident what a difference this project is making.

"There are lots of exciting milestones on the horizon, and we're focused on ensuring that even more people who are out of work benefit from the opportunities ahead."

19-year-old Millie Bayliss from Kingstanding was today named as the 4,000th unemployed person to secure a job on HS2. Having made the tough decision not to go to university, Millie was out of work for eight months. She heard about the opportunity to work on HS2 after former school colleagues and family members recommendations. Within just three weeks of applying, she was welcomed into the team.

Millie joined HS2's construction partner for the region, Balfour Beatty VINCI (BBV), as facilities assistant but in just six months, she secured a promotion and progressed into a new role as data support analyst.

Millie now works alongside a team of highly skilled engineers to update and maintain 4D models of BBV's intricate engineering works, ensuring records are maintained and all works are recorded in accordance with safety and environmental standards.

Millie Bayliss, Data Support Analyst at Balfour Beatty VINCI said:

"Joining HS2 has been a life-changing experience for me as I've found my passion and have been welcomed into the construction industry.

"Working in Balfour Beatty VINCI has allowed me to progress to the next stage of my career within just six months, and with the exciting projects and opportunities ahead, I couldn't imagine a better place to build my career, learn and grow."

To find out more about careers and opportunities on HS2, visit one of the new HS2 Recruitment Hubs, or visit [hs2.org.uk careers](https://hs2.org.uk/careers)

*Photo credit: HS2 Ltd*