

Report finds HS2 delivers £1.7bn boost to West Midlands businesses

March 17, 2023



New figures released today by HS2 Ltd show that over the last six years, 422 West Midlands companies have received a share of over £1.7bn in contract awards.

The figures demonstrate how HS2's construction is playing a vital role in the survival and growth of businesses across the region.

The ripple effect from investing in Britain's new high speed railway is clear, with small and medium sized businesses based in the area emerging as the biggest winners, with a 78% share of local contract awards.

In 2022 alone, the value of HS2 contracts awarded to local firms (£816million) totalled almost twice the value of economic uplift delivered in the West Midlands by the 2022 Birmingham Commonwealth Games (£453.7million^[1])

Mark Thurston CEO at HS2 Ltd said: "As soon as work started on Britain's flagship infrastructure project, businesses in the West Midlands realised the enormity of HS2's potential.

“Contracts worth millions helped to keep factories in production and thousands of jobs safe as the country fought the pandemic, and right now we’re supporting those feeling the cost-of-living pinch.

“As today’s report shows, HS2’s transformational journey is already making an impact and the West Midlands is onboard and reaping the benefits.”

The positive effect of HS2’s construction is also being felt by local people working on the project, developing their careers, and accessing free training to upskill for new opportunities.

Over 8,800 people are supporting HS2’s construction in the area. 729 local residents who were previously out of work are now in jobs, while 399 people have completed or are currently studying for an apprenticeship.

Balfour Beatty VINCI, HS2’s construction partner for the region, has already delivered over 81,000 hours of training to create the 7,000-strong highly skilled workforce it needs to fulfil a wide variety of on-site and office-based roles.

Construction is well underway on over 350 sites between London and the West Midlands. In this region, work is progressing to prepare for two state-of-the-art stations – Birmingham Curzon Street and Interchange, and Washwood Heath Depot – the maintenance facility and control centre for the whole HS2 network. HS2, its partners and suppliers are also boring tunnels, and building bridges and viaducts at key locations across the region.

Andy Street, Mayor of the West Midlands, said: “From the very outset of what is a landmark infrastructure project for the UK, I’ve believed in the transformative impact HS2 can bring about for our region.

“Whether it’s thousands of jobs for local people, improved prospects for our local businesses right the way through the supply chain or indeed enhanced connectivity for decades to come, HS2 is a game changer.

“We must steer a course through any temporary turbulence – inevitable from time to time given cost and political pressures – which is why I’m glad to see the Government redouble its commitment to a scheme which will deliver for the people of the West Midlands and indeed for the UK as a whole.”

Mark Pickard, Managing Director of Altrad RMD Kwikform, an Aldridge-based firm that has secured work with HS2, said: “Our team is on site at Curzon Street, helping to build the network of viaducts that will bring high speed trains into Birmingham City centre. Over the years we’ve worked on major projects all over the world, but to be involved in a project of this scale, so local to us, is really special.

“Like most businesses, we’ve been impacted by the pandemic, and there’s still a great deal of uncertainty in the construction industry generally. HS2 has allowed us to bounce back to the levels of revenue, stability and success we experienced before COVID-19 hit. We’re now able to invest back into the business, purchase new machinery, recruit more people from the local community and train and develop our staff. The size and scale of HS2 gives us reason to be really optimistic, we can plan ahead now for 5-10 years knowing the work is there for us.”

A comprehensive summary of the jobs, skills and supply chain benefits HS2 has already brought to the West Midlands can be found in a new report - [HS2 in the West Midlands](#) - which has been released today (17th March).

Photo credit: HS2 Ltd