



HS2

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report

2024 – 2025

Contents

Foreword	2
Introduction	3
Equality, diversity and inclusion in 2024–2025 at a glance	4
Part One HS2 Ltd: Setting the standards for the industry in 2024–2025	5
Part Two The HS2 supply chain 2024–2025	19
Part Three Communities	36



Front cover image:

A construction worker celebrates tunnel boring machine Mary Ann mining halfway through the Bromford Tunnel.

Foreword



Joanna Davinson.



EDI isn't a short-term project, it's a long-term priority that shapes how we think, lead and build the railway."

Building Britain's biggest infrastructure project requires the best ideas, skills and perspectives from everyone. It's why equality, diversity and inclusion are at the heart of HS2.

I'm the board member for equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and this year I've learned more about our work and seen how seriously we take EDI. We focus on our staff, the companies we work with, and the communities affected by the railway.

For us, EDI isn't a short-term project, it's a long-term priority that shapes how we think, lead and build the railway. It must be deliberate – part of our everyday work. We need to build it into our decisions, systems and workplace culture.

This report honestly shows where we are now. It celebrates our progress and recognises the work still to do as we reset both the HS2 programme and our organisation.

The information in this report has helped us update our EDI strategy. This strategy focuses on building a more inclusive and diverse workplace where everyone feels valued, respected and able to succeed. We're making good progress – from developing inclusive leadership and diverse talent, to having more women and ethnic minority staff than industry standards. But we know there's more to do.

Our supply chain is also important. More diverse-owned businesses are working on the programme, and our partners are using inclusive practices that have been recognised as leading examples.

We also support local communities through funds like the HS2 Community and Environment Fund and the Business and Local Economy Fund, plus skills and employment programmes that create lasting benefits.

Our revised EDI strategy is a big step forward. But like all strategies, it will only succeed through sustained action, working together and being accountable at every level.

We're publishing this report to share our results and achievements, and be open about where we need to improve. Our commitment is clear: EDI will be part of everything we do, now and in the future.

Joanna Davinson

Non-executive director

Introduction

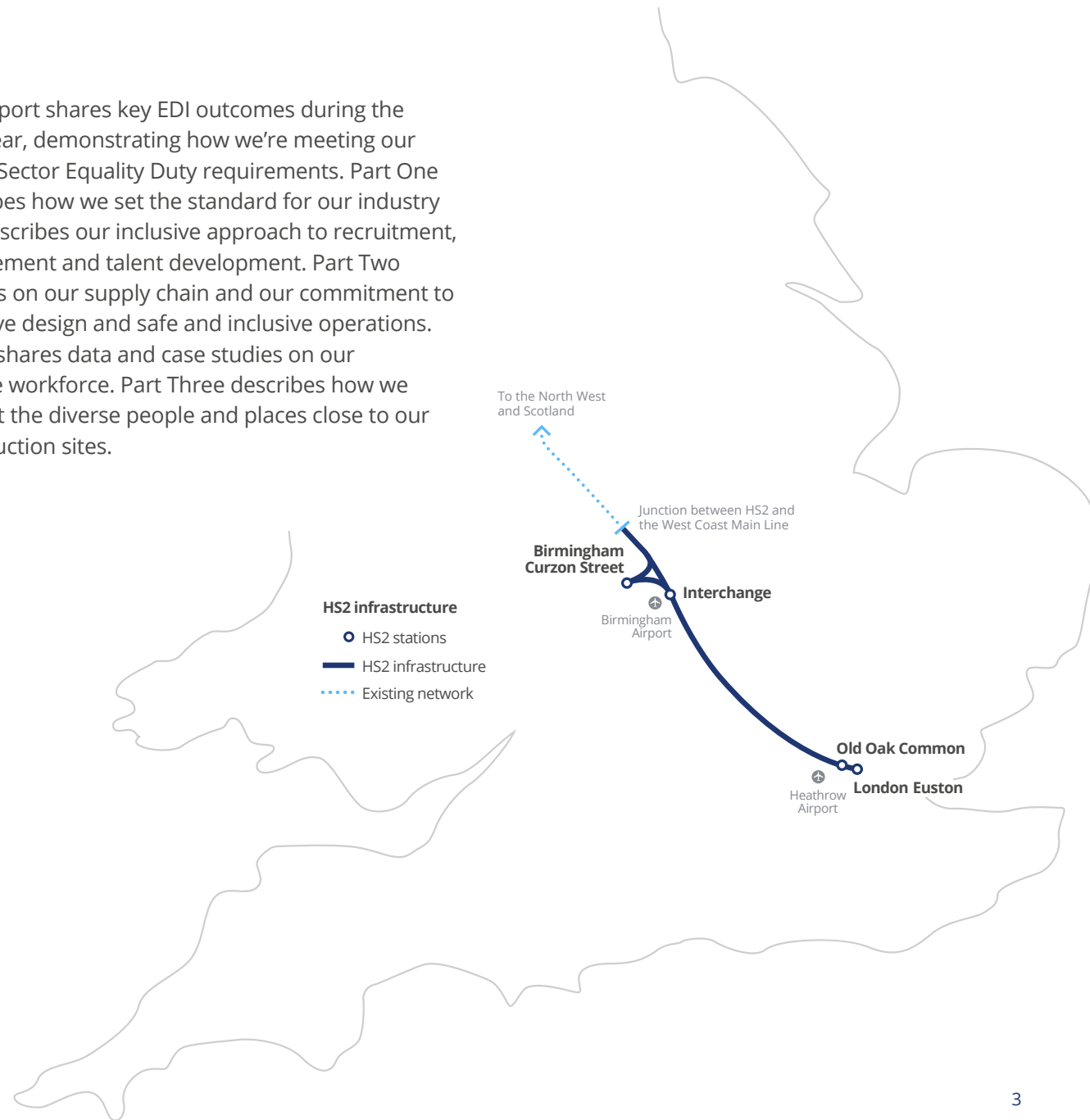
This annual report shares how HS2 Ltd delivered on its Equality Act duties during 2024/25.

HS2 is at peak construction, with 33,000 people working to design and build Britain's new high-speed railway. Attracting and retaining diverse and talented people will help us to achieve our goals. The workforce we create will benefit the construction, infrastructure and rail industries for years to come.

The past year has seen important milestones for the HS2 workforce. There are more than 350 construction sites between the West Midlands and London, and many people new to the industry are learning skills and building their careers. More than 1,800 apprentices and 5,000 previously unemployed people have been supported into work on the project.

This report shares key EDI outcomes during the past year, demonstrating how we're meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty requirements. Part One describes how we set the standard for our industry and describes our inclusive approach to recruitment, engagement and talent development. Part Two focuses on our supply chain and our commitment to inclusive design and safe and inclusive operations. It also shares data and case studies on our diverse workforce. Part Three describes how we respect the diverse people and places close to our construction sites.

Note: The information in this report represents activities between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025. All data referring to HS2 Ltd relates to HS2 Ltd employees only, which includes the following staff types: Permanent, Fixed Term Contracts, Apprentices and Graduates. Where specifically indicated, data may refer to core staff which includes the categories above plus Agency interim staff, Development partner, Engineering Delivery Partner and Commercial secondees.



Equality, diversity and inclusion in 2024–2025 at a glance



37%

of HS2 Ltd workforce is female.



31%

of the HS2 Ltd workforce has an ethnic minority background.



24%

of HS2 Ltd staff successfully received reasonable adjustments in the workplace.



8

staff networks support the improvement of EDI.



Over 1,800 apprenticeships started and 5,000 previously unemployed people supported into work.



Clear Assured Platinum status retained.



Disability Confident Employer.



£61m

spent with diverse owned suppliers.

Part One

HS2 Ltd: Setting the standards for the industry in 2024–2025



HS2 Ltd: Setting the standards for the industry in 2024–2025

HS2 Ltd seeks to set clear standards for our supply chain. The project is addressing national skills gaps and building a new, more diverse construction and infrastructure workforce. This section shares data and case studies on how we are performing against our Equality Act duties.

Equality, diversity and inclusion strategy

HS2 Ltd is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive workplace where everyone feels welcomed, respected and valued.

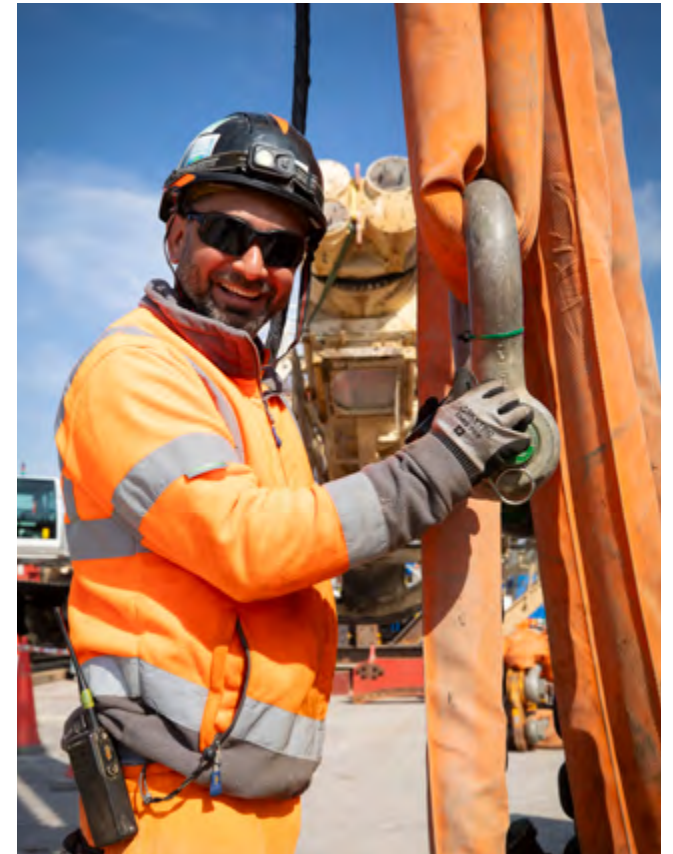
Attracting and retaining new and diverse talent is critical to our work building the railway and will leave a skills legacy for the construction, engineering and rail industries.

While we have built strong EDI foundations, it's important to push for further improvement. We will continue to adopt a creative, partnership approach to boosting standards in order to realise the benefits of EDI in major projects.

In 2024/25, we launched a new EDI strategy focusing on creating a more inclusive culture, improving diversity and representation, being recognised as an inclusive employer of choice and continuing to be a catalyst for change across our industry.

We will achieve this through the following initiatives:

- Inclusive leadership training embedded into leadership and management development interventions.
- Mentoring and reverse mentoring programmes, fostering relationships across the business, and helping leaders to better understand our employees.
- Mandatory EDI performance goals for all employees, including executive and senior leaders, focusing on inclusion and challenging bias.



Male construction worker.

HS2 Ltd: Setting the standards for the industry in 2024–2025

Workforce diversity: Gender

In 2024/25, our target was for women to make up 40% of our workforce. We achieved 37%, which is above typical construction industry standards. The slight decrease from 2023/24 reflects a number of changes made across the organisation within the year. Despite these changes, we remain committed to improving gender balance and wider diversity as we reshape HS2 Ltd.

During the year there was a continued focus on the development and progression of female talent. We continued to provide opportunities for personal and professional growth to support a more diverse pipeline for senior roles. This included the relaunch of diverse talent programmes, supporting female talent to navigate the varied dimensions of their role and build strategic habits to support advancement and progression. Other opportunities such as managed moves, coaching and senior leadership mentoring were also available to further enhance the development of talent across the business.

To ensure efforts are targeted and impactful, we continue to track recruitment, onboarding and exit interview data and this insight plays a critical role in informing initiatives related to improving gender representation across the business in line with our EDI strategy. Employee networks have been active throughout 2024/2025, supporting colleagues across the organisation, providing a variety of events to engage the workforce, and offering a safe space for discussion and support in developing our internal culture.

At the end of the financial year 2024/25 our gender distribution is as follows:

Directorates	Male %	Female %
External Affairs	53	43
Phase Two	54	44
Railway	69	29
CFO	54	44
Systems Delivery	62	37
Stations Delivery	67	30
Civils	74	25
People, Organisation & Communities	36	64
Future Talent	70	29
HS2 overall	61	37

Roles	Male %	Female %
Director	80	20
Senior technical/functional lead	80	20
Head of function	74	24
Senior manager	66	32
Manager	53	47
Adviser	51	48
Assistant	38	61

Note: We have a small number of staff who prefer not to share their ethnicity, and those who 'prefer not to say' are excluded from the table. This means not all directorates and grades have 100% ethnicity representation in the figures shown.

HS2 Ltd: Setting the standards for the industry in 2024–2025

Case study

Developing female talent at HS2 Ltd

We recognise the value of qualifications to develop talent and provide a pathway for future leaders. Supporting individuals to access qualifications provides an opportunity for them to build critical skills, access external networks and experience diverse perspectives, all of which are essential to support the successful delivery of our programme.

Caroline Warrington is currently in the second year of an MBA in major infrastructure delivery at University College London. This programme is designed to equip mid-career professionals with innovative management and leadership practices for the successful delivery of major infrastructure projects such as HS2.

“

I was honoured to receive the Bartlett School of Sustainable Construction Women in Construction Scholarship, which supports women aspiring to senior leadership roles. HS2 Ltd, along with my line manager, has been incredibly supportive of my studies.

The MBA provides a unique blend of academic theory and real-world case studies, enriched by the diverse experiences of an international cohort of students. Supported by leading industry experts, the programme has offered invaluable insights drawn from their expertise. Through this MBA, I have deepened my understanding of infrastructure delivery and enhanced my leadership and interpersonal skills.”

Caroline Warrington

Head of command and control systems and testing



Caroline Warrington.

HS2 Ltd: Setting the standards for the industry in 2024–2025

Workforce diversity: Ethnicity

HS2 Ltd has a corporate target of 23% for ethnic minority diversity in the workforce, demonstrating our aspiration to go beyond industry standards. In 2024/2025 this target was again exceeded, with workforce representation at 31%, an increase of 2 percentage points from 29% in 2023/24.

This is the third year running that the target has been surpassed. However, we continue to engage and work with our REACH (Race, Ethnicity and Cultural Heritage) employee network to celebrate key events such as Race Equality Week.

“

We're proud to continue our support of Race Equality Week. While progress has been made, there is still much more to do in pursuit of creating a more inclusive and equitable society. And we all have a role to play in supporting this at HS2 Ltd, so we encourage colleagues in the REACH network and beyond to participate in the activities taking place during Race Equality Week.”

Anasa Chisholm

Co-chair of the REACH Network



Anasa Chisholm.

HS2 Ltd: Setting the standards for the industry in 2024–2025

The tables below illustrate ethnic minority representation in directorates in 2024/2025, as well as representation across grades.

Directorates	White %	Ethnic minority %
External Affairs	78	16
Phase Two	65	31
Railway	71	24
CFO	61	35
Systems Delivery	59	36
Stations Delivery	61	30
Civils	64	33
People, Organisation & Communities	72	27
Future Talent	52	46
HS2 overall	65	31

Roles	White %	Ethnic minority %
Director	90	0
Senior technical/functional lead	87	11
Head of function	85	8
Senior manager	66	29
Manager	59	39
Adviser	52	44
Assistant	51	47

Note: We have a small number of staff who prefer not to share their ethnicity, and those who 'prefer not to say' are excluded from the table. This means not all directorates and grades have 100% ethnicity representation in the figures shown.

HS2 Ltd: Setting the standards for the industry in 2024–2025

Case study

Developing our talent

Farhad is a functional integration engineer in the Railway Directorate. Part of the 2024/2025 Accelerate Programme, a new initiative to develop more diverse talent, he engages with stakeholders throughout the business to understand how complex systems and users will work together to build the new high-speed railway.

“

I thoroughly enjoyed and gained considerable value from being part of the Accelerator Programme. The programme touched on a number of topics that resonated with me deeply and challenged my way of thinking about key issues such as how I present myself and how I view my career in light of my values and personality. Being someone who is quite early on in their career, and has recently been promoted to a senior position, I found incredible value

in listening and engaging with colleagues on their views and experiences on key topics such as authenticity and imposter syndrome. The programme also provided real practical tools alongside these discussions, such as techniques to manage conflict, which I can apply in my current role and future trajectory.”

Farhad Rage

Functional integration engineer

HS2 Ltd: Setting the standards for the industry in 2024–2025

Workforce diversity: Disability

At the end of 2024/2025, the proportion of HS2 Ltd employees who have disclosed a disability under the Equality Act is 5%.

We continue to support both employees and line managers to action reasonable adjustments as part of the Display Screen Equipment (DSE) assessments process. Currently, 24% of our workforce receive moderate to substantial adjustments linked to their clear talent inclusion profile, a 1 percentage point increase from 2023/2024. We continue to monitor these profiles to ensure colleagues have the tools and support required to thrive within our offices and at home.

In 2024/2025 HS2 Ltd celebrated Neurodiversity Week, with a hybrid event designed to raise awareness, share lived experiences and promote strategies towards creating a more inclusive working environment.

Case study

Neurodiversity Celebration Week

The event was organised by our 2gether Network and designed to celebrate neurodiversity and challenge misconceptions by highlighting the strengths and unique perspectives neurodiverse colleagues bring to the workplace. It also served as a platform to showcase the support mechanisms in place across HS2 Ltd and its supply chain.

The session was opened by Elaine Holt, HS2 Ltd board member and network board sponsor, who set the tone for a powerful session centred on lived experience. A panel of colleagues shared personal stories, offering insight into the realities of being neurodivergent at work and made practical

suggestions for making the workplace more inclusive and accessible.

Human resources and information technology teams shared the assistance and support available for both employees and line managers, with follow up materials made available to attendees.

The success of the event showed the power of dialogue and experience in driving culture. As an organisation, we hope to continue building on this momentum to further embed neuroinclusive practices.

HS2 | 2gether Network
ap Allies Programme



HS2 Ltd: Setting the standards for the industry in 2024–2025

Gender, ethnicity and disability pay gaps

HS2 Ltd publishes pay gap data every year. This data outlines the difference of average earnings of employees across gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation and disability groups. We recognise that reporting pay gaps for all protected characteristics is not mandated. However, we do this to gain valuable insight into data to help inform actions and decisions.

The mean gender pay gap increased by 0.4 percentage points in 2024, whilst the median gender pay gap was down 0.5 percentage points. Pay gaps at HS2 Ltd are driven by the demographics of employees in the upper pay quartile, the profile of leavers and joiners has also contributed.

Gender, ethnicity, disability and sexual orientation pay gaps are outlined in the table below.

	Gender %	Ethnicity %	Declared disability %	Workplace adjustment %	Sexual orientation %
Mean	19	23.5	7.3	14.1	12.7
Median	22.9	23.4	7.1	15.7	20

Note: The mean pay gap is the difference between the average hourly earnings of two groups of employees. The median pay gap is the difference between the middle values from a ranked order of hourly earnings of two groups of employees.



HS2 graduate inductions.

HS2 Ltd: Setting the standards for the industry in 2024–2025

Workforce diversity: Age

Almost 60% of the workforce of HS2 Ltd is over 40 years old.

Employees age breakdown in 2024/25

Age ranges	Percentage
18 or under	0
19-29	14
30-39	26
40-49	31
50-59	21
60-64	5
65 and over	2

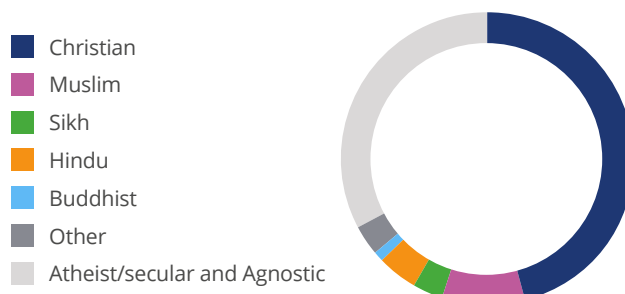


Workforce diversity: Religion

The most common religion or faith among our employees is Christian at 41%.

Employees religion and belief breakdown in 2024/25

Religion/belief	Percentage
Christian	41
Muslim	8
Sikh	3
Hindu	4
Jewish	0
Buddhist	1
Other	3
Atheist/secular and Agnostic	29



Workforce diversity: Sexual orientation

A total of 4% of our staff identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBTQ+).

Sexual orientation in percentages

Sexual orientation	Percentage
LGBTQ+	4
Heterosexual	89



Note: We have a small number of staff who prefer not to share their religion or sexual orientation, and those who 'prefer not to say' are excluded from the table. This means there is not 100% representation in the figures shown.

HS2 Ltd: Setting the standards for the industry in 2024–2025

Workforce diversity: Promotions

The table below highlights the diversity of internal promotions in 2024/2025:

Workforce diversity

	Workforce promotions 2024/25	Workforce diversity 2024/25
Ethnic minorities	29%	31%
Females	47%	37%
LGBTQ+	3%	4%
Disability	5%	5%
Non-Christian	16%	20%
Adjustments	22%	24%

Note: These figures include: regrading; secondments; managed moves; and internal movements.

Workforce diversity: Talent management

We're committed to identifying and developing internal talent to create a robust and diverse business. In 2024/25 we delivered a number of programmes to support this, including:

- **Accelerate Talent programme**

This programme was designed to support ethnic minority talent to stand in their own authentic space and choose how to flex their leadership style to achieve their career goals. Each module was delivered through the lens of negotiating the dominant culture in an organisation and allowed attendees to identify the essential skills, tools and habits to amplify their leadership impact.

- **Women of Colour in Leadership programme**

This programme was aimed at supporting women of colour to adapt daily habits and strategies to navigate the personal, organisational and political challenges of their role, without sacrificing their individuality and cultural identity. This programme was delivered to talented ethnic minority women supporting them to craft a strategic roadmap to achieve leadership success.

- **Mastering Awareness: Empower programme**

This career-ready programme was designed to help women identified as top talent across the organisation to overcome challenges, lead and progress in their careers. The three-month virtual programme provided attendees with tools and techniques required for senior leadership roles and opportunities.

The interventions have helped the groups to venture beyond their comfort zones in areas such as applications, interviews, public speaking and project work.

Alongside the new development programmes, we continue to support talent at all levels through:

- **managed moves:** development moves to internal roles;
- **lunch and learns:** online sessions covering all aspects of personal and professional development;
- **internal apprenticeships:** access to further and higher education opportunities and qualifications through apprenticeships at levels 3 to 7;
- **coaching and mentoring opportunities:** both internal and external;
- **leadership and management development:** structured, blended programmes for all levels of management and leadership; and
- **professional memberships and qualifications.**

HS2 Ltd: Setting the standards for the industry in 2024–2025

Workforce diversity: Apprentices and graduates

In September 2024, we welcomed 26 graduates and 18 apprentices. To create a smooth transition into the business, an in-depth induction programme was developed, providing an overview of the programme and the organisation, explaining what to expect so that they had a great onboarding experience.

Graduates and apprentices gain hands on experience through a variety of placements across both office and site locations. They experience rotations across the business in disciplines such as project management, engineering, cyber security, procurement and surveying, providing them with great insight into different areas and creating strong foundations for their future careers.

Graduate and apprentice diversity

EDI	Graduates %	Apprentices %
Male	66	78
Female	32	22
Ethnic minority	48	41
Disability	2	6
LGBTQ+	3	6

Note: We have a small number of staff who prefer not to share their religion or sexual orientation, and those who 'prefer not to say' are excluded from the table. This means there is not 100% representation in the figures shown.



HS2 graduate inductions.

HS2 Ltd: Setting the standards for the industry in 2024–2025

Workforce diversity: Recruitment

At HS2 Ltd, we're focused on embedding fairness and objectivity across each stage of the recruitment journey, from the moment a candidate applies, through to interview and final selection. Our approach is designed to reduce bias and create a more consistent and inclusive experience for all applicants.

We continue to use MeVitae, an anonymised CV screening tool, to help ensure decisions are based

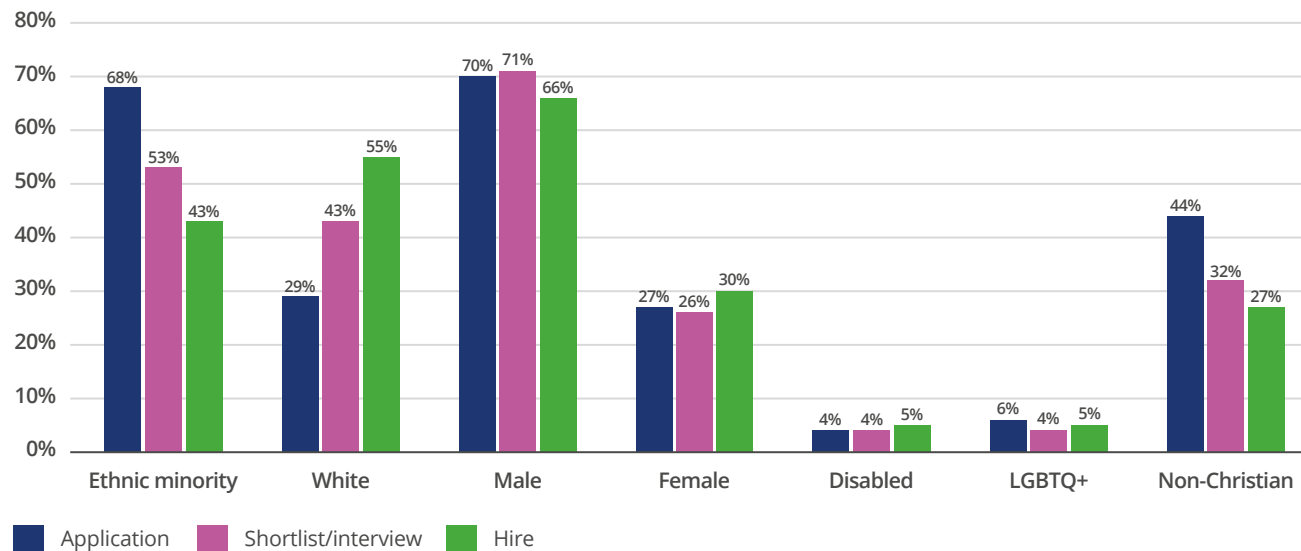
on skills and experience, through the removal of identifiable information linked to background and protected characteristics. This forms part of our wider effort to create a level playing field for all applicants.

We continue to upskill hiring and line managers with targeted training modules such as inclusive leadership and recruitment. These sessions are designed to build awareness, challenge bias and support evidence-based decision-making across our workforce.

During 2024/2025 we saw the following trends:

- The percentage of applicants from ethnic minority backgrounds remained the same (68%) as in 2023/2024. However, progression to hire improved by 6 percentage points to 43%.
- Conversion rates for female applicants remained proportionate across application, shortlist and hire.
- The representation of disabled and LGBTQ+ candidates remained broadly consistent with 2023/2024.

EDI trends in our recruitment



We remain committed to improving conversion rates for candidates across protected characteristic groups through interventions aligned to our EDI strategy. These include the following:

- Relaunching diverse interview panels, reinforcing our commitment to balanced representation and diversity of thought in decision-making and helping to reduce the risk of unconscious biases that influence hiring outcomes.
- Running CV and interview development sessions for internal candidates to ensure they are prepared and ready should they identify a role in HS2 Ltd they wish to apply for.
- Continue to embed disability confident practices into our recruitment process to level the playing field for candidates with disabilities and neurodiverse conditions.

HS2 Ltd: Setting the standards for the industry in 2024–2025

Our staff networks

We have eight employee networks promoting inclusivity across the organisation. Throughout the year, the networks design and deliver activities, events and celebrations focusing on a range of topics aligned to each group as well as intersectional events. Examples include:

- designing and delivering the first ever Neurodiversity Celebration Week;
- coordinating our participation in the Women in Rail mentoring scheme;
- running panel events;
- launching a diverse networking programme;
- delivering a series of courageous conversations;
- celebrating Race Equality Week;
- running quizzes to raise awareness;
- delivering a family event exploring LGBTQ+ family related topics and providing insight and guidance on family-focused support available;
- hosting Armistice Day services;
- attending careers events aimed at supporting members of the armed forces transitioning into civilian work;

- launching the Future You series inviting high profile guest speakers to provide an insight into their careers;
- collaborating with other organisations to bring together early careers cohorts to work on joint projects and network together;
- delivering the first ever Green Week - seven days of events, volunteer days, and carbon literacy workshops;
- running talks such as the 'Reasons to be cheerful about the future of HS2 and the whole railway in a complex world' which highlighted the resilience and strategies required to build and maintain a railway; and
- delivering leadership talks, such as one led by our chief railway officer Emma Head, during which she shared insights to overcoming obstacles, driving performance and building diverse teams.

In 2025/2026 we will continue to provide and retain safe spaces for employee community groups, maintain diversity of thought and continue to educate and raise awareness of the importance of EDI.



Logos for each of HS2's eight staff networks.

Part Two

The HS2 supply chain 2024–2025



The HS2 supply chain 2024–2025

EDI is embedded throughout the complex HS2 supply chain as a means of ensuring safe and inclusive sites and offices, with the wider aim of attracting more talented and diverse people into the industry.

This section focuses on:

- diverse owned businesses across our supply chain;
- the workforce diversity of our main works civils and stations partners; and
- EDI in our approach to health, safety and wellbeing to ensure both the design and operation of the new railway are inclusive.

The corporate supply chain

We have created, and continue to develop, a diverse supply chain that is representative of the communities that live and work along the route of the railway.

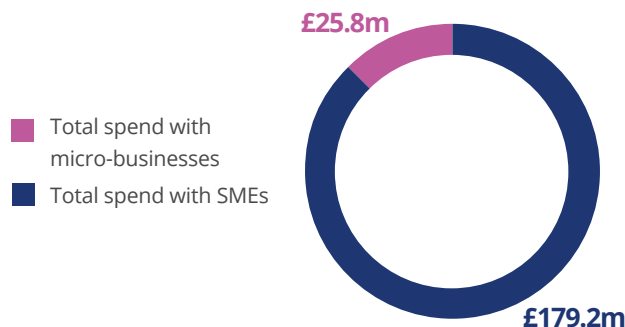
We define minority-owned businesses as those where women, ethnic minorities, LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender) or disabled people make up more than 50% of the partners or directors in day-to-day control of the business; or where a sole proprietor is from one of these groups. We also monitor our spend with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)¹ and micro businesses².

Between April 2024 and March 2025, there were 203 suppliers that were paid for services provided in support of delivering HS2.

The total HS2 corporate supply chain spend in 2024/25 was £6.5 billion, the same as in 2023/24. Large businesses³, at £6.3 billion, account for 97% of the overall spend, which is the same as in 2023/2024. Total spend with SMEs and micro businesses over the same time period was £179.2 million (up from £173.2 million in 2023/24) and £25.8 million (up from £12.5 million in 2023/24) respectively.

Total HS2 Ltd spend with SMEs and micro businesses in 2024/25

£205m



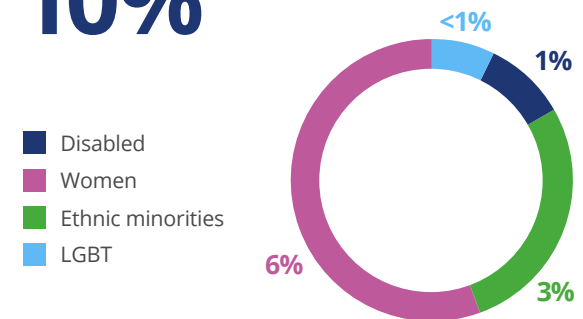
¹ An SME is defined as having 10-249 employees

² A micro business is defined as having fewer than 10 employees

³ A large business is defined as having more than 250 employees

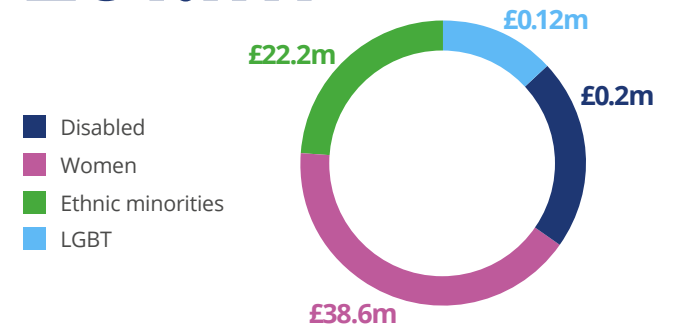
Representation of diverse-owned suppliers in 2024/25

10%



Total HS2 spend with diverse-owned suppliers in 2024/25

£61.1m



The HS2 supply chain 2024–2025

Our highest total spend across minority-owned businesses is with those owned by women – £38.6 million in 2024/2025 and £204.4 million cumulatively since 2016/2017. This is followed by spend with ethnic minority-owned businesses – £22.2 million in 2024/2025 and £109.2 million cumulatively since 2016/2017.

Spend with businesses owned by disabled people is significantly lower – currently £200,000. But in cumulative terms, £9 million has been spent with businesses owned by disabled people since 2016/2017.

Spend with businesses owned by LGBT people is also relatively low. In 2024/2025, spend was £120,000 and is £160,000 cumulatively since 2016/2017.

Over the course of 2025/2026, there will be a continued focus on working within HS2 Ltd and across our supply chain to engage with local and minority-owned businesses about contract opportunities. This will also include working with relevant local and business support stakeholders.

Minority-owned businesses in our supply chain

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Total
Women	£5,600,000	£4,500,000	£2,800,000	£77,500,000	£24,700,000	£14,200,000	£14,200,000	£22,300,000	£38,600,000	£204,400,000
Ethnic minority	£6,500,000	£3,200,000	£200,000	£13,800,000	£20,000,000	£10,000,000	£11,600,000	£21,700,000	£22,200,000	£109,200,000
Disabled	£2,800,000	£1,900,000	£300,000	£200,000	£2,700,000	£700,000	£100,000	£100,000	£200,000	£9,000,000
LGBT	£20,000	£0	£0	£0	£20,000	£0	£0	£0	£120,000	£160,000
Total	£14,920,000	£9,00,000	£3,300,000	£91,500,000	£47,420,000	£24,900,000	£25,900,000	£44,100,000	£61,120,000	£322,760,000



The HS2 supply chain 2024–2025

The HS2 supply chain and operations

Across the entire HS2 programme, we have set contractual performance measures for our supply chain. Our Tier 1 contractors are assessed on a six-monthly basis on their performance and this assessment flows down to their subcontractors.

The following areas are measured and monitored:

- policies and procedures
- recruitment
- workforce monitoring and reporting
- supplier diversity
- EDI training, and
- a requirement to obtain an externally verified EDI standard.

Of paramount importance is ensuring the safety of everyone working on HS2. By integrating inclusive approaches into our health, safety and wellbeing practices in collaboration with our dedicated teams, we can achieve a higher standard for our staff.

Key activities in this area include:

- best practice in tackling modern slavery, including training, awareness sessions, toolbox talks and lunch and learn sessions;
- diversity and respect training for site operatives;
- health and safety reporting for EDI incidents onsite; and
- mental health and wellbeing champions.

The next section highlights the workforce diversity of our main works civils and stations contractors in relation to women, ethnicity and disability compared to industry benchmarks⁴. Data given is for the contractor and their own subcontractors combined.



Female construction worker.

⁴Industry benchmarks are based on data from Network Rail and the GMB Union

The HS2 supply chain 2024–2025

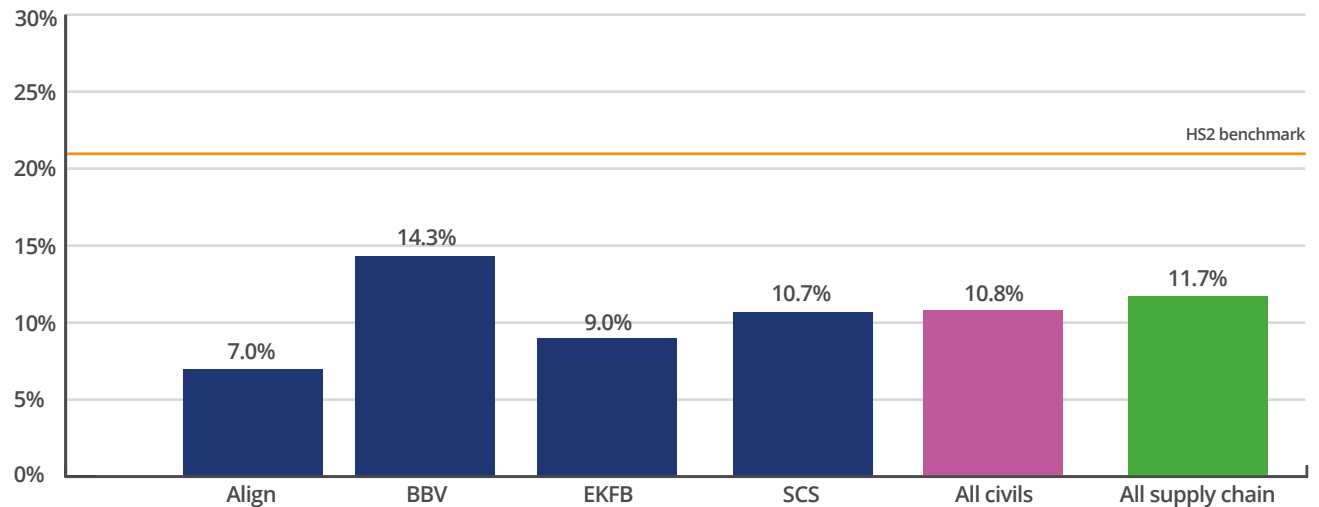
Main works civils contractors (MWCCs): Women

The MWCCs overall reported that 10.8% of their workforce were women. Balfour Beatty VINCI (BBV), our West Midlands construction partner, reported the highest female workforce compared to other MWCCs in 2024/2025 with 14.3%.

These diversity figures are for the Tier 1s and their subcontractors combined. When disaggregated, there is higher gender diversity in Tier 1s than in their subcontractors, largely due to the composition of the workforce based in offices as opposed to onsite. Of the Tier 1 main works civils and stations workforce, 23% are women.

All contractors overall are lower than our benchmark of 21%. This can be attributed to the contracts being deep in construction with a low proportion of female site operatives relative to female office-based workers. All the MWCCs are prioritising and developing initiatives to help encourage a better representation of women across all roles and across their supply chain.

Chart 1: MWCCs workforce diversity statistics – Women



10.8%

of MWCCs total workforce is female.

14.3%

of BBV's total workforce is female.

23%

of the Tier 1 main works civils and stations workforce are women.

The HS2 supply chain 2024–2025

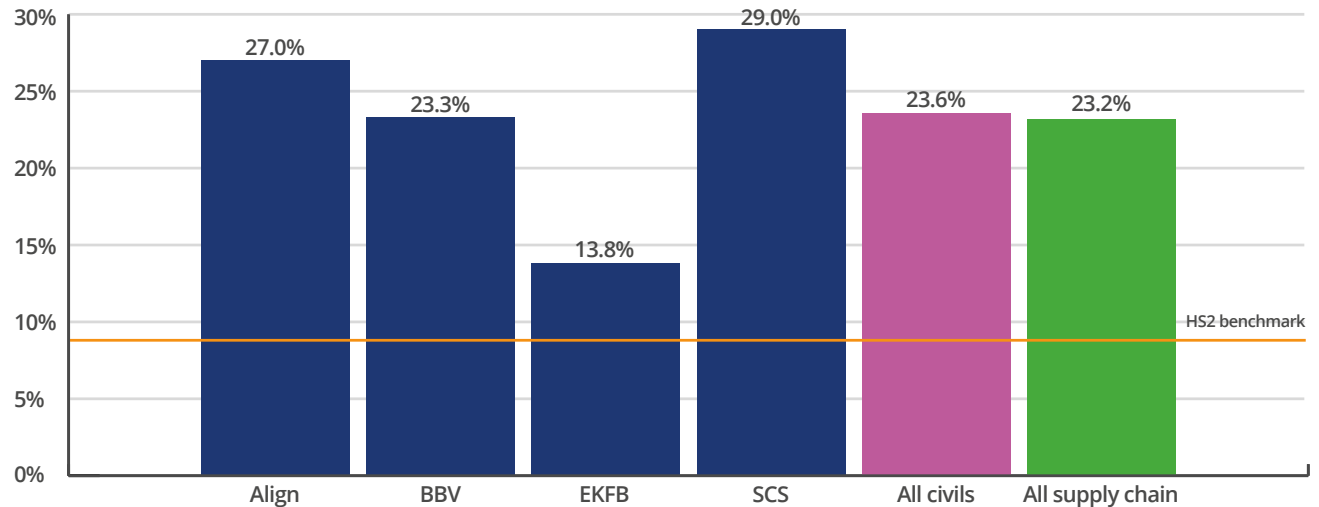
Main works civils contractors (MWCCs): Ethnicity

The MWCCs have continued to deliver higher ethnic diversity in their workforce than the HS2 benchmark of 9%, reporting collectively 23.6% overall. Ranging from Skanska Costain STRABAG (SCS Railways), our construction partner delivering the tunnels between West Ruislip and Euston, at 29%, to Eiffage Kier Ferroviaire BAM (EKFB), our construction partner delivering from the Chiltern tunnels to Long Itchington, at 13.8%, all of the MWCCs are demonstrating ethnically diverse workforces.

These diversity figures are for the Tier 1s and their subcontractors combined. When disaggregated, 30% of the Tier 1 main works civils and 21% of their subcontractors' workforce are from an ethnic minority background.

Even with this positive percentage, there are still challenges with disclosure with some of the workforce reporting "prefer not to say". As with disability in the section below, contractors are looking at ways to help support their workforce to improve disclosure.

Chart 2: MWCCs workforce diversity statistics – Ethnicity



23.6%

of MWCCs total workforce are from an ethnic minority background.

30%

of the Tier 1 main works civils workforce are from an ethnic minority background.

21%

of the main works civils subcontractor workforce are from an ethnic minority background.

The HS2 supply chain 2024–2025

Main works civils contractors (MWCCs): Disability

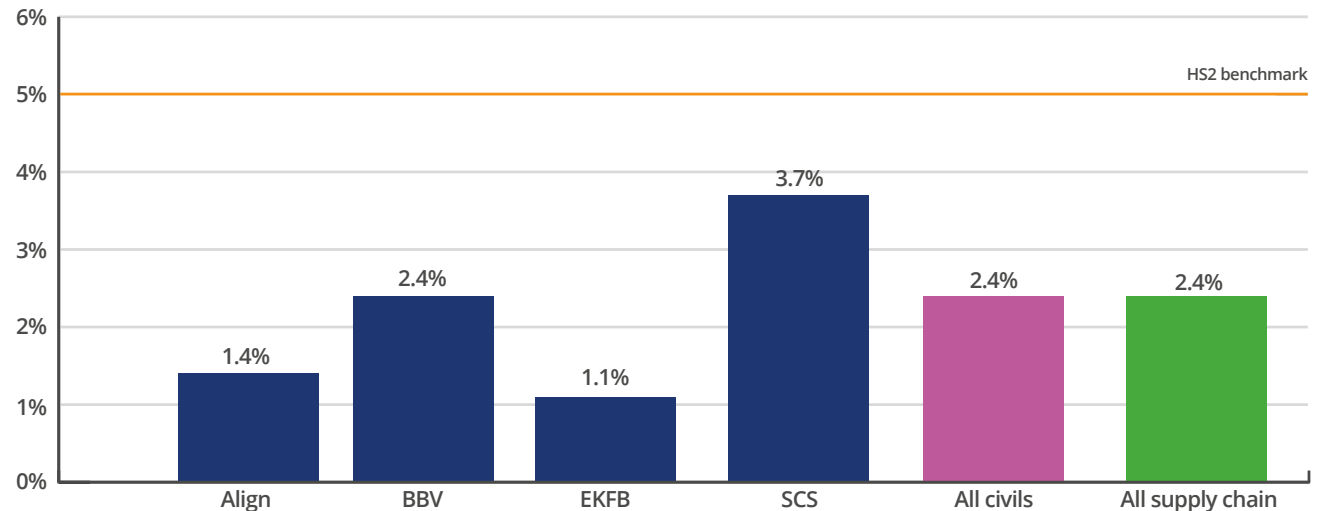
The MWCCs overall collectively reported that 2.4% of their workforce disclosed a disability, falling short of our benchmark of 5%.

A challenge that all of the contractors have is with disclosure. A high percentage of the workforce report that they prefer not to say whether they have a disability. Our MWCCs are looking at ways to help support their workforce to disclose better and receive appropriate support with interventions, including raising awareness of disabilities through training.

2.4%

of MWCCs total workforce
disclosed a disability.

Chart 3: MWCCs workforce diversity statistics – Disability



The HS2 supply chain 2024–2025

Case study

Changing careers with BBV

The first Covid-19 lockdown in 2020 left Nicola Devenport, a mobile hairdresser from Great Barr, Birmingham, unable to work. At 51, hairdressing was all that Nicola had known.

When the pandemic hit, Nicola was unable to continue running her business. She qualified for universal credit, but was desperate to work. Her Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) job coach contacted her about an HS2 training programme that could lead to a job.

She became one of the first people to train at the BBV Skills Academy, a partnership between our construction partner and South and City College Birmingham. They had just started delivering fast-track training programmes to help local people start new careers with us. The six-week programme included four weeks of theoretical training and two weeks of site-based training.

Despite almost 40 years in hairdressing, Nicola hasn't looked back. Her hard work has seen her promoted from environmental technician to environmental coordinator. She's now a valued member of the BBV team supporting construction in the West Midlands.

“

I got more excited as each day went on. When I passed the Construction Skills Certificate Scheme, and received my accreditation card, it meant I could start working on site and from that very first day, I absolutely loved it. I used to get home at night, and I'd be talking to my partner about health and safety and construction.”

Nicola Devenport

Environmental coordinator



Nicola Devenport.

The HS2 supply chain 2024–2025

Case study

Embedding inclusion into safety culture at SCS

SCS Railways fundamentally believe that an inclusive working environment is a safer one. Feeling included is an integral part of being able to speak up about concerns and feel psychologically safe. Recognising this, SCS brought together their EDI, health and safety and behavioural safety teams to lead an initiative connecting inclusion with the core project value of Love for Life.

This collaboration was designed to explore how inclusive practices contribute directly to the health, safety and wellbeing of the workforce. It aimed to shift the conversation from compliance to culture, asking not only whether people were following the rules, but whether they also felt respected, valued and heard in their day-to-day roles.

During National Inclusion Week 2024, SCS launched a project-wide campaign. Love for Life stand ups were held in operational areas, offices and sites, using the message that you cannot be safe if you do not feel safe to open dialogue with teams of all sizes and disciplines. The goal was to move beyond

definitions of inclusion and instead encourage colleagues to reflect on how inclusion looks and feels in practice.

Sessions focused on:

- exploring the link between psychological safety and physical safety;
- promoting awareness of how inclusion helps people speak up, challenge unsafe behaviours and support one another;
- encouraging everyone to take personal responsibility for creating a respectful and inclusive working culture;
- highlighting the importance of listening to diverse experiences in understanding what safety means for different people; and
- promoting participation in the safety climate tool survey by explaining its purpose and encouraging honest, anonymous feedback.

The initiative has had a measurable and lasting impact on safety conversations, participation in team briefings and discussions around safe behaviours. SCS have seen a cultural shift in safety with teams reporting a greater willingness to challenge unsafe or inappropriate behaviours and to support one another in raising concerns.

SCS are now working to embed lessons from this campaign into business as usual through a toolkit for site teams.

SCS will also continue to analyse data from the safety climate tool survey to monitor how perceptions of safety and inclusion evolve over time, using this to shape both strategic and local interventions.



The HS2 supply chain 2024–2025

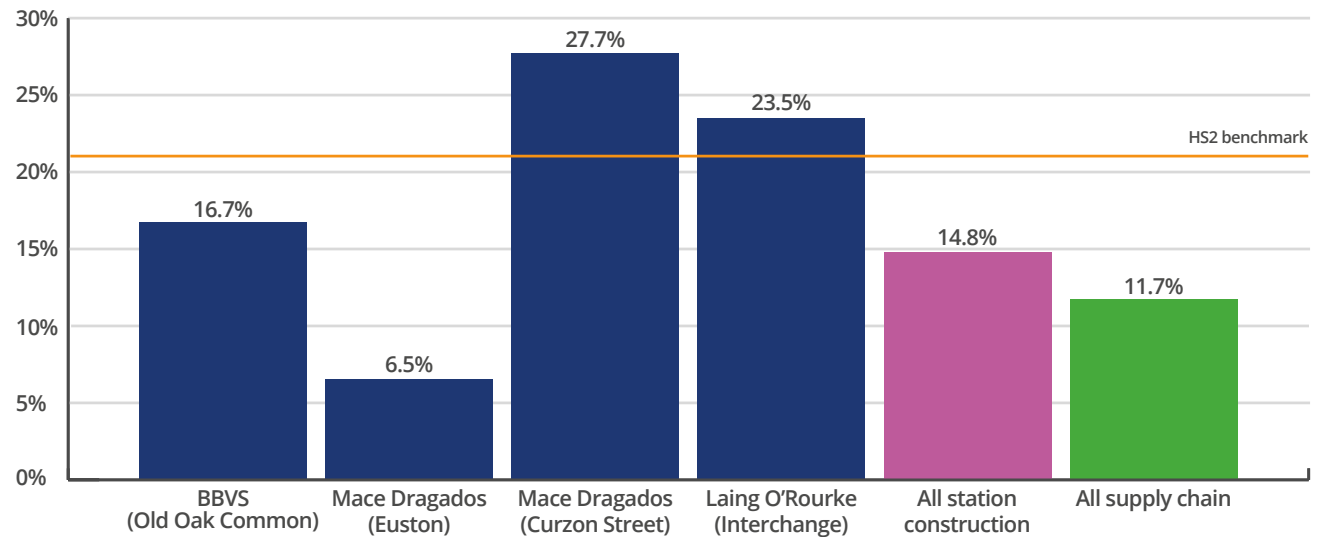
Station construction partners (SCPs)

Both Mace Dragados JV (Curzon Street) and Laing O'Rourke surpassed our benchmark of 21% with 27.7% and 23.5% respectively for their percentage of women in the workforce. Overall, SCPs have achieved 14.8% collectively.

Both Mace Dragados JV and Laing O'Rourke are in the early stages of construction and roles are predominantly office-based which tend to attract more female representation. This will be monitored as the construction progresses. Balfour Beatty VINCI SYSTRA (BBVS) is more advanced and into construction, with roles on that contract both office and site-based.

We are working with all of our SCPs and their supply chains to improve performance, particularly on recruitment and retention of more females in the workforce.

Chart 4: SCPs workforce diversity statistics – Women

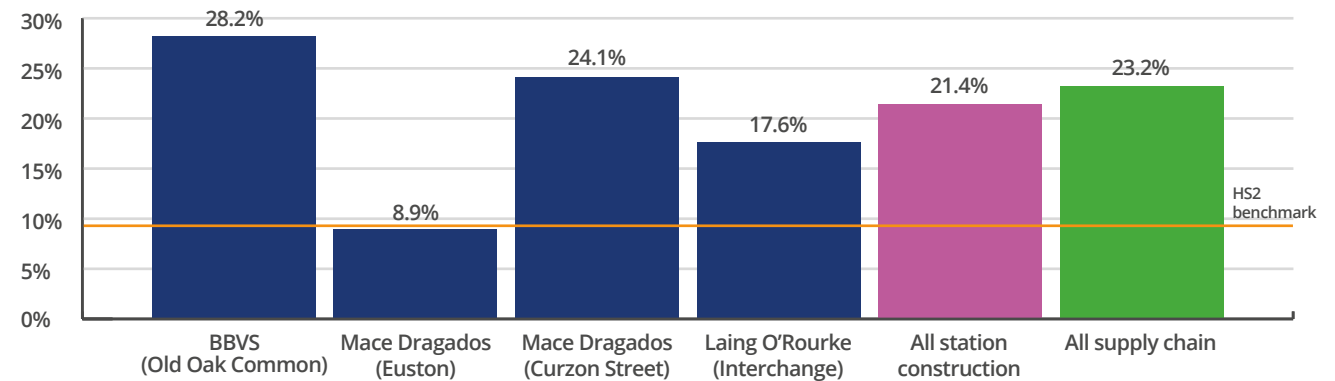


The HS2 supply chain 2024–2025

Ethnicity

All SCPs, with the exception of Mace Dragados (Euston), have exceeded our benchmarks of 9% for ethnicity in the workforce. Mace Dragados (Euston) fell marginally short at 8.9%. SCPs overall have achieved 21.4% collectively demonstrating an ethnically diverse workforce.

Chart 5: SCPs workforce diversity statistics – Ethnicity

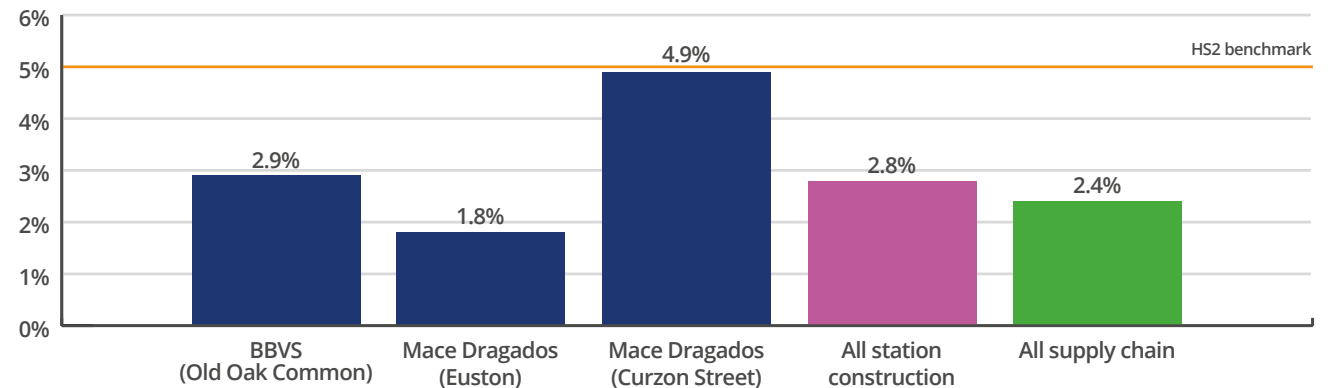


Disability

Collectively, the SCPs have achieved 2.8%, falling short of our benchmark of 5%.

As with the MWCCs above, disclosure of a disability is also a concern for SCPs and contractors are looking at ways to enhance support to their workforces to improve this.

Chart 6: SCPs workforce diversity statistics – Disability



The HS2 supply chain 2024–2025

Case study

BBVS Clear Assured Platinum Standard Accreditation

Our construction partner for Old Oak Common station in west London has been recognised for its outstanding commitments to diversity and inclusion.

BBVS received the Clear Assured Platinum Accreditation by the Clear Company.

The accreditation is awarded to companies that can demonstrate EDI best practice against a robust audit and evidence-based framework.

There are 450 organisations in the Clear Assured community, 280 of which have received formal assessment, with BBVS, HS2 Ltd and AtkinsRéalis making up three of four organisations to achieve Platinum Standard.

In particular, the project received praise for its approach to embedding a safe, respectful and inclusive culture through collaboration with its partners. Initiatives to advance inclusive leadership, social value and community outreach, the health and wellbeing of its workforce, especially mental health, were highlighted areas of success.

“

What is remarkable about this achievement as a relatively newly formed joint venture, is how a small team has managed to power through so much activity to achieve impact so quickly. They have shown tremendous commitment in getting the whole organisation behind the journey to become a platinum accredited employer.”

Kate Headley

CEO of the Clear Company

“

We have a firm commitment to embedding EDI principles across the programme. With our contractors and supply chain partners we are seeking to change the industry by challenging ourselves on ‘what good looks like’ to achieve better workplace environments which embrace best practice.”

Peter Gow

Project client for Old Oak Common station at HS2 Ltd



The HS2 supply chain 2024–2025

Case study

Men's health awareness at Mace Dragados (Euston)

Mace Dragados launched a testing campaign for prostate cancer as a commitment to being Safe at Heart. A Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) test involves a small sample of blood being taken to check the amount of PSA. It can help pick up prostate cancer before any symptoms show and is an alert to a fast-growing cancer at an early stage.

Their health, safety and wellbeing team arranged for a medical practitioner to come to site. Initially the plan was to carry out one session. The first testing day was a huge success with 100% attendance from those who signed up. Mace Dragados decided

to provide three more testing days – resulting in 120 men tested, with 100% attendance. An emphasis was put on sections of the workforce at an increased risk of prostate cancer because of age or race.

In support of this campaign, Mace Dragados displayed prostate cancer awareness posters and information across the site and worked closely with the onsite nurse to raise and discuss prostate cancer checks with the workforce.



Matt Dicks, Optima Health, and Paul Leighton, project director at Mace Dragados.

The HS2 supply chain 2024–2025

Case study

Fortel Group's suicide awareness campaign in Punjabi

Fortel Group, a labour supplier working with BBV in the West Midlands, saw a critical need to address mental health awareness, particularly suicide prevention, within the construction sector. This need was amplified by the unique challenges faced by Punjabi-speaking workers, including cultural stigmas, language barriers, and a reluctance to discuss mental health openly.

To bridge this gap, they developed a bespoke suicide awareness campaign in Punjabi. The campaign began with tailored resources and communication strategies and suicide prevention materials were easily accessible.

Workshops and face-to-face sessions were provided in a safe, supportive environment where workers could openly discuss mental health challenges and suicide awareness. Sessions prioritised education, emphasising empathy and practical steps for support.

Messages were culturally sensitive, acknowledging and addressing long-standing taboos within Punjabi communities. The initiative saw outstanding engagement. Workers expressed gratitude for finally having conversations they previously avoided. By addressing this vital yet overlooked issue, the campaign not only increased awareness but also empowered individuals to recognise warning signs and seek help when needed.

The initiative has become an example of best practice in promoting mental health inclusivity. Fortel Group's work demonstrates that language and cultural adaptation are essential in reaching underrepresented groups and can significantly improve outcomes. They won the Inclusion Legacy Award at our 2025 Inspiration Awards.



Rebecca Young, head of skills and inclusion (supply chain) at HS2 Ltd, and Hardeep Sanghera, health and safety manager at Fortel Group.

The HS2 supply chain 2024–2025

Case study

WSP Inclusive Employer of the Year 2024

Our design and planning consultant, WSP, was named Inclusive Employer of the Year at the 2024 Consultancy and Engineering (ACE) Awards. This recognised its commitment to promoting a culture and environment where inclusion and belonging are expected and valued.

WSP has supported our journey since 2012, including on railway systems and specialist land services. They also provide design services for BBVS at Old Oak Common station and Mace Dragados JV at Curzon Street station.

The ACE awards recognise outstanding achievements from the built environment. In receiving this award, WSP demonstrated how its inclusion and diversity strategy 2022 – 2024 is embedded throughout its culture, promoting change and inclusion. In 2024, WSP refreshed their recruitment processes. Their efforts have yielded positive results, leading to above-sector-average representation for women, ethnic minorities, disabled individuals, and LGBTQ+ employees, with representation also increasing in leadership roles.

WSP actively listens and responds to their employees to better understand their culture and identify areas for development. The WSP Listens survey, which measures trust and belonging, was completed by 80% of employees and scored it in the top quartile of industry benchmarks. Key EDI drivers demonstrate colleagues' appreciation of WSP's inclusive workforce and feeling of belonging.

Employee resource groups also play a key role in policy refinement, ensuring inclusivity for all. Changes based on employee feedback include menopause benefits, flexible bank holiday swaps, and accelerated pay distribution.



The HS2 supply chain 2024–2025

HS2 and inclusive design

We are committed to a design and service that is inclusive: one that eliminates barriers to participation for all users – passengers, staff and visitors. One that people feel safe using and are able to use with ease, independence and dignity. Doing this will ensure that the project delivers maximum benefits for all and the greatest value possible.

Our approach means our stations, depots and trains will be designed around the people using them. This acknowledges and recognises user diversity and seeks a design which offers an equitable experience. Inclusive design is an integral part of the process at all stages of the project.

To support this, we have an ongoing engagement with the Built Environment Accessibility Panel (BEAP). During 2024/2025, BEAP reviews have included our emerging furniture designs which include station seating and customer information points and the accessibility of our trains.

BEAP has also been part of the detailed design of Curzon Street station. Passenger experience has been key to the design process for the new station, which incorporates a number of improvements. These include additional cycle parking, better accessibility at pedestrian entrances and a more unified internal layout of the eastern concourse which allows passengers to change platforms without leaving the ticketed area, enhancing the customer experience.

Consultation with BEAP will continue during detailed design development. BEAP has given feedback on the integration of travel routes in the urban realm, parking and drop-off facilities, customer facilities including toilets and providing colour contrast to fixtures and fittings for people who are partially sighted.

“

Consultation with BEAP is an important part of the design process and how we deliver on our strategic goal to set new standards for customer experience. As part of the overall design management strategy, consultation and engagement with BEAP helps HS2 Ltd to make the right design choices and deliver on the design vision for the project. The feedback from BEAP has been invaluable and continues to inform the designs of the stations and operational considerations.”

Neil Smith

Inclusive design lead at HS2 Ltd

The HS2 supply chain 2024–2025

Case study

User group testing for HS2's new high-speed trains

The public is at the heart of refining the designs for the interior of our new trains. The process was taken forward by West Coast Partnership Development (WCPD), HS2 Ltd and its manufacturing partner, joint venture Hitachi-Alstom High Speed (HAH-S).

A range of customer groups, including disabled people, cyclists and young families, were invited to experience life-sized wooden mock-ups of the trains at the HAH-S facility in Derby, helping engineers understand the levels of ease, accessibility and comfort. This included reviewing boarding and

alighting options, the positioning of grab rails to aid mobility and support and testing the layout of toilets, particularly for wheelchair users. Life-sized mock-ups were also made of other sections of the train such as the café and child buggy storage.

Following feedback, designers have repositioned grab handles near the doors, created a step-free solution at stations for passengers and adjusted wheelchair spaces to give a much better customer experience.

This forms part of a refinement process, supported by market research, that enables the final designs

to be adjusted to meet the needs of passengers and staff. Although similar processes have previously been used in the development of rolling stock, this is believed to be the most extensive user development exercise ever undertaken for a new train fleet built in the UK.

Twenty groups provided feedback as part of a process organised by WCPD, which represent the train's future operator. They also used insights from their customer community – a focus group of 5,000 people who have a mix of travelling needs.



Alstom prototype testing visit.

“We’re designing HS2 to provide a step-change in the passenger experience so that it’s accessible to everyone – and especially to people who don’t currently think train travel is for them or don’t consider it in the first place.”

James Dawson

Senior rolling stock engineer at HS2 Ltd

Part Three

Communities



Communities

We aspire to respect the diverse people and communities we affect as we build the new railway. We know that planning and building the railway disrupts the lives of local people and we always try to reduce disruption as much as possible. This section explains how we engage with communities along the HS2 route and share the opportunities the project brings, from education programmes, to jobs, skills and apprenticeships.

Our community engagement strategy, *Respecting people, Respecting places*, acknowledges the effect that the project has on people's lives as construction increases between the West Midlands and London. The strategy includes our community commitments which reflect the issues most important to the people whose lives we disrupt.

You can view the strategy at:
gov.uk/government/publications/hs2-ltds-community-engagement-strategy

Case study

Specialist support services

We are serious about our responsibilities and do our best to design and build HS2 in ways that reduce the impact of our construction work.

However, we recognise that some residents require additional support to understand complex issues. Some people also need support to articulate the impact the project is having on them and their health. We have a range of specialist support services for vulnerable people or those who require additional support. This includes an independent advocacy service.

The advocacy service provides independent support to people whose personal circumstances, disability, or long-term medical conditions impact on their ability to self-advocate. The service provides advice, signposting, and additional assistance in understanding our documentation and completing paperwork. As of March 2025, 119 people had received support from the advocacy service.

We also continue to provide tailored solutions to individual members of the public who may have specific needs and where the range of support we already have in place does not provide them with adequate protection from our construction works. We set up a panel, which includes independent and expert members, to oversee and manage the way these cases are assessed.

The panel considers the individual circumstances of the case and seeks to find alternative solutions and reasonable adjustments. To date, we have supported 312 households with additional and bespoke assistance, including 81 in the 2024/2025 financial year. These include temporary rehousing, additional noise insulation and mobility support.

Communities

Community Environment and Business and Local Economy Funds

The £40 million HS2 Community Environment Fund (CEF) and Business and Local Economy Fund (BLEF) opened in 2017. This funding is available to local communities and businesses that are demonstrably

disrupted by the construction of Britain's new high-speed railway between the West Midlands and London. Community charity Groundwork UK independently administer the funds. To date, £18.61 million has been awarded to 340 projects.



Attendees at Buildforce project day.

Case study

Lindengate (CEF)

Lindengate is a registered charity in Wendover, Buckinghamshire. In 2013, Lindengate set out to create a space that provides horticultural therapy to support better mental health and wellbeing for local residents. They received a CEF award of £72,800 to create a community and educational hub for people to learn about nature, wildlife, conservation and horticulture.

The hub is used by a combination of service users, volunteers and members of the public, with an emphasis on learning and experiencing the positive impact of being immersed in nature. A new entrance is being developed to provide improved access to the hub and nature reserve and will include planting, landscaping and pathways.

Communities

Case study

Home-Start Hillingdon (CEF)

Home-Start Hillingdon, Greater London, supports local families in need. The charity received a CEF award of £75,000 to provide a combination of direct family support and bespoke packages to improve the quality of life of families living in communities disrupted by HS2 construction.

The project supports relationships between families and referral services, oversees volunteer recruitment and delivers tailored and direct in-home assistance to struggling families.

Case study

ShowerBox (CEF)

ShowerBox is based in Camden, Greater London. The charity received a CEF award of £94,494 to provide a mobile shower service for those facing homelessness. This is based at St Giles-in-the-Fields Church in Camden every Saturday and enables guests to have hot showers.

By providing a place to wash and groom, ShowerBox offers both a physical and a mental boost to its guests and reduces stigma from the public and the spread of preventable, debilitating diseases. Guests are also provided with fresh underwear, period products, toiletries, hot drinks and snacks. They also benefit from meeting with familiar faces and engaging with other organisations, which can serve as a bridge to accessing other services.

Case study

Watford FC Community Sport and Education Trust (CEF)

Watford FC's Community Sport and Education Trust in Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire, received £35,633 for its project, Man On! This provides weekly sessions at the William Penn Leisure Centre for men who have been diagnosed with a mild to moderate mental health issue.

The sessions offer the opportunity to join physical activities, along with time for a conversation café, providing a platform to share experiences and advice and build support networks.

Communities

Skills and employment initiatives

Case study

Operator Skills Hub Training Skills Bootcamps

Jobseekers living near the HS2 route are benefitting from new training opportunities thanks to funding secured by one of our key subcontractors. More than 1,480 people have successfully gained qualifications at three dedicated plant training centres at Iver (Buckinghamshire), Brackley (West Northamptonshire), and Sutton Coldfield (West Midlands), run by Flannery Plant Hire in collaboration with Balfour Beatty and our main works contractors.

With funding from the Department for Education, the hubs are designed to upskill local people ready for jobs with us and other Flannery projects, in as little as two weeks.

The hubs offer a broad range of training programmes, including its two-week skills bootcamp in plant operations, which is free to local residents over the age of 19.

The programme provides all the training and accreditation needed to start work as a plant operator – controlling machines such as earth movers and dumper trucks that are vital to any construction site. The initiative is designed to support those most in need, or who are looking

for a career change, to develop new skills and secure employment in record time.

More recently, a temporary training facility was established on Hampstead Road, in the London Borough of Camden, where the new railway will be built. This initiative is a collaboration between Flannery Plant Hire, HS2 Ltd and its construction partner SCS Railways, Camden Council, and The Euston Partnership.

Among the people to complete the skills bootcamp successfully is Camden resident Fatima, who said:

“I thoroughly enjoyed the two-week boot camp with Flannery. Not only did I learn how to operate two plant machines, it felt great to be on the HS2 site. I am overwhelmed to have accomplished my ticket for the roller and dumper. Doing the course has enhanced my confidence and knowledge for plant operations. Thank you all for changing my life.”



Kyle Clement (Flannery trainer) with trainees Mohammed Miah, Aaron Gill and Beatrice Adegbola.

Communities

Skills and employment initiatives

Case study

BBV Skills Academy

Based within South & City College's Bordesley Green campus in Birmingham, the BBV Skills Academy is a partnership venture between the college and our construction partner for the region.

The academy was launched in 2021 to upskill unemployed local people, and those looking for a career change, with the entry level skills they need to secure a broad range of jobs on HS2.

Since the launch, BBV has established further community access and training spokes in partnership with City of Wolverhampton College/ National Infrastructure Solutions, Solihull College/ RMF, Birmingham Metropolitan College and QTT (a private training provider based in Lichfield).

Through 44 customised pre-employment training programmes, 502 local unemployed residents have accessed programmes leading to both site and

office-based roles across our sites. Roles include general operatives, environmental technicians, document control trainees, trainee materials testing technicians, instrumentation and monitoring technicians, as well as site-based apprenticeships for tunnelling, steel fixers and formworkers.

In total, 310 local residents have completed programmes, gaining industry-specific accredited tickets and 117 have undertaken a 10-day paid work trial. From this 99 people have converted to job starts across our project, helping us plug the skills gap.



BBV Skills Academy logo.

Communities

Skills and employment initiatives

Case study

HS2's 1,500th apprentice

Construction of the new super-hub station in Old Oak Common, west London, moved into a new phase as workers completed excavation of the huge underground box structure where high-speed trains will stop.

This has taken three years, after permanent construction to form the walls of the box began in June 2021. The vast underground box has a 1.12 mile fibre-reinforced concrete diaphragm wall around it and 1.3 million tonnes of London Clay has been removed from inside – enough to fill over 300 Olympic-sized swimming pools.

Our station construction partner, BBVS, working with their specialist structures contractor, Expanded, completed the dig with our 1,500th apprentice Miguel Jardim removing the last of the London Clay.

Miguel, 19, is a civil engineering apprentice from Surrey Quays, south east London.

“

It is quite an honour to be part of celebrating such a massive excavation milestone – the opportunity came along very unexpectedly!

The best thing about my job here at Old Oak Common is all the experience I'm gaining from going out onsite daily, seeing progress coming along. I would 100% encourage others to start working on HS2, as it's a massive project where you get to work with lots of people with similar goals. There is also a great network of people that you can learn from and connect with.”

Miguel Jardim

Civil engineering apprentice



Miguel Jardim.

Communities

Skills and employment initiatives

Case study

HS2 Recruitment Hubs

The DWP and the National Careers Service joined forces with us to invest in new dedicated recruitment hubs, bringing HS2 opportunities closer to communities.

The hubs advertise new jobs and training vacancies and provide prospective candidates with the opportunity to meet face-to-face with recruiters.

Local people like Cimara Gregory are starting to reap the benefits of this collaborative approach.

Cimara, 58, was unemployed for more than five years. With the support of Washwood Heath Jobcentre and the HS2 Recruitment Hub, she was persuaded to explore construction roles, something she had never considered before.

Cimara admits she was hesitant at first, due to misconceptions about construction being a male-dominated sector, especially as an older person re-entering the workforce. However, after being unemployed for so long, decided it was worth considering. She was especially interested when she realised there were administration roles available, which would allow her to use her transferable skills. She is now working in an administration role on the project.

“

There are still misconceptions about construction being a male-dominated sector, so I was hesitant at first, especially as an older person re-entering the workforce, but I needn't have worried.

My skills were matched to an administration role, and I've been supported throughout. Now I'm eager to explore how the project can help me to progress my career.”

Cimara Gregory

Tunnels administrator



Cimara Gregory.

Communities

Skills and employment initiatives

Case study

Youth Development Through Social Action

As part of our commitment to supporting social mobility and fostering inclusive communities, we partnered with Envision to help a cohort of year 9 students from less advantaged backgrounds in inner-city Birmingham. Over three months, the programme focused on helping students develop essential skills through structured mentoring and youth-led social action.

Twelve students produced an in-school social action project aimed at creating positive change within their school community. Supported by nine HS2 Ltd colleagues serving as dedicated mentors, the students chose to explore the theme of cultural awareness. Their project culminated in a vibrant display celebrating the diversity of their school, encouraging reflection on representation, identity, and inclusion. This aligned closely with our values of Respect, Integrity, Leadership, and Safety.

Throughout the programme, students demonstrated resilience, adaptability, and strong collaboration. The mentoring support was instrumental in

enhancing their confidence, teamwork and public speaking skills. One student notably stepped outside his comfort zone by delivering the solo opening presentation at the final showcase – an inspiring moment that exemplified the personal growth achieved through the programme.

The initiative concluded with the Envision Final, where students presented their project to a panel of judges and an audience of over 100 people. Feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive, with one student commenting that visiting our offices made her “feel like a businesswoman in a film” – a testament to the aspirational impact of the experience.

This partnership highlights the value of corporate involvement in community-based initiatives. By offering mentorship and access to professional settings, we have helped empower young people with the skills, confidence, and experience to thrive – reinforcing our commitment to leaving a positive and impactful legacy.



Envision Birmingham Mentoring Programme.

HS2

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