Delivery Partners for the Hinkley Supply Chain Team

June 2023

It has yet again been a busy couple of months for the project since the last e-newsletter, both on dry land, as well as on and under the Bristol Channel!

Work has begun connecting the heads to the tunnels which will be used to supply cooling water to the power station, while it is also all-go on the installation and connection of the station's electrical circuits.

One of the highlights, though, was the publication of the annual socio-economic report highlights the huge benefits the project is having for local people, businesses and the economy across Somerset and beyond.

You can find more details and a link to the full report in this newsletter, but the headline figures are incredible:

- Spending in South West has topped £5.3 billion with 1,300 companies
- Investment in local infrastructure and community support has reached £139 million
- Grants to fund local projects has hit £14.5 million
- 1,130 apprentices have been trained, so far

And there are still plenty more contracts for local businesses to bid for – but in order to be considered for work on the project, businesses must be registered on the supply chain portal with their most up-to-date information.

So, if you have not visited the website recently, please log-in to the portal to ensure your registration details are correct. You can find the portal and the Hinkley Supply Chain's website here.

Scott Jenkins, Hinkley Supply Chain Project Lead
Somerset Chamber of Commerce

Project Update

While work continues apace on the Hinkley Point C site itself, a lot of progress is also being made in the Bristol Channel!

Two huge two jack-up barges, Neptune and Sea Challenger, are working in the channel to connect the six concrete heads on the seabed to the tunnels underneath, installing casings and liners through each head to create vertical shafts more than 20m deep.

This is what will eventually allow seawater to pass through into the power station. The first step will see the casings hammered into the seabed in each of the six head locations. Then, mining operations will take place to create a socket for the liners to be positioned into. The liners have been specially designed and fabricated in Scotland and each one weighs more than 270 tonnes (more details below).

Back on dry land, the first of a set of 10kV switchboards that will help distribute electricity across the power station during commissioning and operation has been installed in the electrical building.

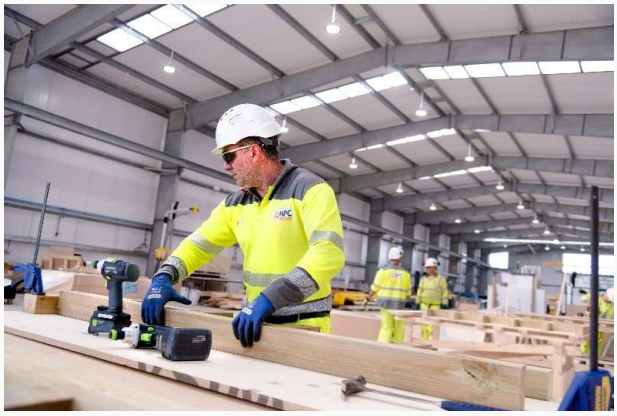
The 10kV switchboards distribute electrical power to essential equipment such as the reactor cooling pumps, as well as to lower voltage equipment. Their installation and eventual energisation will enable the commissioning of the rest of the plant's electrical infrastructure.

The first 10kV switchboard is made up of 13 individual cubicles that create a single 2.4 m high panel that weighs more than 13 tonnes.

And on the nuclear island, the first of a series of pumps was successfully installed inside one of the Unit 1 safeguard buildings. Weighing 6.5 tonnes, the pump will deliver water to cool the supply from the main pump to the sprinkler safety system located on the underside of the dome.

Hinkley Point C announces 30,000 new training places

Hinkley Point C has announced 30,000 new training places between now and the power station's completion, helping local people to join the project as its hits peak construction.



Trainees will be able to upgrade their skills and earning potential by joining the work to fit miles of pipes, cables, equipment, and control systems. The opportunities have been made possible by Hinkley Point C's £24 million investment into education, skills, and employment, including at three new Centres for Excellence in welding, electrical and mechanical skills.

Courses will be available in in-demand skills such as electrical work, welding, steelwork, and pipe installation. The training centres will become part of Hinkley Point C's legacy, available for local and national businesses to enrol their own employees, which will help to strengthen the region's industrial capability.

The figure was released in Hinkley Point C's 2023 Socio-Economic Impact Report, which shows that:

- Spending in South-West has topped £5.3 billion with 1,300 companies
- Investment in local infrastructure and community support has reached £139 million
- Grants to fund local projects has hit £14.5 million
- 1,130 apprentices have been trained, so far

As well as apprenticeships, the project has also expanded its T Level scheme for those at the very beginning of their careers and is offering a supported traineeship programme for those with learning difficulties.

Hinkley Point C's Managing Director, Stuart Crooks, said: "Nuclear power is not just essential for the country, it also delivers significant benefits for the communities and region that host it. We have worked hard with local colleges and businesses to make sure that Hinkley Point C increases prosperity and productivity in Somerset and the South West – giving as many people as possible the chance to increase their skills and earning potential."

Emma Rawlings, Chief Executive of Somerset Chamber of Commerce, which runs he Hinkley Supply Chain in partnership with EDF, said: "Hinkley Point C is continuing to drive the agenda for investment in both Somerset and the wider South West region.

"Somerset Chamber of Commerce is proud to be playing its part, working in partnership with Hinkley Point C to give local people and regional businesses the best opportunity to win contracts and benefit from the legacy of the project. Once Hinkley Point C is completed, businesses in the South West will be more than ready to meet the demands of the future net zero economy."

Andy Berry, Principal and Chief Executive of Bridgwater & Taunton College, said: “Bridgwater & Taunton College is proud of the ongoing partnership with Hinkley Point C, and we continue to collaborate with them to help provide the skills required for the project and the local area.

“Working together, we have played a key role in establishing three centres of excellence in Welding, Electrical, and Mechanical, which are critical assets for ensuring the future of new nuclear in the UK.”

Paula Hewitt, formerly Deputy Chief Executive of Somerset County Council, said: “Hinkley Point C is supporting our vision for Somerset to be the centre of the globally significant clean growth region in the South West of England.

“Clean growth means recognising our climate emergency and addressing this through clean energy generation, clean transport, decarbonisation of industry, and attracting business opportunities which help to reduce carbon emissions, which benefit from our established expertise, innovation, and infrastructure.” The full socio-economic report 2023 can be found here.

Final phase of Hinkley Point C’s offshore work begins

Two huge two jack-up barges, Neptune and Sea Challenger, have arrived in the Bristol Channel to install vital components for Hinkley Point C’s cooling water system.

Six vertical shafts will be installed at a depth of more than 20-metres, marking the next stage in connecting six miles of tunnels with the seabed.

Once installed, miners will dig a horizontal connection between the bottom of the shaft and the tunnel. This is the first part of linking the intake and outfall heads with the tunnels. These 5,000-tonne structures were lowered onto the seabed last summer and will circulate water to the two nuclear reactors.

Often used to build offshore wind farms, the platforms’ cranes have a combined lifting capacity of 1,500 tonnes. At 132m, Sea Challenger is longer than a football pitch, and Neptune is 60m long.

Each vessel uses its four legs to elevate itself above sea level – so it can operate safely without being impacted by waves and currents.

Jonathan Smith, Area Delivery Director, said: “This is one of the final stages of our offshore operations, which will see teams from EDF, Balfour Beatty and New Wave Solutions working together to deliver yet another incredible feat of engineering. The cooling water system is critical to the power station – which will help Britain fight climate change and achieve stronger energy security.”

Roger Frost, Balfour Beatty Project Director, said: “The arrival of Neptune and Sea Challenger marks another significant step forward in the successful delivery of the first new nuclear power station in the UK for over 20 years.

“We now look forward to utilising our unique capability and unrivalled expertise to continue with the linking up of the six miles of tunnels which are buried below the Bristol Channel – this is another important chapter in the offshore works required for Hinkley Point C’s critical water-cooling system.”