



# Gravity

Smart Campus

**GRAVITY BUSINESS  
CHARTER**

Fast-track to the future, naturally

[thisisgravity.co.uk](http://thisisgravity.co.uk)

TA7 8AD

# Gravity Business Charter

## 1. Introduction

Gravity has significant ambitions to host a new era of companies that set a new standard for clean and inclusive growth, drawing in new investment, new supply chain and business opportunities, as part of a transformational agenda to sustain and grow economic activity and jobs into the future.

The Gravity Business Charter is a commitment by Gravity and its partners along with future occupiers of the UK's premier smart campus to take action within their own organisations and sectors to contribute to clean and inclusive growth. The purpose of the Charter is to act as a guide for Gravity, its partners, and future occupiers in terms of engagement with their supply chains and local business, setting expectations for that engagement and ensuring alignment with the key strategies and policies Gravity has in place in order to deliver a truly unique and trail-blazing clean and inclusive smart campus.

To challenge us and our team, we have created our Clean and Inclusive Growth Strategy, establishing 50 priorities as our approach to working to achieve a positive contribution towards meeting the UN Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDG's).

***Our Mission is to create decent work and inclusive economic growth, in conjunction with climate action, whilst contributing to the UN SDG's.***

***Our journey is to nurture low carbon innovation, processes, and systems, to enable our future occupiers and communities to share our aspirations.***

Working collaboratively with Sedgemoor District Council, a pro-business Council, with an enviable track record of economic development success, the agreement is to shape a business-led, market-led planning and implementation strategy through a process called a Local Development Order, to create a simplified planning regime for the Gravity Enterprise Zone, securing business rates to be retained and recycled locally to enable the delivery of the Gravity enterprise zone and facilitate sustained economic growth and restructuring, as well as the acceleration of environmental outcomes through a locality investment plan, creating a virtuous cycle of investment and clean growth.

A key outcome sought from Gravity is to facilitate economic transformation, attract international inward investment and attract new sectors and businesses to the Southwest, through creating greater certainty for investors, leveraging in finance, driving up economic confidence, creating internationally competitive conditions for investment and growth.

The Hinkley Point C (HPC) project has created important foundations for inclusive local growth by inspiring young people, and creating additional training facilities, employment, and business opportunities. Whilst many roles and business opportunities are relatively temporary, we can now look ahead to scope how we can ensure a legacy beyond HPC construction and sustain employment in sectors fit for the future.

This Charter builds on and responds proactively to the Councils local labour agreement which seeks to encourage the use of local businesses in construction and operation and draws out a specific dedicated approach within a transformational, regional context.

The Gravity Business Charter establishes our commitment to business engagement and collaboration through planning, construction and implementation of the Gravity smart

campus and community. Gravity will be a place where companies, occupiers and their supply chains are encouraged to make a difference socially, economically, and environmentally.

This is Gravity Ltd have already agreed a Local Labour Agreement with Sedgemoor District Council in respect of the current consent for the Huntspill Energy Park, which will ensure Employment and Skills Plans are in place across construction and operation of Gravity, in the best interests of the local community. The agreement also encourages the use of local businesses. This will take effect for any first movers / early occupiers, and this has evolved into a new Skills Charter and a new Business Charter as an integral part of the new Local Development Order process.

The development of the Business Charter provides a greater clarity and transparency and is a key step in ensuring the site delivers on its Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance objectives and partners and occupiers are clear on the expectations and commitments which being part of the Gravity community entails. The Business Charter sits below the Clean and Inclusive Growth Strategy and alongside the Skills Charter in order to guide Gravity, its partners and future occupiers in their responsibilities for engagement with supply chains, local businesses and stakeholders.

## 2. Context

Gravity is a UK destination for inward investment, located in the heart of the South West, in Sedgemoor District, aligned to deliver the Governments Industrial Strategy, levelling up and building back better.

Gravity is committed to delivering a 616-acre Enterprise Zone as a smart campus and community to attract higher value occupiers and create new opportunities for local residents and business as well as addressing national Grand Challenges relating to Clean Growth.

Gravity establishes the foundations for accelerating and transforming growth whilst simultaneously cutting greenhouse gas emissions, creating good jobs, low carbon homes and realising positive social outcomes for local communities. Gravity will create a low carbon campus generating up to 7500 green collar jobs, providing both a strategic economic stimulus to drive economic renewal, shaping and connecting to a green supply chain across the UK. Home to international business, supply chains, academia, training facilities, support services, start-ups and SMEs, Gravity will be a home for Clean Growth and green industries, creating the space to innovate and create green solutions from energy solutions to smart homes and new smart mobility choices.

Gravity will become the engine room of the Heart of the Southwest Local Enterprise Local Industrial Strategy and Build Back Better plan, working closely with the Western Gateway and wider Bristol City Region, to deliver transformational investment opportunities, unlocking connectivity through infrastructure, and bringing new higher value employment and skills opportunities to the South West.

Offering excellent connectivity, Gravity is well related to the strategic motorway network, Bristol port through rail restoration, Bristol airport, and within a Western Gateway innovation cluster. This hosts academic research and development linked to a vibrant ecosystem of technology, cyber, engineering expertise underpinning advanced manufacturing. Together with an exceptional quality of life and 'green' culture, Gravity and the wider region can offer a competitive international destination to host a new era of investment and business opportunities to support both existing and new business in the heart of the South West.

### 3. The Charter

#### A Clean and Inclusive Growth Mission

In the UK, Government has committed to 'net zero carbon' by 2050. This requires a seismic shift in thinking and action to respond. Creating a route to delivering clean and inclusive growth is the greatest industrial opportunity in our history. At Gravity, our strategy is to seize this opportunity to create a smart campus and integrated community that delivers the 4<sup>th</sup> Industrial Revolution, providing an exemplar in the UK and a beacon for wayfinding on this Clean Growth Journey. This will require those organisations joining and investing in the Gravity community to share this vision and commit to working towards a shared set of objectives and values.

#### The Gravity 50

Looking across the Gravity 50, many of the priorities are relevant to business and sit outside of the traditional planning approach, however form part of a wider commitment to promote and facilitate the economic development of the locality in conjunction with the private sector, local councils, local enterprise partnerships, and business organisations.

The Charter draws out a few to create focus for this Charter, as follows:

1. Champion the South West
  - through marketing and enquiry management.
2. Promotion of Bristol port as a global trade hub in the West of England
  - through enquiry handling and operational planning and integration to meet customer needs.
3. Establishing a digital innovation alliance across the M5 growth corridor
  - via the 5G Create project on logistics.
4. Host test beds and green finance initiatives to develop green solutions
  - via 5G test bed project and linking this culture into management strategies within the LDO, seeking new collaborations with potential partners, and following up on opportunities that arise.
5. Incubating innovation, start-ups, enabling new forms of business, energy, and transport technologies
  - by making provision within the LDO for flexible business space to accommodate and working with partners to ensure there is a legacy beyond HPC i.e., potential re-purposing of the Somerset Energy Innovation Centre to support new businesses and sectors for example in advanced engineering and automotive.
  - By working with academic partners at Bridgwater and Taunton College, Bristol University and University of the West of England across the wider region on research and development and business startup and growth

## **Environmental and Social Governance (ESG)**

Gravity has crafted an ESG policy to set out our corporate commitments and guide the business and its activities as a whole.

We have evaluated the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and have identified 12 that are directly relevant to Gravity and have organised these into 5 key themes:

- Wellbeing and Inclusivity
- Clean Energy
- Natural Resources
- Clean Transport
- Digital Revolution

In all of our early discussions with investors and partners, and indeed Government, the South West has not been clear as a destination for international inward investment and economic transformation. With strong competition from the Northern Powerhouse, Midlands Engine, Oxford - Milton Keynes - Cambridge Arc, and calls for investment as part of a strategic response to the 'levelling up' agenda and positive responses to stimulate a green economic recovery, Gravity is clear in that the South West can play an important role in the UK. Climate Change, Covid-19 and Brexit are individual challenges and represent a cumulative threat as well as opens up opportunities that business can and must respond to.

## Business Engagement

We have formed a 'business leaders' group to help strengthen communications, champion the South West and our collective potential to kick start a green economic revival. This has resulted in a narrative integrated into our web site to establish a shared position to inform enquiry management and response. This work will continue to evolve through business networking.



## **Supply Chain Quality**

Gravity would like to stimulate 'a community of interest' around Clean Growth, working with those who wish to transition to a net zero carbon model of operation, or indeed help others to transition.

The primary focus for Gravity and its supply chain will be quality, alignment with the clean and inclusive growth objectives, and of course campus and community safety.

ESG of businesses will be a key consideration, alongside the location of the business and the workforce. Gravity will encourage partners and occupiers to work to identify appropriate supply chain partners in the immediate locality, working through steps on the basis of a 'local first' approach: Sedgemoor, Somerset, South West, UK, International.

Organisations within our supply chain with over 50 employees, and all construction suppliers will be asked to have or have plans in place to develop the following quality management systems:

- ISO 9001
- ISO 14001
- BS QHSA 18001

In addition, all organisations within our supply chain will be required to have an environmental policy (or equivalent).

For organisation with over 50 employees, we will seek statements on approaches to delivering science-based targets to achieve Net Zero Carbon for their businesses. As part of the Gravity journey, we welcome working with business to achieve this.

Collective achievement of these standards and requirements through our supply chain will provide helpful indicator of business commitment to safety, quality, and sustainability.

## **Creating Opportunities for Business**

It's a little early to map out specific opportunities but imagine a site bigger than Hinkley Point C - built out over a longer period of time – creating up to 7500 permanent jobs and many other indirect and supply chain opportunities. The Government Enterprise Zone status is operational until 2042 and the Gravity LDO is operating to a construction horizon of 2032, so Gravity is a project that may evolve incrementally, occupier by occupier, each bringing new opportunities or indeed be led by one primary occupier with their integrated supply chain on the campus.

Construction of Gravity over the next 10 years comprises a significantly large construction project in its own right which can build on the construction sector capacity delivered through the Hinkley Point C (HPC) project and create and longer-term opportunity for the construction sector in the local area. Gravity will assist to 'match make', helping to identify opportunities in its supply chains for local and regional companies and we will do this through the enquiry management process. The Gravity project may also create the opportunity to develop new supply chains.

There will also be significant opportunities for local business to engage in the supply chain for the ongoing servicing of the occupiers on site throughout their operation. There is the capacity to accommodate multiple small, medium and large-scale occupiers of up to 1.1million square metres at Gravity, as well as associated ancillary uses and social



infrastructure to be delivered, and all of these occupiers will create opportunities for local and regional businesses to engage with the project in perpetuity, to the considerable benefit to the local and regional economy.

For example:

- Net zero carbon products and practice
- Advanced manufacturing, robotics, AI
- In construction and operation
- Modern methods of construction
- Smart and micro mobility
- Electric Vehicle charging
- Green solutions/ energy storage and management
- Water management
- Leisure and well being
- Digital infrastructure and services
- Data management/ cyber
- Bio- medical
- Agri tech/ hydroponics
- Alternative fuels
- Research and development
- Professional services
- In training and development of the workforce
- In site services, management, maintenance
- Consultancy
- Transport / connectivity/ de-carbonisation
- Facilities management and security

## **Local Supply Chain**

To ensure there is a social benefit and an economic multiplier effect for expenditure, Gravity will seek to maximise the use of local supply chains where possible. It is vital that the Project embraces the abilities and capability local to the Gravity site. "Local" for the purposes of this Charter is defined as within Sedgemoor District, with wider geographies being considered as Somerset County, the South West and the wider UK. 'Local first' always being a primary consideration to maximise benefit and minimise impacts, such as travel.

The policy for the construction of Gravity is to utilise, as far as possible, local sources of labour, service providers and materials / components. Organisations simply having a sales representative within Sedgemoor or Somerset as an example, would not qualify as part of a 'local' supply chain, as a local office and operational workforce would be required in the relevant geography.

This requirement will be reflected in contract tender documentation, instructions given to bidders and encapsulated in local consultation documentations produced to support the project.

## **Identifying 'Local' Companies**

Sedgemoor, Somerset, and the wider South West has a proud history of manufacturing, from the thriving brick and tile industry that prospered up until the 1930's to the more recent strengths in food and drink, engineering, and logistics. A hub of high-tech industry has also developed in south of the county supporting the aerospace and Defence sectors as well as to the north of the site near Bristol. Its excellent transport links allow rapid communications and hence many local businesses have clients throughout the UK and Europe.

Experience of the large HPC civil construction projects to support the construction phase has advanced area capability and the locality has quite unique experience in training a bespoke workforce to meet specific business needs, whether high end craft manufacturing for Mulberry, logistics and warehousing for Morrison's or project managers, nuclear engineers for HPC.

Local companies are invited to register their interest to become part of the project via the Gravity web site: <https://thisisgravity.co.uk/>

The listing of local companies will be further enhanced by frequent engagement with the business community via the local chambers of trade, business collaboration organisations, the local authority and via Gravity sponsored events.

A business leadership group will meet at least annually and will receive up to date project briefings and details of local business engagement activities.

## **Careers and Education**

Gravity are working collaboratively with Bridgwater and Taunton College to lead and facilitate a workforce development strategy for occupiers. BTC will work closely with Bristol and other universities as well as the Institutes of Technology on a package of skills and training that respond to occupier and local needs.

This will help raise the profile of the area and encourage younger people into the labour force with new training opportunities that could really help create a positive culture of ambition about living and working in the South West.

Through our social value programme led by our Skills Charter, and specific occupier Employment and Skills Plans, we will create opportunities and pathways into training and careers in clean growth sectors.

Building on the exceptional educational infrastructure already located in Sedgemoor through both organisations, with the National College for Nuclear as one of the most modern and dynamic learning environments, Gravity will create new opportunities for the community.

From landscape management, agri- tech, advanced manufacturing, and engineering to digital and energy management we can train and provide a workforce to meet business needs.

Students should have the choice of living and studying locally, and Gravity does want to create the opportunity for our young people to live, work and play in the South West.

We are excited about partnering opportunities with universities to draw in clean growth expertise. Many of the top universities in the UK and located in close proximity to Gravity and have specialisms and strengths in the environmental and low carbon and manufacturing sectors. Universities can act as a pipeline for innovation and Gravity could be an incubator and test bed for spin-out ventures.

## **Local Supplier Visits**

Visits to the Gravity site have already been facilitated and will continue to be offered to build an awareness of the Gravity project and to ensure local business are well briefed on progress and opportunities.

Gravity and / or investor site visits to business premises in Sedgemoor, Somerset, or the wider South West may be appropriate as part of early due diligence or procurement process to explore capability and ESG credentials as well as consider the area as a whole. How 'we' perform as a 'team' to attract investment will be a factor in investor decision making and goes to the issue of risk management and confidence in any significant key decision process.

## **Contractual Implications**

This is Gravity Ltd cannot prescribe the level of use of 'local' suppliers in its principal contractors and other supply chain contractors. The contracts will include our encouragement to the contractor and its subcontractors to maximise the use of local sources (within Sedgemoor, Somerset, and the wider South West) for the supply of material, equipment and services. The Contractor will also be required to maintain records to demonstrate the extent of compliance with this intent. The records will be available at all times to This is Gravity Ltd and will be reported annually.

In addition, the generic instructions to bidders for contracts offered by This is Gravity Ltd will include details of how to access the local supplier database via the registration website set up by This is Gravity Ltd.

## **Measuring Success**

In order to measure the success of the business and local supplier engagement activities described, a number of key performance indicators will be developed to be reported annually as an integral part of the environmental and social governance process and communicated through the monitoring and management regime. These will be used to demonstrate locally and nationally the positive impact the project is having on the local business community and through local investment in Somerset.

The measures will include:

- Total Value of inward investment secured.
- Number of contracts awarded to Sedgemoor, Somerset, South West, UK Companies.
- Value of contracts awarded to Sedgemoor, Somerset, South West, UK Companies.
- Number of new businesses created, or growth supported in clean growth sectors.

As a member of the Gravity community, partners and occupiers are expected to utilise reasonable endeavors to operate in accordance with the objectives and ambitions of the charter and to report on these measures to support in delivering clean and inclusive growth at Gravity.

Occupiers and investors will be required to submit details of their response to the Business Charter and if approved through the 'compliance process' will be required to submit an annual report on ESG performance which will include response to the Clean and Inclusive Growth Strategy, the Skills Charter and the Business Charter.

When approved, a formal summary report to the council will be required to inform the monitoring groups, with a parallel summary progress update to the community, both on a quarterly basis outlining the achievements during the previous quarter against the KPIs and provide details of the various business activities delivered in the quarter.

An annual Environmental and Social Governance (ESG) report will draw together responsiveness and progress against the CIGS and Charters and capture any additional relevant progress and activity.

