

THAMES ESTUARY GROWTH BOARD JOINS FORCES WITH CADENT, SGN AND NGGT TO ADVANCE HYDROGEN AGENDA

The Thames Estuary Growth Board, supported by Ikigai Capital, have formed a partnership with Cadent, SGN and National Grid Gas Transmission (NGGT) to investigate the development of hydrogen infrastructure in South East England.

The Thames Estuary Growth Board launched its Hydrogen Route Map and Investment Plan in October 2021, which highlighted the potential benefits of developing a hydrogen ecosystem in the Thames Estuary. The analysis concluded that investment into the hydrogen value chain could support 9,000 jobs and unlock £3.8 billion Gross Value Added by 2035.

In parallel, Cadent, SGN and NGGT, which together are responsible for delivering gas across most of Great Britain, have recently commissioned the Capital Hydrogen feasibility study. The study is being supported by ERM and Element Energy (an ERM Group company) and will consider the role of the gas grid in delivering low-carbon hydrogen across Greater London and the South East. The Capital Hydrogen study will encompass six case studies, which will leverage existing expertise and look at how the gas grid can play a role in the distribution of hydrogen both via blending in the existing network and working towards the delivery of 100% hydrogen via dedicated infrastructure.

Joining forces to attract hydrogen investment

The two groups have now joined forces to work collaboratively, to share information and lessons learned, with the mutual aim of attracting investment across the hydrogen ecosystem. There will be a particular focus on the 'East London' hydrogen cluster identified in the Thames Estuary Growth Board's Hydrogen Route Map, as one of the six proposed case studies in the Capital Hydrogen project.

This partnership will jointly identify the optimal hydrogen network infrastructure route, design, upgrading, phasing and ancillary investment required to distribute hydrogen produced in or imported into the Thames Estuary to various sources of demand in the East London cluster. This will cover optimal uses of hydrogen in industry, transport (public, heavy-duty road and marine), back-up power, and domestic heating. The organisations will also explore opportunities on the southern bank of the Thames, building on SGN's plans for a new 100% hydrogen pipeline linked to low carbon hydrogen production in the Isle of Grain.

Kate Willard OBE, Estuary Envoy and Chair of the Thames Estuary Growth Board, said: "It is becoming evident that delivering on the hydrogen agenda both at a regional but also at a national level, requires co-operation amongst different stakeholders. The Thames Estuary Growth Board recognises the important role of the gas grid in providing efficient distribution solutions from production at scale, which will facilitate the adoption of low-carbon hydrogen amongst end users.

"We are excited to work with Cadent, SGN and NGGT to deliver a south east hydrogen ecosystem. This partnership will help us meet our goals and objectives, attracting investment into the Thames Estuary, which in turn will stimulate green growth and levelling up across the region."

Sally Brewis, Head of Regional Development (East and London, Cadent) said: "Through our Capital Hydrogen feasibility study, Cadent, SGN and National Grid Gas Transmission are working together to

deliver a vision for the transition of London's gas networks to low carbon hydrogen. As part of this, we're extremely pleased to be working so closely with the Thames Estuary Growth Board, building on their Hydrogen Route Map and our work on hydrogen pipeline networks. With our collective skills and expertise, we plan to accelerate new and existing opportunities, stimulating early hydrogen deployment in the region. The UK government recently announced its ambition to deliver 10GW of low-carbon hydrogen production capacity by 2030. This is equivalent to the amount of natural gas consumed by over 6 million households in the UK each year. The target is therefore an essential part of the UK's wider strategy to meet the country's net zero commitments.

The Thames Estuary Growth Board, Cadent, SGN and NGGT are aligned with the UK's hydrogen strategy, and strongly believe this partnership will take the country one step closer to achieving its Net Zero targets.