# Bristol–Bath tech corridor surges with nuclear, AI and cyber-security investment



The Bristol and Bath region is seeing a wave of strategic investment across energy, AI and secure infrastructure, with projects that could create thousands of skilled jobs and strengthen the UK’s innovation base.

At Berkeley, Chiltern Vital Group has acquired the 40-acre former power station and science park, planning a “nuclear centre of excellence” in partnership with Rolls-Royce, the University of Bristol and tech firms including Astral Systems and Quantum Leap Energy. Astral is developing compact fusion devices to make medical isotopes, while Quantum Leap is targeting advanced fuels such as HALEU and lithium-6. Both ventures remain subject to regulatory and financing milestones.

In Bristol, data and AI consultancy DATA3 has secured a £200,000 South West Investment Fund loan via FW Capital to expand its team and capabilities. The seven-year-old firm has delivered over 300 projects and aims to translate its data expertise into local job creation.

Bath has seen two major moves: VoIP provider Gradwell Communications was acquired by Onecom, backed by LDC, to integrate Gradwell’s hosted voice and unified-comms platforms into a national operation; and cyber-hardware company Blueskytec raised £1.5m from Maven Capital Partners to scale its “bump in the wire” devices for protecting operational technology in critical infrastructure.

Meanwhile, Innovate UK Business Growth at Business West has launched a Secure Innovation Security Review Scheme, offering early-stage firms subsidised security reviews and Cyber Essentials vouchers to bolster defences against advanced threats.

Analysts say the mix of private capital, public-sector support and university links is turning the West Country into a model for place-based innovation. Challenges remain — from fusion regulatory hurdles to manufacturing scale-up for hardware — but the momentum suggests the Bristol–Bath corridor could play a pivotal role in the UK’s ambitions for safe fusion, trustworthy AI and resilient industrial security.

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## Bibliography

1. <https://techspark.co/blog/2025/08/15/bristol-bath-tech-news-august-14-2025-nuclear-fusion-ai-cybersecurity/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=bristol-bath-tech-news-august-14-2025-nuclear-fusion-ai-cybersecurity> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-gloucestershire-68127378> - BBC reports that the former Berkeley nuclear power station and adjoining science park have been sold to Chiltern Vital Group, which intends to redevelop the 40-acre site as a low‑carbon energy and nuclear technology hub. The piece outlines plans to create a research, training and R&D campus focused on small modular reactors, in partnership with organisations including Rolls‑Royce and the University of Bristol. The sale preserves the on‑site University Technical College, and stakeholders expect the redevelopment to generate skilled jobs and support the UK’s nuclear roadmap. Local leaders welcomed the move as positive for regional economic growth and skills development.
3. <https://tech.eu/2025/02/06/astral-systems-secures-4-5m-to-bring-nuclear-breakthroughs-to-healthcare/> - Tech.eu covers Astral Systems’ €5.3 million funding round to commercialise its multistate fusion (MSF) reactors for medical isotope production. The article explains that the Bristol‑based deeptech firm has developed compact fusion devices designed to generate neutrons for on‑demand radioisotope manufacture, addressing global shortages that affect cancer diagnostics and therapies. Investors named include Speedinvest and Playfair, supporting rapid scale‑up and deployment by the end of 2025. Astral’s technology combines lattice confinement and plasma techniques to increase fusion rates in a compact form factor. The piece highlights partnerships, revenue from research contracts and the company’s clinical and industrial ambitions and future applications.
4. <https://www.nasdaq.com/articles/asp-isotopes-inc-appoints-dr-ryno-pretorius-ceo-quantum-leap-energy-llc-drive-advanced> - Nasdaq reports ASP Isotopes’ appointment of Dr Ryno Pretorius as CEO of its Quantum Leap Energy subsidiary, signalling plans to develop advanced nuclear fuels such as HALEU and lithium‑6. The release outlines QLE’s strategic role as a spin‑out bound entity targeting the supply chain for next‑generation small modular and advanced reactors. It notes ASP Isotopes’ broader ambitions in isotope enrichment and strategic collaborations, and states an expected spin‑out timeline in the second half of 2025. The piece warns that many statements are forward‑looking, dependent on regulatory approvals, financing and successful technology scale‑up, while highlighting the market opportunity for HALEU supply.
5. <https://fwcapital.co.uk/news-and-events/funding-boost-supports-growth-bristol-data-insight-and-ai-consultancy> - FW Capital announces a £200,000 loan from the British Business Bank’s South West Investment Fund to Bristol‑based data and AI consultancy DATA3, supporting the company’s expansion and hiring plans. The page notes DATA3 was founded in 2017 by Helen Tanner and has delivered over 300 data and AI projects globally, boasting a high net promoter score and multi‑million pound turnover. FW Capital’s investment aims to help the firm scale operations, develop new capabilities and create local jobs. The statement includes comments from DATA3’s founder and FW Capital’s investment executive about the importance of regional growth capital for technology firms and opportunities.
6. <https://www.gradwell.com/press-release-onecom-acquires-gradwell/> - Gradwell’s official press release confirms that Onecom has acquired the Bath‑headquartered telecoms provider, integrating Gradwell’s hosted voice Wave platform, SIP network and unified communications expertise into Onecom’s national operation. Published 22 July 2025, the statement quotes Onecom’s CEO Darren Ridge praising the cultural fit and customer service focus, while Gradwell’s CEO Jamie Ward describes the deal as an exciting new chapter. The release notes Onecom’s backing by private equity firm LDC and lists advisers to the transaction. It highlights benefits including geographic reach, enhanced capability and opportunities to deliver expanded services to Gradwell’s SME customer base across the UK nationwide.
7. <https://www.uktech.news/cybersecurity/blueskytec-1-5m-investment-20250811> - UKTN reports that Bath‑based cybersecurity hardware firm Blueskytec secured a £1.5 million investment from the British Business Bank’s South West Investment Fund, managed by Maven Capital Partners, to accelerate deployment of its patented 'bump in the wire' hardware. The coverage describes Blueskytec’s solution as a physical security barrier for operational technology and critical infrastructure, used by government and industrial partners across defence, energy and civil nuclear sectors. The funding will support manufacturing scale‑up, recruitment and business development to meet rising demand. Commentators highlight the importance of hardware‑based cyber resilience for mission‑critical systems and regulatory compliance and long‑term sector protection goals.