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Digital Ladder Permits at Hinkley Point C

How the team at Hinkley Point C leveraged DataScope's software to control the use of ladders across site, improved auditability and reduced risk.

LOCATION
Somerset, UK

PROJECT
Hinkley Point C

Background

The first new nuclear power station to be built in the UK in over 20 years; Hinkley Point C in Somerset will provide low-carbon electricity for around 6 million homes. Building critical, complex infrastructure requires more than 4,000 workers – many of whom carry out safety-critical tasks on a daily basis.

The Challenge

Having successfully delivered a Crane Management and Booking System at Hinkley Point C, DataScope were approached by the project team to digitalise ladder permit submittal, management and approval.

With the majority ladders being used for convenience rather than safety, a solution was needed to both ensure ladders were only used as a last resort and easily monitor any live permits effectively all while making the solution simple to use for both the HPC team and the contractors.

"Using DataScope's permit system has really helped us control the use of ladders on site. When ladders are used, there is now a well-documented audit trail that can be easily accessed online with all the supporting evidence. Since going live with the system, we have mitigated the use of ladders on the project 1000s of times."

ASHLEY DANIELS
HEAD OF LIFTING & TEMPORARY WORKS, HINKLEY POINT C

Contractor Buy-In

The solution must be easy to use and drive benefits for both EDF and the wider supply chain to ensure buy-in.

Ensuring Compliance

A solution was needed to allow teams to access a permit, photograph evidence and any associated document all from one place.

Missing and Incomplete Audit Trails

Having a paper-based permits system meant that permits could go missing in the field, are incomplete and cancelled permits are not accounted for.

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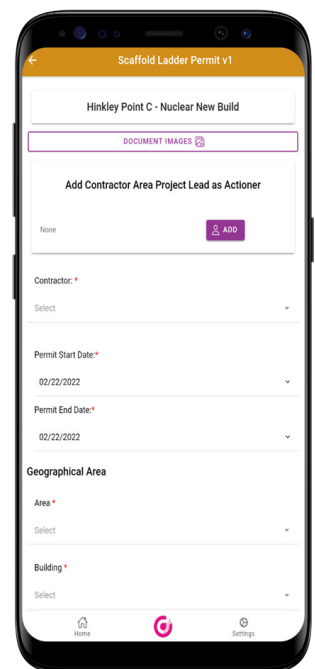
The Solution

The project team operate a system whereby ladders are only used as a last resort where there is no way to use a safer access system. To help monitor this effectively, the team enlisted the support of DataScope, who developed an Electronic Ladder Permit System.

App to submit and approve permits

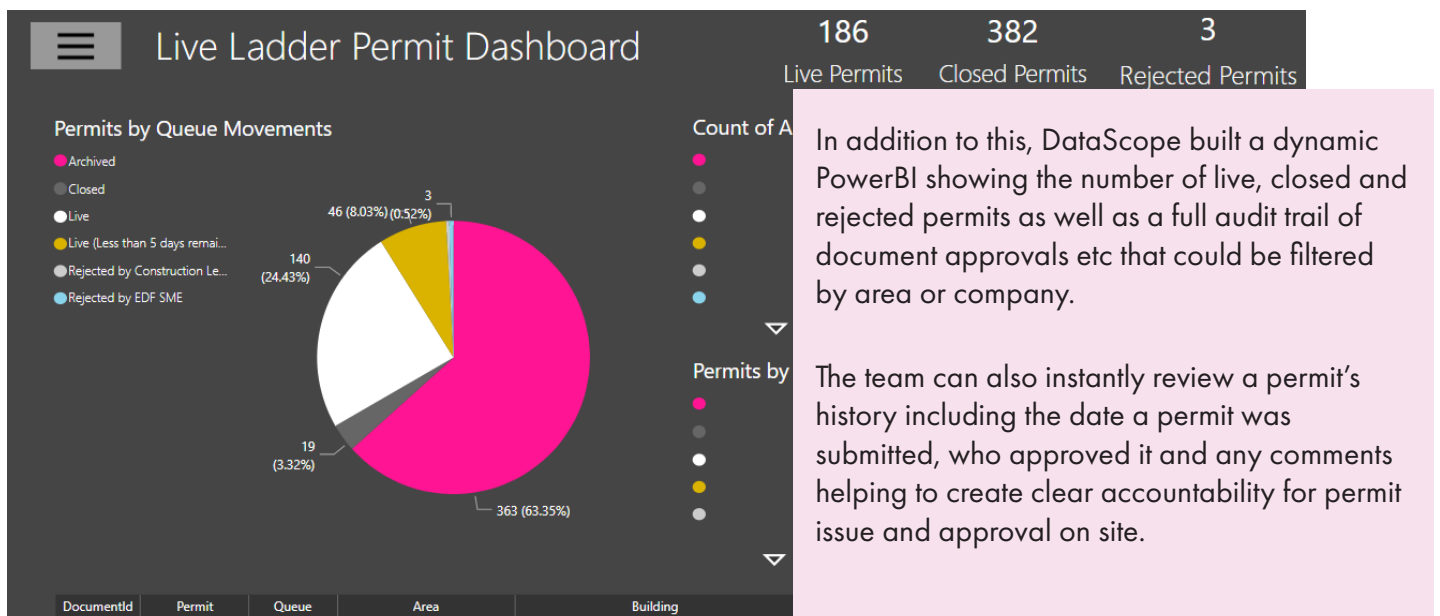**Automated multi-stage approval process**

Instant access to permit information and reporting

DataScope took EDF's existing ladder permit form and digitalised it – allowing subcontractors to complete and submit permits on their smartphone via the DataScope app. As well as capturing typical data contained within a ladder permit, the digital form also allows users to submit photographic evidence and upload rescue plans.

All submitted forms are automatically pushed to the appropriate team member for review and approval, as well as being made available on the web system for monitoring and auditing purposes. This then allows the two stages of review and approval to also be completed directly on the app.

Completed permits can be viewed as a PDF download online and contain any photo evidence as well as links to uploaded documents all in one place.


In addition to this, DataScope built a dynamic PowerBI showing the number of live, closed and rejected permits as well as a full audit trail of document approvals etc that could be filtered by area or company.

The team can also instantly review a permit's history including the date a permit was submitted, who approved it and any comments helping to create clear accountability for permit issue and approval on site.

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The Result

Avoided the use of ladders more than

1,000 times

As well as the obvious time and waste-saving benefits of moving permits online and automating the approval process, the implementation of digital ladder permits helped to foster a step-change in behaviour that helped ensure ladders were only used as a last resort thus hugely reducing avoidable incidents that cause harm.

"Since going live with the ladder permit system, we have managed to avoid the use of ladders on site 1000s of times and helped to remove over 300 ladders from the project. It has helped to shift ladder use from an occasional occurrence to a well-documented exception."
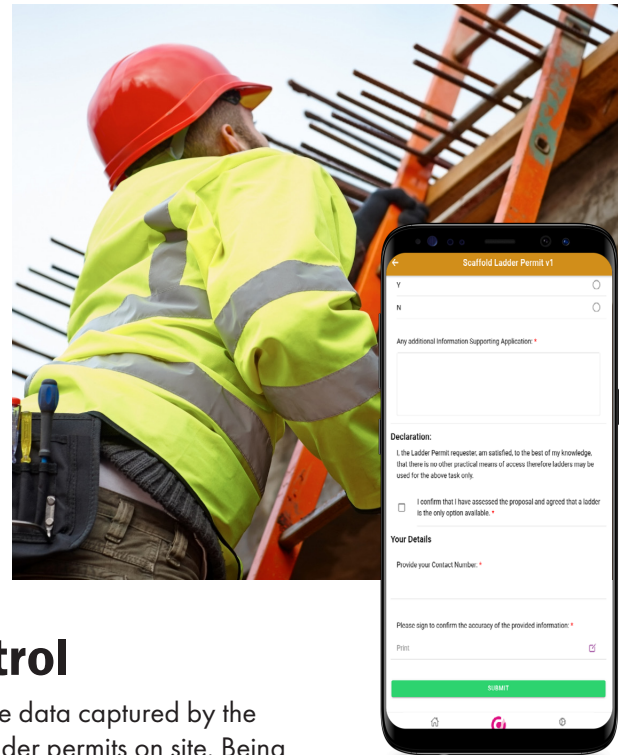
Reduced Risk though Improved Control

Another immediate benefit was greater contractor control: by visualising the data captured by the app in a BI dashboard, the EDF team had immediate visibility of all live ladder permits on site. Being able to access completed permits immediately on the web system, the team know in real-time which organisations and individuals are using ladders, when and why they are being used.

The system also greatly improves auditability, and also allows the Health & Safety team to easily identify companies or individuals who may be repeatedly requesting a ladder permit. In the event of an incident, users can immediately log into the system, review the authorised permit as well as an audit trail of who had authorised the permit and when.

A Solution That Works for All

By moving the permits online, this has not only created a better system for recording and archiving permits but has also improved accountability as well as helping to reduce waiting times for the applicant. The system has allowed the team to create, issue and approve permits without having to phyically locate or chase the responsible parties.
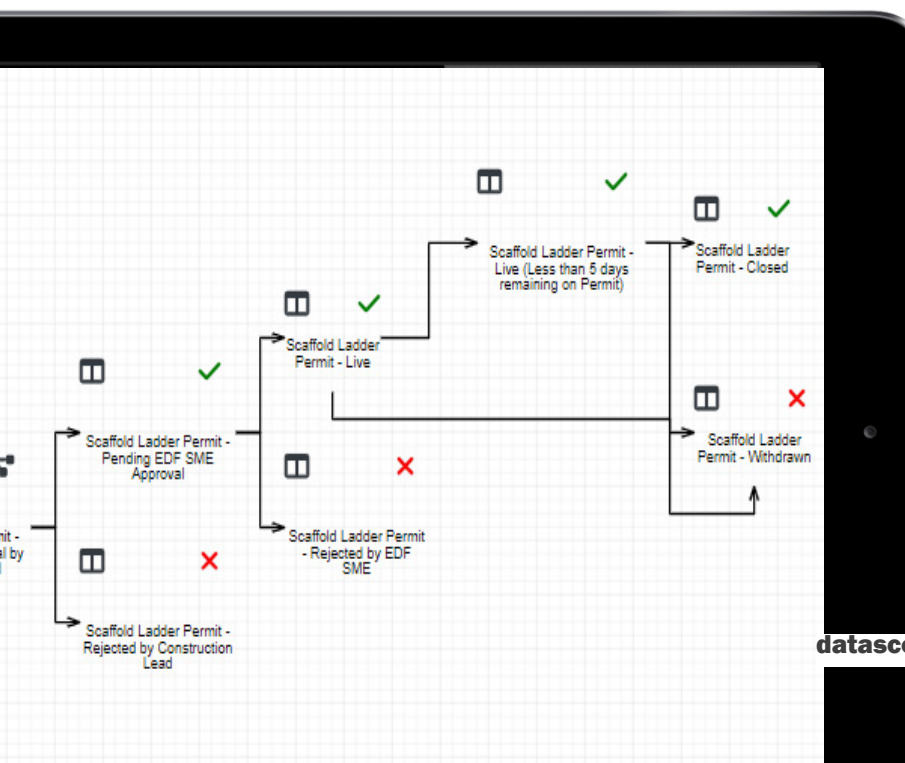
Using the Solution Elsewhere

As a result of Hinkley Point C's success with implementing this for ladder permits, the team plan on using the system to digitalise permits for voids and openings as well as suspended slab permits.

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