

Welcome to the HS2

COMMUNITY UPDATE

We'd like you to have all the latest news and information about HS2 – the planned high speed railway network.



This update introduces our local community engagement team – here to support you and your neighbourhood as the railway is planned and built.

What is HS2 and what does it mean for me?

HS2 is a new railway that will become the backbone of our national rail network.

HS2 will create more seats for passengers on our crowded railways and better connect our cities, supporting growth and regeneration.

We're set to start construction this year on Phase One of the railway, from London to the West Midlands.

This community update explains who we are, when you might see us working in your area, and what we are doing.

If you'd like to find out more, you can get in touch with our helpline – all our contact details are on the back.

What stage are the plans at?

We expect to receive approval from Parliament very soon for the powers we need to construct and operate HS2. Once we get this formal go ahead, construction is set to start.

The first stages will mostly involve preparatory works like habitat creation, archaeology and roadworks. We recently confirmed which contractors will help us to deliver these early works along the route. A joint venture involving Morgan Sindall Construction & Infrastructure Ltd, BAM Nuttall Ltd and Ferrovial Agroman (UK) Ltd has been selected to lead works in your local area. Meanwhile, we're undertaking surveys and checking utilities such as water and electricity beneath the streets.

You may not have noticed the work we've done so far but, in the next couple of years, you may see changes in your neighbourhood. Our helpline is available 24/7 - so if you want to know more about what activity to expect in your local area, you can call us on [020 7944 4908](tel:02079444908) and select the option that will put you through to one of our team.

Here to help

HS2 Ltd was set up by the Government to plan and build the railway. We have another key role – making sure that, if you're affected by the project, you understand what to expect and how we help.

That's why we have established a new team dedicated to helping local people in your area. You may already have met us at a public event near you. The people and organisations that represent your area – like MPs and local councils – have also been meeting with us.



Matt Hadlington, senior community engagement manager, explains: *"We are working closely with communities in this area, and starting to build new relationships that are really important to us. It's vital that people know about any works that may affect them as well as the support available, such as our property compensation schemes. We'll be making every effort to inform and involve the community as HS2 is built."*

Information on property

As we move towards construction, we will be in touch with you if you're a directly affected resident or business to explain what the plans mean for your property.

This contact may be from a member of our Land and Property Team or one of our appointed advisors. Anyone that is directly affected by the project will also be asked to fill out a Land Information Questionnaire. You may have completed one before but it is important that information about your property is as up-to-date as possible.

If you own and live in a property directly affected by HS2, you may be eligible for one of our property schemes. Some of these property compensation and assistance measures are open for applications now. You can find out more by visiting www.gov.uk/claim-compensation-if-affected-by-hs2

Here in your area, listening to you

Over recent months, we've been sharing information about HS2 with your community and others along the proposed route. This has included everything from letters to site tours with parish councils.

There's no substitute for face-to-face discussion, and events continue to be a cornerstone of our activity. We've held several large-scale information events around the area and you may be one of the people affected who have been coming along and speaking to our experts.

You may have seen us at existing community events as well, like the Blakesley Show, Amersham Town Show and local markets. And we've been meeting with schools and parish councils to introduce ourselves and understand local issues.

Our events programme continues as we get closer to construction, giving you an opportunity to find out how we'll respect your neighbourhood as the railway is built. Please have a look for us at any events near you - all of our events are publicised at www.gov.uk/government/collections/hs2-events and we'll send you an invite if there's one happening nearby.



Understanding ground conditions

Ground investigations are a key part of our preparations and will guide how the railway is constructed. This work typically involves drilling holes in the ground and taking samples of the soil away for analysis. Working with utility companies, we're also checking services like water mains and power cables.

We'll let you know in advance if we need to do any of this work near you, especially if there's an impact on local roads or it might be noisy. Our contractors will work as quickly and quietly as they can.

Uncovering the past

As part of building HS2, we'll be carrying out investigations at sites of historic interest, starting in the spring. This work will include historical buildings and landscapes such as the Edgcote Battlefield and Roman Villa in Northamptonshire.

Edgcote was where one of Britain's most bitter battles took place - part of the War of the Roses. While some information is known about the battle that took place there in 1469, our work will help to uncover more details about a key historical event.

We'll be working with local schools and communities to ensure you have the opportunity to find out about the results of these investigations.

£70m to benefit local communities

Communities and businesses near the new railway will benefit from grants worth millions, through the Community and Environment Fund as well as the Business and Local Economy Fund. Through these schemes, £40m in total will be available to support businesses and community groups affected by construction of the first phase of HS2. Once these are up and running you'll be able to apply for funding through our independent grants management body, Groundwork UK. A £30m road safety fund has also been set up for improving local roads.

Useful links

RESIDENTS' CHARTER AND COMMISSIONER

The Residents' Charter is our promise to communicate as clearly as we possibly can with people who live along or near the HS2 route. There's also an independent Residents' Commissioner whose role is to make sure we stick to the promises we make in the charter and keep it under constant review. You can read their reports as well as the charter here:

www.gov.uk/government/collections/hs2-ltd-residents-commissioner

You can contact the Residents' Commissioner at:

residentscommissioner@hs2.org.uk

CONSTRUCTION COMMISSIONER

An independent Construction Commissioner has been appointed to look into any matters arising from the construction of the railway. This includes any issues that have not been resolved through HS2 Ltd's complaints process, as well as mediating in any disputes related to our small claims scheme. You can see more about the Construction Commissioner's role here:

www.hs2-cc.org.uk

You can contact the Construction Commissioner at:

complaints@hs2-cc.org.uk

If you have any questions or you'd like to find out more, you can get in touch with our helpline:



TELEPHONE
020 7944 4908



EMAIL
HS2enquiries@hs2.org.uk



MINICOM
020 7944 6500

Please contact us if you'd like a free copy of this leaflet in:

- Large print
- Braille
- Audio
- Easy read

You can also contact us for help and information in a different language.