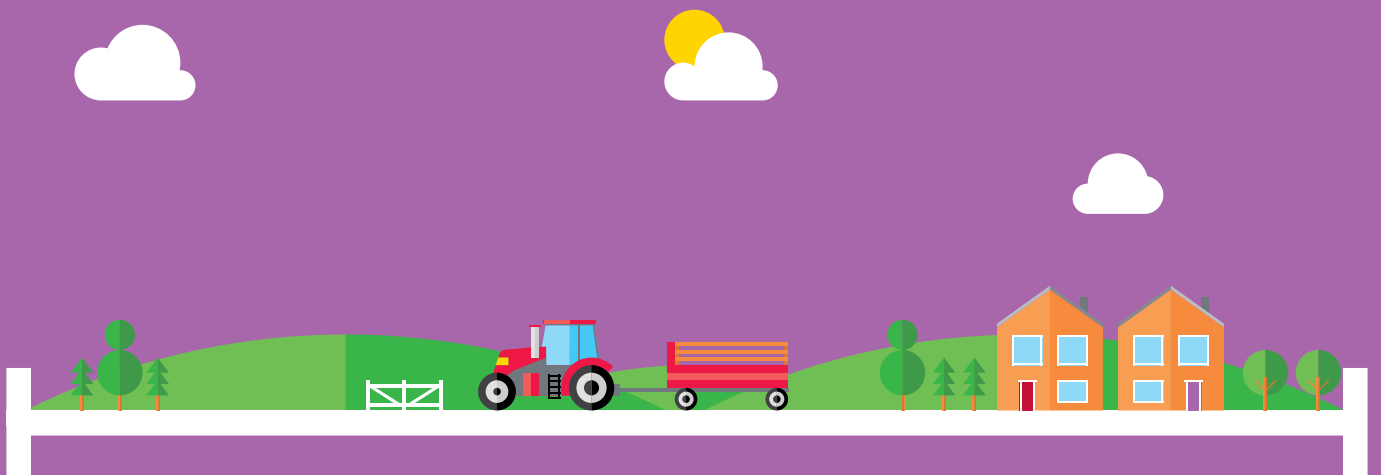


HS2

Being a good neighbour Our progress

January to June 2018





Department for Transport

High Speed Two (HS2) Limited has been tasked by the Department for Transport (DfT) with managing the delivery of a new national high speed rail network. It is a non-departmental public body wholly owned by the DfT.

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Foreword

In my foreword in the Community Engagement Strategy, I was clear that we have to be an exemplar project in our approach to engagement with communities. For me this means HS2 and our suppliers being actively involved with communities, working as one team to build respectful, two way relationships.

Our Corporate Plan explores this in more detail and our goal of being a good neighbour every single day is one of the seven strategic objectives for HS2, and one of the key definers of our success as a project. We can't shy away from the impact we will have, but we can find ways to work with communities to minimise these impacts, and maximise the opportunities that the project will bring.

Since the launch of the Community Engagement Strategy, work has started in earnest. We have appointed £6.6 billion of main works civils contracts for Phase One, deposited the bill for Phase 2a, and shared details of the evolving design for the 2b route.

In terms of visible construction activity, we have already seen site compounds established at key points along the route, preparing the way for demolitions, ground surveys and archaeological activity.

Alongside these preparations we have started to make good progress in our engagement work. We are listening to feedback from communities, learning from any past mistakes and focusing on ensuring we are always improving.

I am pleased to report that this progress has been noted in the regular reports by both of our independent commissioners, and I am heartened to see that the work and impact of the team is starting to be recognised.

Although we have made good progress over 2018, we also recognise that there is still more work to do. This first progress report sets our benchmark and shows the ways we have improved. It also gives us a clear picture of how we think we are doing, recognising that we need to continue to listen, understand and improve for the future.

Mark Thurston
Chief Executive Officer,
High Speed Two (HS2) Ltd



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The journey so far

Julie King, Director of Community and Stakeholder Engagement, describes the journey so far, and what's coming next

The journey so far

We launched the Community Engagement Strategy in September 2017, which included our 10 community commitments.

Since then we have started to make progress towards being a good neighbour by focusing on putting engagement with communities at the heart of everything we do. We recognise HS2 will affect the lives of thousands of people and how important it is to deliver this project with compassion and empathy.

To bring the commitments to life, this report includes case studies that demonstrate how we are tailoring our engagement by listening and, where possible, responding to the needs of local communities.

We focused on increasing the volume of our engagement activity, tailoring the ways we inform, involve, and respond. The Community Engagement Team has grown substantially over the past 12 months, enabling us to position dedicated Local HS2 Engagement Managers out in the communities along the 345 miles of route. In most cases we were able to recruit local people who live in the area.

We have also improved our complaints processes. We still have a long way to go, however, we now have a new complaints process in place which sets out clearly the steps involved. During January to June 2018, we were dealing with 9 out of 10 complaints in less than 20 days and we resolved over 95% at the first stage of the complaints process, with no need for further escalation.

The next steps

Looking forward to the next six months, we recognise there is still a lot more we need to do to fully embed our commitments and values across HS2. Given the scale of the challenge, we are learning from existing best practice, while also aiming to find innovative ways to set new standards.

Our priority will be developing the tools to **measure the effectiveness of our community engagement out on the ground and whether we are being a good neighbour to communities impacted by HS2.** This will involve finding out how our communities feel by capturing feedback on what works well, as well as listening to recommendations for better ways of working together.

Our next report will update on a wide range of involvement opportunities around new station designs, heritage and archaeology events, and focused engagement on the design of key structures such as tunnels and viaducts. We will be expanding our local websites and introducing regular newsletters. Finally, we will be seeking your views through our first annual community engagement survey, and also by asking you to participate in a questionnaire when you attend our events.

Your feedback is important to ensure we continue to learn and grow as an organisation. Please let me know how you think we are doing, and what more we can do to further improve how we engage and involve communities. Details of how to contact us are found on page 7 and on the back of this document.

Julie King

Director of Community and Stakeholder Engagement
High Speed Two (HS2) Ltd



Community Engagement at a glance

January to June 2018

11,000

helpdesk enquiries handled

1

national website launch

9 out of 10

complaints resolved within
20 working days or fewer

10

local community websites for the areas
along the London to Birmingham route
(Phase One)

95%

of the 165 complaints received were
concluded at the first stage of the
complaints process

25,000+

people visited the 10 local community
websites covering the route from
London to Birmingham

1,000+

pupils attended the construction
safety workshops

Over 1,200

subscribers to the local community
websites since their launch

14,000

people were engaged with at over
900 engagement activities including
meetings, drop-ins and events

Over £1.4m

of funding has been awarded to 26 local
projects through the Community and
Environment Fund (CEF) and Business and
Local Economy Fund (BLEF) across the
route from London to Birmingham





Community commitment: We will continue to build respectful, long-term relationships with communities, and actively encourage our workforce to listen to local concerns and be considerate and accountable for their actions at all times

As the HS2 and supply chain workforces grow we need to ensure we are behaving consistently and in line with our strategy. This commitment looks at **how well HS2 Ltd staff, consultants and contractors understand and are behaving in line with the Community Engagement Strategy and HS2 Values.**

Indicator: Evidence that our staff and contractors understand, and are behaving consistently within this Strategy

Q Case Study

Listening to the community and building respectful relationships in Boddington, Northamptonshire

One of the areas where we have seen progress in building relationships is in Boddington. Boddington is a rural parish in Northamptonshire whose narrow country lanes will be impacted by HS2 construction. The community is concerned about the impact of lorries in the area, and in particular the safety of children walking home from school.

The local Community Engagement Team have developed local relationships, which has enabled constructive joint work with the 'Friends of Boddington' residents group, and local councils. Our joint work has resulted in clear and timely advance notification of planned works, and their likely impact. These notifications were well received and considered to be best practice of how advance notifications should work. The lessons learned from this positive engagement will be shared across the line of route.

Wider benefits are being delivered in this community, including the development of a local play area through the Community and Environment Fund (CEF). The Boddington community has recently received an award of £75,000 from CEF. This award will contribute to providing a new community playground and picnic area.



The interest that has been generated during the construction phase amongst the children and visitors to the parish has been amazing. Without HS2's support we would not have progressed so quickly."

Dennis Burton
Chairman of the Parish Council



It is immensely satisfying to see the results of a lot of people's efforts coming to fruition. I am particularly pleased that HS2 and their business partners have supported us in this venture. We still have several challenges in front of us, but by working together I am sure we can identify further win/win situations."

Philip Freer
Chairman of the Friends of Boddington



2

Community commitment:

We will work with communities to develop local two-way engagement and communication programmes, and ensure these are accessible and tailored to local needs

Working with communities and our partners, we are actively **developing tools and platforms that are tailored to local communities in line with the engagement approach defined in the Community Engagement Strategy.**

Indicator: Our progress against our Strategy and our local engagement plans

Case Study

'In Your Area' Plans, and two-way, public events

As part of ensuring that our communications are suitably tailored, we have applied lessons learned from Phase One consultation to our approach to Phase 2. The Phase 2b route of HS2 is made up of 26 community areas. Each community has an 'In Your Area' booklet that includes:

- a summary of the proposed route;
- how the design has developed since July 2017;
- what we are currently working on; and
- the benefits that HS2 will bring to each area.

The 'In Your Area' booklets can be found at <https://www.hs2.org.uk/documents/collections/phase-2b-2018-information-events-in-your-area-booklets/> with hard copies also available.

We also ensure there are plenty of ways for communities to talk to us about the information contained in the 'In Your Area' booklets. For example, a series of 31 public information events took place in summer 2018 across the communities that will be affected by the Phase 2b route. Around 6000 people attended the events to speak to HS2 specialists on engineering, environment and property issues.

The team also held individual discussions with 149 local people who wanted to discuss the impacts that the project will have on them.

We received 558 individual pieces of feedback on early design at these events. Traffic and transport emerged as the main topic of discussion, followed by land and property and engineering. The HS2 team will now be working through these responses, and taking on board suggestions wherever this is possible.



At first sight we have been much encouraged. The proposals look sensible, well thought out and in general line with what we would have hoped for. I must admit, I wasn't really expecting to be able to write these words!"

2b event attendee





Community commitment: We will make sure communities are made aware in advance of any activities taking place in their area

HS2's success depends on **how well communities and stakeholders are informed about what's happening in their area.**

We are committed to delivering relevant and timely information about what we are doing, using a variety of digital and traditional methods, that enable us to communicate with people in the way that is easiest and best for them.

Indicator: How well we are informing communities about works taking place in their area

Case Study

The launch of local websites, providing up to date, advance information

Another way we have ensured we are keeping communities informed about works is through the launch of 10 new local websites for Phase One. Each contains up-to-date project information and easy to understand, locally tailored content. Communities can sign up to project news to receive all the latest local updates relating to road closures and construction works.

The sites can be found by visiting <https://hs2.commonplace.is/>

Number of visitors to the sites to 30 June 2018	25,000+
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Number of people signed up to receive project news	1,200+
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We have changed the way we inform and respond to communities this year, by ensuring Local HS2 Engagement Managers are regularly available in the community. Increasingly we are tailoring the way we involve communities to enable us to better inform and respond to people face-to-face.

- Between January and June 2018 we have met with nearly 14,000 people, face to face through over 900 meetings and events.
- While we continue to hold large scale events and arrange regular community drop-ins, we are now frequently attending existing forums that local communities use regularly. These include parish council & local authority meetings, community and residents groups.
- Where it is appropriate we also meet with members of the public and stakeholders on an individual basis so that we can fully explore more complex and sensitive issues.



4

Community commitment:

We will operate a Freephone Community Helpline 24 hours a day, 365 days a year

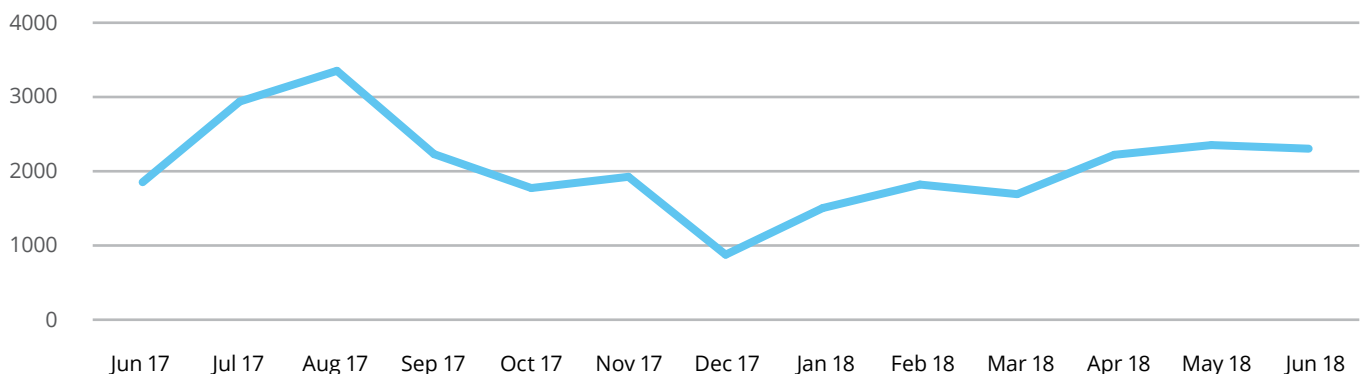
Operating a Freephone community helpline is the foundation of our approach to **how well we deliver reliable, responsive customer service for everyone who contacts us**. We want to be open and accessible and make it as easy as possible for people to contact us.

Indicator: How well we handle your enquiries

As part of making it easier for people to contact us, the public can contact HS2 using a variety of methods. We operate a dedicated email address, a new 24-hour Freephone telephone number and Freephone mini-com number for callers with hearing or speech difficulties. Calls are free from UK mobile and landline numbers.

Between January and June we handled over 11,000 helpdesk queries, through a mixture of telephone calls and emails. The majority of contacts were from individuals regarding land or property related queries.

Helpdesk enquiries



Type of helpdesk queries

Land and property issues	42%
Signposting/call transfer	27%
Ground Investigation works	8%
Construction works	7%
All other	16%





Community commitment: We will make health and safety a priority for communities and our workforce

HS2 is an exciting project but one which will impact on lots of communities. We don't underestimate that impact, nor our responsibility to minimise disruption and keep everyone who lives and works in those communities safe and secure.

Indicator: How well we demonstrate that safety is a priority for staff and communities

Case Study

Promoting health and safety through 'Playing it Safe' workshops with schools

One of the ways we are demonstrating this commitment is by recognising that it is important to keep children safe around construction sites as we move towards more intensive construction activity. To address this issue we launched a Health and Safety workshop called 'Playing it Safe'. Created by Arc Theatre, the interactive workshop uses drama to explain the importance of staying safe when living and playing near construction sites.

We ran the first workshop at Maple Cross Primary School in Hertfordshire with 60 year 5 and 6 pupils in February. The workshop received excellent feedback.

Following the successful pilot, a programme of the 'Playing it Safe' workshops was rolled out over the Phase One route from London to Birmingham. This included a workshop at the school closest to the line of route – Leigh Primary in Washwood Heath.

By the end of June 2018 23 sessions had been delivered at 14 schools to just over 1,000 pupils across Phase One. 98% of the pupils who completed the feedback surveys rated the workshop as 'excellent' or 'good'. This programme will continue during term times over the course of 2018.



We were really concerned about the impact of HS2 on the school, the traffic caused by the closure of Chalfont Lane and the construction site so near to us, but working with HS2, has allowed our school to experience a drama performance about engineering and holds the promise of a range of developments."

**Headteacher,
Maple Cross Primary School**



6

Community commitment: We will respect the wellbeing of communities, minimising disruption to their lives with local mitigation plans and activities, ensuring we meet the standards set out in the Code of Construction Practice

HS2 recognises the impact and disruption that construction will cause to communities. This commitment considers **how community and stakeholder input is influencing how we build the railway.**

How we and our contractors behave is as important to the railway's success as delivering the project on time and ensuring value for money for the tax payer.

Indicator: How well we demonstrate that we are continually looking to minimise the impacts of the programme

Q Case Study

Listening to community concerns and finding solutions to minimise disruption

We can't always make changes, but where it is possible we are trying to do so. An example of where this has been possible is the area around Henry Chadwick Primary School in Hill Ridware, Staffordshire. Like many communities along the route, Hill Ridware is a small village with concerns about the impact of construction traffic.

The Local Community Engagement Manager worked closely with the community to listen fully to local concerns. The local manager then worked with the HS2 design teams to ensure that local concerns were addressed wherever it was possible to do so.

The outcome of listening to the community was a change to the proposed plans and an alternative road solution, which will remove construction traffic from the village and the school.

“

Our Community Liaison Officer did exactly what it said on the tin: she kept the lines of communication open even though she was aware of mounting frustration in our community and couldn't give us any hard information on developments. She kept encouraging us to press on and I am grateful to her for her commitment, resilience and cheerfulness in her dealings with us.”

School Head of Governors and Parish Council Representative





Community commitment: We will leave a positive and sustainable legacy for the communities in which we operate

HS2 recognises that building the new railway will cause disruption to communities. However, it is important that we also focus on leaving a positive legacy for communities that sets a new standard for major infrastructure projects.

This commitment focuses on **long term benefits that are being delivered through our investment programmes every day.**

Indicator: What long-term benefits our investment programme is delivering

Q Case Study

Leaving a legacy through the Community and Environment Fund (CEF) and the Business and Local Economy Fund (BLEF)

One of the ways that HS2 is benefitting communities now is by supporting local projects through grant schemes. The Community and Environment Fund (CEF) and the Business and Local Economy Fund (BLEF) are collectively worth £40million across the first Phase of the project (London – West Midlands). A total of £1.4m was awarded up to the end of June 2018.

The CEF is targeted at the voluntary/community sector, including residents' associations, community groups, community interest companies (CICs), social enterprises, community businesses and registered charities. CEF funds awarded so far includes support to:

- youth, training and community garden projects in Greater London;
- sport, memorial and conservation projects in the central area of the route; and
- careers advice, upcycling and children's play projects in the West Midlands.

The BLEF is targeted at organisations which are established for public benefit and not for profit, and which have formal objectives that support the development of local business/tourism.

A BLEF award has been recently made to Buckinghamshire Business First, who encourage local investment and carry out activities which benefit economic and business development. This year-long project aims to increase visitors to the area and provide advice, guidance and support to tourism and retail businesses and their supply chains up to 5km from the line of route. The line of route extends for around 60km through Buckinghamshire.



HS2 Minister Nusrat Ghani joined HS2 Ltd officials to visit Castlehaven Community Association to see projects that have benefitted from the HS2 Funds.



Community commitment:

We will respond to questions and complaints quickly and efficiently, with an acknowledgement within 2 working days, and responding within a maximum of 20 working days if we cannot answer the query straight away

How well we handle community and stakeholder enquires and complaints is a key element of how we aspire to be a good neighbour.

Indicator: How well we handle your complaint

Following an extensive review to improve the HS2 complaints service, our complaints procedure has been updated and published on the new HS2 website: www.hs2.org.uk/how-to-complain/

Under our new procedure a dedicated member of the team is the single point of contact for the complainant who will guide them through the process.

Between January to June 2018 the Public Response team have:

- dealt with 165 complaints;
- progressed 9/10 complaints through to resolution within 20 working days; and
- resolved over 95% of complaints at the first stage of the complaints process, with no need for further escalation.

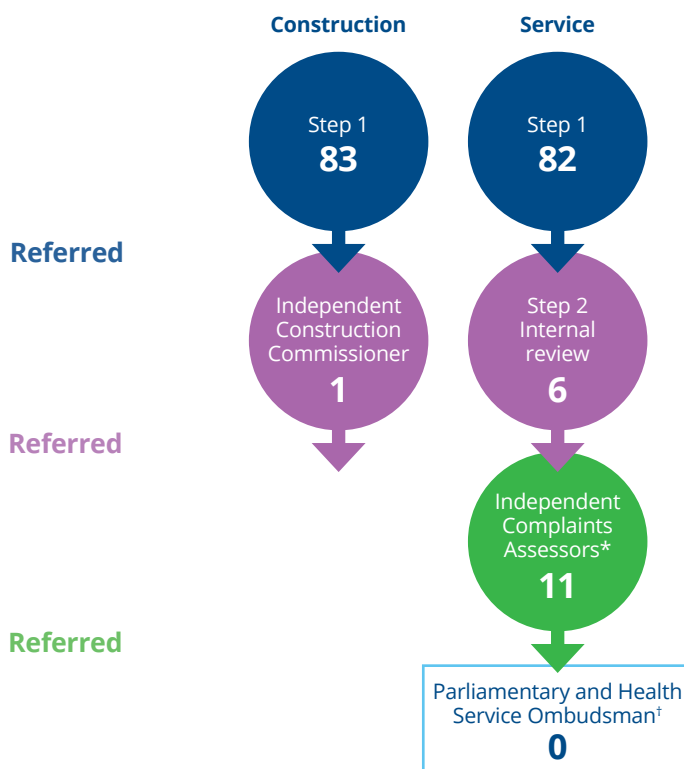
The majority of complaints between January and June 2018 relate to programme delivery (construction), followed by land and property (service) issues.

	Total
Programme delivery (construction)	50%
Land and property (service)	33%
Community engagement (service)	16%
Other (service)	1%

We are continually looking to improve how we handle complaints, and also how we take on board recommendations from both independent commissioners, the Independent Complaints Assessor (ICA) and the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO).

Public Response – June 2018

165 complaints received January to June 2018.



* Seven are from the same complainant

† There are 3 historical cases that are under consideration by the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO)

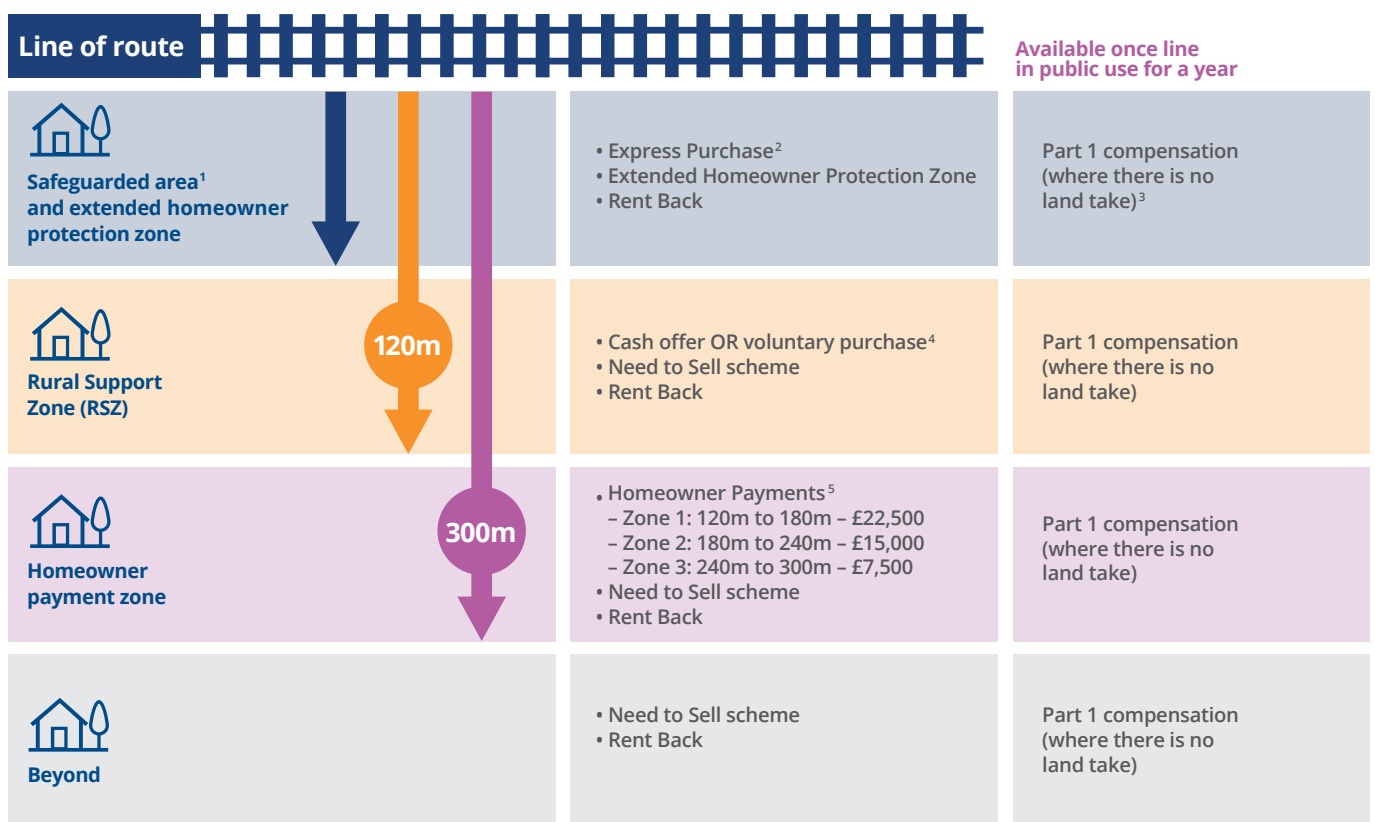


Community commitment: We will promote awareness of all our property schemes so that anyone who may be eligible has all the information they need and is aware of the support available to them

Communities and businesses located near the approved or proposed route have access to the range of statutory and discretionary property schemes.

Information about the schemes, frequently asked questions and the application process have been made widely available to the public at events, meetings, in our literature and on www.gov.uk, www.hs2.org.uk and hs2.commonplace.is

Indicator: We will provide clear and up to date information about our property schemes



¹ Usually 60m in rural areas.

² Surface safeguarding only.

³ Compensation for any reduction in the value of property as a result of the physical effects of the operation of the railway.

⁴ Applies to rural areas only and does not extend to areas beyond deep tunnels.

⁵ Available now for Phase One; only available for Phase 2a and 2b after Royal Assent of the respective Bills. Applies to rural areas only and does not extend to areas beyond deep tunnels.

Since their launch, HS2 have received and accepted the following numbers of applications to discretionary property schemes:

Discretionary property schemes	No. of applications	No. accepted	% acceptance
Rural Support Zone	484	383	79%
Homeowner Payment Zone	761	669	88%
Need to Sell	659	242	37%

We recognise that property issues are very sensitive for the people who are impacted by HS2 in this way.

We will continue to listen and learn lessons to improve how we communicate with people directly affected, ensuring that all of our approaches about land and property issues are as empathetic and compassionate as possible.



Community commitment:

We will display the Residents' Commissioner's and Construction Commissioner's contact details on all relevant materials, along with the HS2 Helpline information and complaints procedure

This commitment is about **how we are making information about the role and contact details of the commissioners accessible.**

We ensure that the Commissioner's contact details are available at all public events, and are also advertised on the HS2 website, Commonplace and all public materials.

Indicator: We will learn from the independent reports provided by both the Residents' and Construction Commissioner

Residents' Commissioner – Deborah Fazan

The independent Residents' Commissioner holds HS2 Ltd accountable to the commitments made in the Residents' Charter. The Residents' Commissioner meets regularly with the HS2 Ltd Chairman about emerging trends and concerns.

The Residents' Commissioner can be contacted on: residentscommissioner@hs2.org.uk

The Residents Charter can be found here: www.gov.uk/government/publications/hs2-residents-charter

The Residents' Commissioner oversees and monitors our commitments to you and produces regular reports that are published online at: www.gov.uk/government/collections/hs2-ltd-residents-commissioner

Construction Commissioner – Gareth Epps

The independent Construction Commissioner's role has been developed to mediate and monitor the way in which HS2 Ltd manages and responds to construction complaints. Gareth Epps is the interim Construction Commissioner, Gareth will be succeeded by the permanent Commissioner **Sir Mark Worthington** from October this year.

The Construction Commissioner will mediate any unresolved construction related disputes between HS2 Ltd and individuals or bodies, and provide advice to members of the public about how to make a complaint about construction.

The Construction Commissioner regularly meets with the HS2 Ltd Chief Executive Officer to raise any concerns or emerging trends across the project.

The Construction Commissioner can be contacted on: complaints@hs2-cc.org.uk
www.hs2-cc.org.uk

Learning from independent scrutiny

We work closely with our commissioners, ensuring we learn from the recommendations in their reports. Our responses to the formal recommendations made by our commissioners are published, and set out how we seek to implement solutions on the areas where they have concluded there is still scope for improvement.

We have now implemented the recommendations in the independent Bynoe report from 2016. The work we have completed over 2017 and 2018 in delivering improvements to our handling of enquiries and complaints closes our response to this report: www.gov.uk/government/publications/ian-bynoe-report-on-hs2-ltds-complaints-handling-and-community-engagement

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