

HS2

Guide to temporary rehousing and the Prolonged Disruption Compensation scheme



Introduction

High Speed Two (HS2) is the new high-speed railway for Britain.

Phase One of the railway is being built between the West Midlands and London. It will be followed by Phase 2a, which will connect the West Midlands and Crewe. Phase 2b will complete the HS2 network: the western leg will extend the railway from Crewe to Manchester, and the eastern leg will connect the West Midlands and Leeds.

We are HS2 Ltd, the company set up by the Government to design and build HS2.

We are committed to being a good neighbour and treating the communities where we work with respect and compassion. We're working hard to reduce the effects of building and operating HS2.

You can find information about the plans in your area on our local community website at: www.HS2inyourarea.co.uk

We will also update you by post and provide the latest information at our local engagement events.

Temporary rehousing and prolonged disruption

We are aware we may cause disruption to people who live and work near the route of HS2. We're doing all we can to keep this to a minimum, such as reducing construction-related noise and vibration as far as we can. We consider the time of day we carry out construction work and how we can best use 'quiet' equipment. Where these steps aren't enough, we'll offer you noise insulation for your property in the form of secondary glazing.

However, there may be occasions where we need to do more for you. This guide describes the options available in these circumstances through either temporary rehousing or the Prolonged Disruption Compensation scheme.

This guide explains:

- how we predict construction noise;
- how you'll know if you're eligible for further help;
- the options if you're eligible;
- the arrangements for temporary rehousing;
- details of the Prolonged Disruption Compensation scheme; and
- our approach to special cases.

This guide also provides information on how we will keep you informed and where you can go for further help.

Predicting the noise during construction

We will carry out 'noise modelling' to predict the level of construction noise outside your property. We consider the type of equipment we will use, how long we will use it for (and when), and the distance between your property and our work.

It's possible that the predicted noise you'll experience will go above a set threshold. This is known as the 'trigger level'. If this happens, we will contact you before the work to explain what your choices are and to allow you time to decide what you would like to do.

Working out if you're eligible for support

You will be eligible for temporary rehousing or the Prolonged Disruption Compensation scheme if:

- you own or live in a residential property or other building used for residential purposes; and
- the predicted or actual noise from the railway construction is higher than the trigger level. Our trigger levels reflect best practice and national policy.

The trigger level is the point at which the construction noise level is predicted to be above certain thresholds (as defined in the HS2 Information Paper E23: 'Control of Construction Noise and Vibration') for 10 or more days in any 15-day period. When noise levels are above the trigger level for this length of time, you'll be eligible for temporary rehousing or the Prolonged Disruption Compensation scheme.

We will write to you if our noise modelling shows you are eligible. However, if you haven't received a letter and think you should be eligible, please contact our Helpdesk, using the details provided at the back of this guide.

Your options

If you are eligible for temporary rehousing or the Prolonged Disruption Compensation scheme, we'll contact you to talk about your specific circumstances and discuss your options.

You'll need to decide whether you would like to be temporarily rehoused or stay in your home and receive cash through the Prolonged Disruption Compensation scheme.

We will not pay cash compensation and temporarily rehouse you at the same time. But you can ask to change between the two options. For example, you may take the cash compensation to start with and if the noise affects you more than expected, you can ask us to find you alternative accommodation.

The following illustration explains the step-by-step process and the options that are open to you.

Step-by-step guide to your options

Step 1

We'll assess the predicted noise levels about six months before construction starts.



Step 2

If the predicted noise triggers the temporary rehousing threshold, we'll send you a letter containing application forms and explain your options.



Step 3

We'll contact you to explain the three options (below) or you can tell us what you've chosen.

Temporary rehousing

Option 1

You can choose to be temporarily rehoused during the noisy construction work. We can arrange this for you or we can repay reasonable costs if you want to do this yourself. (See option 1 below.)

Prolonged Disruption Compensation scheme

Option 2 (see note below)

You can stay in your home and receive cash compensation instead of choosing temporary rehousing. (See option 2 below.)

Option 3 (see note below)

If the construction noise is more than the temporary rehousing trigger level for a continuous period of three or more months in a 12-month period, you can ask the Secretary of State to buy your property. (See option 3 below.)

Note: You must have, or be in the process of having, noise insulation installed for option 2. You may need to have noise insulation installed for option 3, depending on the timing of the construction work in relation to the purchase of your property.



Step 4

Once you've chosen the option you prefer, fill in the relevant application form and send it to us.



Step 5

Once we've received your application, we'll confirm if you're eligible and go ahead with your application.

If you've chosen to be temporarily rehoused, we will either provide you with proposals to rehouse you or give you the information you need to make your own arrangements. In either case, we will discuss the proposals with you and you won't be under any obligation to accept the offer.

If you've chosen the Prolonged Disruption Compensation scheme, we'll arrange for your monthly payment to be made or start the process of buying your home.

Once we have agreed your preferred option, we will go ahead with your wishes as set out in the sections below for:

- temporary rehousing, which is covered by option 1; and
- the Prolonged Disruption Compensation scheme, which is covered by both option 2 and option 3.

Option 1 – temporary rehousing

If you choose to be temporarily rehoused, we will offer to arrange the following.

- Temporary alternative accommodation, which may be in a hotel, serviced accommodation, such as a serviced apartment with a kitchen and living area, or rented accommodation, depending on how long you need it
- Removal services
- Storing and insuring your personal belongings
- Any increased insurance costs for the home you are leaving
- Putting pets in kennels, catteries and so on
- Disconnecting and later reconnecting gas, water, electricity and so on if necessary

The accommodation we offer will depend on what is available at the time and what you may need. You can choose to make alternative accommodation arrangements yourself. If this is the case, we will give you information and advice on all the matters listed above. We will also pay any costs we agree with you beforehand.

Whatever temporary rehousing arrangements you choose, we will pay, or refund you for, the reasonable costs of temporary rehousing. We will also pay any increased costs of maintaining or insuring your home while you live elsewhere.

If you have to maintain your property regularly under the terms of your lease or any other legal requirement, you'll still be responsible for this. We will make sure that you have suitable access to your property so you can do this.

If you are a tenant and we offer you temporary rehousing, you will still be responsible for the rent, bills and other payments at your current home, and you will still be a tenant there.

Our offer of temporary rehousing will include the extra cost of the accommodation you are being moved to. You are free to visit and use your home while you are in temporary housing, depending on the terms of your existing tenancy.

If your tenancy agreement ends while you are in the temporary accommodation, you should – if you want to – renew it with your landlord in the normal way. If you choose not to renew your tenancy, the money we pay you to meet the cost of the alternative accommodation will end when your tenancy ends.

If you are a landlord, your tenant will stay as your tenant and will still have to pay rent in line with your agreement with them.

Options 2 and 3 – the Prolonged Disruption Compensation scheme

The Prolonged Disruption Compensation scheme supports people who will be disrupted by our construction work for an extended time.

The temporary rehousing thresholds and eligibility criteria set a representative measure for ‘prolonged disruption’. Where noise levels are high, it is most likely that other types of intensive and particularly disruptive construction work are also taking place – for example, noise caused by extra traffic.

Where noise from our construction work is above the noise insulation trigger level, you can have noise insulation installed so your property remains suitable to live in. Where the noise is above the temporary rehousing trigger level, you will be eligible to be temporarily rehoused.

The Prolonged Disruption Compensation scheme modifies and improves these measures, to:

- give you the option to remain in your home, avoid the disruption of being temporarily rehoused and receive cash compensation instead; and
- give owner-occupiers of residential properties the option to ask the Secretary of State to buy their property in those cases where they would need to be temporarily rehoused for a period of three or more months in a 12-month period.

Here are more details about option 2 and option 3.

Option 2 – cash compensation

As an alternative to temporary rehousing, you can stay in your home and receive cash compensation.

If you choose this option, you must have, or be in the process of having, appropriate noise insulation installed at your home.

You can find our guide to noise insulation at:

<https://www.hs2.org.uk/in-your-area/assistance-for-property-owners/find-out-if-your-home-is-affected/>

The cash compensation is a fixed amount and we will pay it for the period of time that construction noise goes above the temporary rehousing trigger levels, as set out in Information Paper E23. You can find this guide at:

<https://www.hs2.org.uk/in-your-area/assistance-for-property-owners/find-out-if-your-home-is-affected/>

Your compensation will be paid each month.

The amount of compensation we'll pay you will be based on your home – the number of people living in your home doesn't make any difference. We'll use council tax bands to work out the compensation, and it will be equivalent to the average property rental value for your tax band. The most compensation we'll pay in total will be £30,000, or £50,000 in Greater London to reflect the higher property prices there.

Only one claim can be made for each property. That is, there is only one compensation payment per household, not per occupier.

Option 3 – temporary rehousing for more than three months

We appreciate that being temporarily rehoused for a long time can be stressful. If we identify that the noise level from construction is more than the temporary rehousing trigger level for a continuous period of three or more months in a 12-month period, we'll talk to you about further ways we can support you.

If these circumstances apply and you're an owner-occupier (you own a property that is your main home) you will be able to ask the Secretary of State to buy your property for its full 'unblighted' value (that is, the value of the property in current market conditions as if there were no plans for HS2).

This only applies if you own your property – it doesn't apply to tenancies. If you're a tenant, you will only be eligible for temporary rehousing or the Prolonged Disturbance Compensation payment.

If you are eligible, the Government will pay 100% of the unblighted open-market value, as assessed by two independent valuers. The Government will not cover extra costs, such as legal fees or removal costs.

Special cases

We're committed to being a good neighbour in the communities where we're working. In some instances, we recognise that residents or buildings may not be adequately protected by our policies, and these special cases need to be considered individually.

Examples of special cases include:

- people who have a medical condition which will be seriously aggravated by our construction noise;
- homes where noise insulation won't work, such as houseboats or mobile homes; and
- night workers.

We've set up a panel to oversee and manage the way special cases are assessed. If you believe you have been negatively affected by our activities you should contact our Helpdesk or community engagement teams. The panel will consider your circumstances, together with any supporting information it may ask you or our contractors for. This will help the panel decide if we should offer any alternative measures or reasonable adjustments. In these circumstances, any measures will be provided as we decide.

Frequently asked questions

Do I have to move?

No. If you accept a temporary rehousing offer you don't have to move if you don't want to. You can stay in your home and receive cash compensation through the Prolonged Disruption Compensation scheme.

What happens to my existing tenancy if I move out temporarily?

You'll still be responsible for the rent, bills and other payments at your current home and you'll still be a tenant there. Our offer covers the extra cost of the temporary relocation accommodation. You're free to visit and use your current home as you wish during the relocation, depending on the terms of your tenancy. If your tenancy agreement ends during the relocation, you should – if you want to – renew it with your landlord in the normal way. If you choose not to renew your tenancy, our payment to meet the cost of the relocation accommodation will end when your tenancy ends.

I am a landlord. Will you compensate me for lost rent if you temporarily relocate my tenant?

No. Your tenant will remain your tenant and have to pay rent in the normal way.

Will the temporary accommodation you offer me be the same standard as my current home?

The type of temporary accommodation we offer you will depend on the time you'll be staying there. For short stays, hotel accommodation may be appropriate. For longer periods, alternative rented accommodation would be more suitable. In all cases, we'll take account of your existing accommodation as far as possible.

How far away from my home will I be if I move to temporary accommodation?

The accommodation we offer you will depend on what's available at the time and your reasonable requirements. Some people may be prepared to move to another area temporarily if they would be nearer friends, family or work. Other people may need to stay in the same area.

What criteria do you use to decide whether I qualify for temporary rehusing and the Prolonged Disruption Compensation scheme?

We use our 'trigger' levels to decide whether you qualify for temporary rehusing and the Prolonged Disruption Compensation scheme. Our trigger levels are in line with national policy and are set out in our Information Paper E23.

My neighbour has received a letter about temporary rehusing and the Prolonged Disruption Compensation scheme but I haven't. Why not?

We identify and write to people who are likely to be eligible for the scheme. If you haven't received a letter and feel you should have, please contact our Helpdesk using the details at the end of this guide.

How will you calculate the compensation I'll receive through the Prolonged Disruption Compensation scheme?

Owner-occupiers and tenants of properties where we predict noise levels will be above the temporary rehousing thresholds for 10 or more days in any 15-day period during construction will be eligible for cash compensation. The amount we pay you will be calculated using council tax bands and will be equal to 100% of the average local property rental value. We'll decide the rental value based on advice from an independent expert to make sure it reflects local prices. The amount we'll pay – not more than £30,000, or £50,000 in Greater London – is an alternative to being temporarily rehoused.

What is noise insulation?

Noise insulation refers to the measures we can take to reduce noise at eligible properties. The measures include:

- secondary glazing for living room and bedroom windows;
- installing extra ventilation, such as a small electric fan on an external wall to draw air into your property, so you can close windows to block out noise;
- blinds for windows that have secondary glazing; and
- insulation for external doors.

You can find out more about how we manage noise and disruption in the Information Paper E23: 'Control of Construction Noise and Vibration', the 'HS2 Prolonged Disruption Compensation Scheme Policy' and 'Noise Insulation: A Guide to the HS2 Noise Insulation Scheme'.

You can find copies of these documents on our website at <https://www.hs2.org.uk/in-your-area/assistance-for-property-owners/find-out-if-your-home-is-affected/construction-noise-and-vibration/>

If you don't have access to the internet, we can send you a copy of the information paper by post. Call our Helpdesk on 08081 434 434 or email HS2enquiries@hs2.org.uk

Keeping you informed

We are committed to keeping you informed about work on HS2. This includes making sure you know what to expect and when to expect it, as well as how we can help.

Our independent commissioners

We have an independent Residents' Commissioner whose job is to make sure we keep to the promises we make in our Residents' Charter.

Our independent Construction Commissioner's role is to mediate and monitor the way in which we manage and respond to construction complaints.

For more information visit www.hs2.org.uk/in-your-area

Holding us to account

If you are unhappy for any reason, you can make a complaint by contacting our HS2 Helpdesk team.

For more information visit www.hs2.org.uk/how-to-complain

Property and compensation

You can find out all about HS2 and properties along the line of the route by visiting our website.

You can also find out if you're eligible for compensation. Visit www.hs2.org.uk/in-your-area

Contact us

Our HS2 Helpdesk team are available all day, every day. You can contact them by:

 Freephone
08081 434 434

 Minicom
08081 456 472

 Email
hs2enquiries@hs2.org.uk

Write to

FREEPOST

HS2 Community Engagement

Website www.hs2.org.uk

To keep up to date with what is happening in your area, visit:

www.hs2inyourarea.co.uk

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