

# HS2

## **HS2 Project Rescoping: Interim Policy Update**

### **HS2 Rent Back Policy**

**July 2025**

Version 3.0

# Introduction

**The advice and guidance within the attached document have not yet been updated to reflect the decision not to proceed with Phase Two of HS2** published in [‘Network North: Transforming British Transport’](#) on 4 October 2023.

In January 2024, HS2 safeguarding was removed across the majority of the former Phase 2a route (West Midlands to Crewe). Safeguarding was retained close to Handsacre to allow Phase One of HS2 to connect to the West Coast Main Line so that HS2 trains can reach cities in the north of England and Scotland on the existing West Coast Main Line.

In July 2025, HS2 safeguarding was removed across the majority of the former Phase 2b Eastern Leg route (West Midlands to Leeds). A short section of safeguarding was retained in Central Leeds to allow for potential enhancements to the existing station. The Government will set out more detailed plans in due course, including further details of a disposal programme for land and property acquired for HS2 that is no longer required.

Any land acquired for Phase 2 that is no longer required will be sold in line with Treasury rules.

High Speed Two (HS2) Ltd is working with the Department for Transport and we will update our policies and procedures when further information is available.

## **Update of HS2 Rent Back Policy**

This guidance provides information about our Rent Back Policy.

If you are selling your property to the Government you can ask to rent it back and stay in the property, which may be your home. This is known as 'Rent Back.' Rent Back is designed to offer people affected by the route of the railway reassurance and flexibility about their options. It allows you to carry on living in, or working from, your property and remain part of the local community.

Rent Back will continue to be available where the Secretary of State for Transport has agreed to purchase a property under Statutory Blight or a discretionary scheme and where the applicant and property meet the relevant criteria.

### **When will this document be updated?**

When changes are required, HS2 Ltd will update this guidance document as soon as possible.

### **Need more information?**

We regularly update our 'Frequently Asked Questions' webpage. It includes questions about our land and property programme and provides the most up to date information. These can be viewed here: <https://www.hs2.org.uk/in-your-area/assistance-for-property-owners/project-rescoping-phase-two-cancellation/>

If you have further queries, the easiest way to contact us is via the HS2 Helpdesk. The HS2 Helpdesk is open all day, every day on 08081 434 434 (freephone); Minicom: 08081 456 472; or email us at [HS2enquiries@hs2.org.uk](mailto:HS2enquiries@hs2.org.uk).

# HS2

## Rent Back scheme



[www.hs2.org.uk](http://www.hs2.org.uk)

CS1408b

# Introduction

High Speed Two (HS2) is Britain's new high-speed railway. It is being built by High Speed Two Limited (HS2 Ltd), the company set up by the Government to deliver HS2.

This booklet explains how you can rent back your property from HS2 Ltd if the Government agrees to buy it. It also answers some frequently asked questions.

HS2 is being built in phases and we need to buy land and property that is located along the route. We also act on the Government's behalf for HS2's property schemes, including the Need to Sell and Voluntary Purchase schemes. The Rent Back scheme is a property scheme that allows you to stay in your property.

Phase One of HS2, which is being built first, links the West Midlands and London. Phase 2a of the railway is between the West Midlands and Crewe. Phase 2b will extend the railway from Crewe to Manchester and from the West Midlands to Leeds.

# How the Rent Back scheme works

If you are selling your property to the Government you can ask to rent it back and stay in the property, which may be your home. This is known as 'rent back'.

There are several reasons why you may be selling your home to the Government.

- We need your property for the railway's tracks, services and buildings, such as new stations, train depots, viaducts and cuttings.
- You may live close to the new railway and be in one of the Government's property schemes that allows you to sell your property to us – for example, the Voluntary Purchase or Need to Sell scheme.
- The Government may have agreed to buy your property because you have special circumstances that mean you need to sell.

Rent back is designed to offer people affected by the route of the railway reassurance and flexibility about their options. It allows you to carry on living in, or working from, your property and remain part of the local community.

You should ask your HS2 case manager to explain how you can rent back your property when you are arranging to sell it to the Government.

If you want to apply for the Rent Back scheme, we will:

- consider the cost of any repairs or improvements to your property that we may need to make so we can rent it back to you;
- check all the property's service installations, such as the electricity and gas, as required by law; and
- work out the property's rental value on the open market once we have made any necessary improvements.

# Frequently asked questions about the Rent Back scheme

## Are all properties affected by HS2 covered by the Rent Back scheme?

All properties the Government buys for HS2 can be considered for our Rent Back scheme. However, the following conditions must be met.

- The cost of maintaining the property or making any improvements must be a reasonable use of taxpayers' money.
- The property must meet the standards required by health and safety legislation. If work needs to be done to the property, it will take place between the exchange of contracts and the legal completion of the purchase.
- In the short term, the property must not be needed for building work in connection with HS2.
- The person selling the property must have the right to rent in the UK and pass our reference checks for tenants.

Some properties, such as listed buildings, may not be suitable for rent back. However, we aim to make all decisions fairly.

We follow standard commercial principles when buying properties, and we make sure all purchases pass our value-for-money test.

## **Why can't I rent back the property without having any of the work done?**

We have to follow the Government's regulations on rented properties, including the need for these properties to be safe and suitable for tenants. The legal standard for renting a property is higher than that for an owner-occupier.

## **What happens if the sale is agreed and you need to carry out work to the property?**

We will tell you what work needs to be done and how long this will take. You might experience disruption while any improvements are carried out if you decide to continue living at the property during this time. Your tenancy will start once the work has finished and the purchase has completed.

## **Do I have to agree to rent back?**

No. It is entirely up to you. You need to be happy with the arrangement and the tenancy agreement we offer you.

## **How much rent will I pay?**

If your property is suitable for rent back, we will work out the rent based on the rents charged for similar properties in your area on the open market. Like any landlord, we will ask you for a deposit and to provide references.



## **What will be the terms of the tenancy agreement?**

The tenancy we offer will be an open-market rent. Residential tenancies are usually granted for an initial term of six months. Neither you nor we can end the tenancy during this period.

After six months, you can end the tenancy by giving us one month's notice or we can end it by giving you two months' notice. Commercial tenancies will be granted for an initial minimum term of one year.

For residential tenancies, we will be responsible for:

- keeping the structure of the property in good repair;
- making sure the heating, water, gas and electricity installations are in good order and that they are tested; and
- installing smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms and heat detectors.

Further details of the tenancy agreement will be made available throughout the process.

## **As a tenant, you will be responsible for matters including:**

- some internal repairs and routine property maintenance;
- paying utility bills; and
- paying council tax.

Commercial tenancies will be on standard commercial lease terms.

# More information about our Rent Back scheme

For more information about rent back, please go to [www.hs2.org.uk/in-your-area/assistance-for-property-owners](http://www.hs2.org.uk/in-your-area/assistance-for-property-owners)

You can talk to someone about the Rent Back scheme by contacting your dedicated case officer, who can talk to you about your options.

Or, you can speak to the HS2 Helpdesk on 08081 434 434 or email us at [hs2enquiries@hs2.org.uk](mailto: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](http://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](http://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](http://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](mailto:hs2enquiries@hs2.org.uk)**

Write to

**FREEPOST**

**HS2 Community Engagement**

Website **[www.hs2.org.uk](http://www.hs2.org.uk)**

To keep up to date with what is happening in your area, visit:  
**[www.hs2inyourarea.co.uk](http://www.hs2inyourarea.co.uk)**

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