

HS2 Update

West Midlands to Crewe

February 2021

High Speed Two (HS2) is the new high speed railway for Britain. Phase 2a is the section of the planned railway between the West Midlands and Crewe, passing through parts of Staffordshire and Cheshire. This newsletter explains what to expect in the next few months, provides information about funding and property schemes and sets out the support available.



Phase 2a hybrid Bill reaches Royal Assent

In July 2017, the Government deposited a hybrid Bill in Parliament to secure the powers to construct and operate HS2 Phase 2a between the West Midlands and Crewe. On 11th February HS2 took a major step forward, as the latest phase of Britain's new railway successfully completed over three years of Parliamentary scrutiny to receive Royal Assent.

This now provides us with the powers we need to build and operate the railway. Our focus now moves to the enabling works and further design development of the railway.

This phase of HS2 represents the first new intercity railway built in the North of England for over 100 years. The new section from West Midlands to Crewe will be built at the same time as the line between London and the West Midlands.

The placing of long-distance services onto their own set of high-speed tracks between London and Crewe frees up space on the West Coast Main Line and other lines for more local and commuter trains.

This is fantastic news for the economy and jobs. HS2 is already supporting over 13,000 jobs, and the extension to Crewe will see an additional 1,920 full time construction jobs and further jobs through suppliers of goods and services.

HS2 and Covid-19

We continue to postpone all face-to-face engagement events and meetings for the foreseeable future.

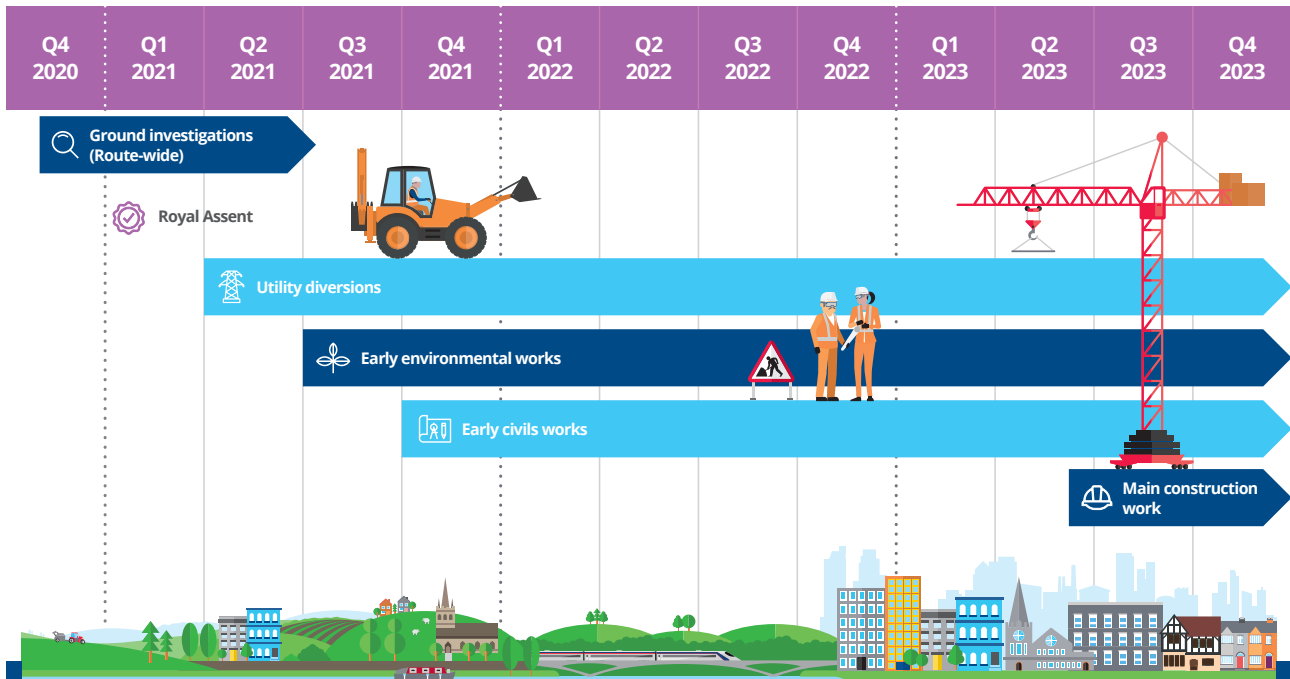
We are keeping communities informed and involved in different ways including updates and alerts from our local community websites.

You can still sign up for updates in your local area at:

hs2instaffordshire.co.uk
hs2incheshire.co.uk



What happens next on Phase 2a



Ground Investigations

To help us design and build HS2 in the safest and most efficient way, we need to understand ground conditions along the route. To achieve this, we are carrying out a Ground Investigations (GI) programme for Phase 2a. The latest GI programme along the Phase 2a route started in November 2020 and will take several months to complete. These investigations will enable us to understand the ground conditions along the Phase 2a route in preparation for building the railway.



We will engage closely with landowners whose land we need to use for the work and inform communities who may be affected by them. One method of doing this will be via a Notification of Works leaflet, which will be distributed at least two weeks prior to any works starting in your area.

Utility diversions and changes to roads

Before any major construction begins, we will need to divert existing utilities infrastructure, such as water, gas mains, and electricity pylons that are in the path of the construction areas.

In some locations we will need to make changes to roads which could mean realignments of existing roads, widening in places and closing roads to allow for the construction and operation of the railway. These changes will be either temporary or permanent.



Ecology Surveys and Early Environmental Works

A number of planned environmental surveys were understandably restricted during 2020 due to the COVID pandemic. We will resume our ecology surveys in early 2021 as part of our preparations for the Early Environmental Works. This will include surveys relating to local ecology, helping us to understand the needs of local wildlife populations.

The Early Environmental Works ensure mitigation measures are met before the main civils construction begins. This will include woodland, wetlands, grassland, newt ponds, reptile and amphibian hibernacula and bat houses.

Our multi-discipline design and construction teams are working alongside ecological professionals to secure the best outcome for wildlife on these sites.



Civils - Constructing the railway

We will need to set up a number of construction sites across the route. Once we are able to establish the 'site compounds' we can then start the earthworks. This will include excavating cuttings, building embankments and the start of tunnelling construction.

As we complete the major civils work our focus will then shift to installing the railway systems including ballast, slab tracks, signalling and power supply. As this stage is complete there will be a period of testing and commissioning of each phase of the railway before any services can start to run.



HS2 Funding and Property Schemes

Funding for local communities

The HS2 Community and Business Funds for Phase One have been open for application since March 2017. With over 130 projects already funded since then, communities and businesses disrupted by the construction of HS2 are already realising the tangible benefits that the project can bring.



It was announced in January 2018 that an additional £5m would be made available for Phase 2a communities and businesses.

As with the Funds for Phase One, applications will open in due course now that Royal Assent has been achieved.

In the meantime, further information can be obtained from Groundwork UK; HS2funds@groundwork.co.uk or 0121 237 5880

Information for property owners

Now that the plans for Phase 2a of HS2 have been approved by Parliament, if you own and live in a property between 120 and 300 metres of the line of route in rural areas where the railway is not in a tunnelled section, you may be eligible to claim a one-time cash payment under the HS2 Homeowner Payment (HOP) scheme.

The aim of the scheme is to make sure that people who live near the new high speed railway receive an early share in the benefits of HS2.

The Homeowner Payment scheme operates within a zone made up of three 60 metre wide bands.

The zone typically starts 120 metres from the centre line of the railway and runs to 300 metres from the centre line of the railway.

The payments are made to owner-occupiers of a house, business or agricultural unit who meet certain requirements. The cash value offered is dependent on the band in which the main home (or main building) is in and are valued between £8,000 and £24,000.

We will be writing to properties that are within the Homeowner Payment zone shortly, informing them that applications are now open across Phase 2a and we will at that point include the full Homeowner payment Guidance document.

The amounts payable are as follows:
HOP band 1 (120m to 180m) £24,000, HOP band 2 (180m to 240m) £16,000 and HOP band 3 (240m to 300m) £8,000.

If you want to find out more and to check if your property is located in a HOP band, and information on our other property schemes please contact the HS2 Helpdesk on freephone 08081 434 434 or email hs2enquiries@hs2.org.uk.

Further information and application forms can be found on the HS2 website
hs2.org.uk/documents/homeowner-payment/



Managing the impacts of construction traffic

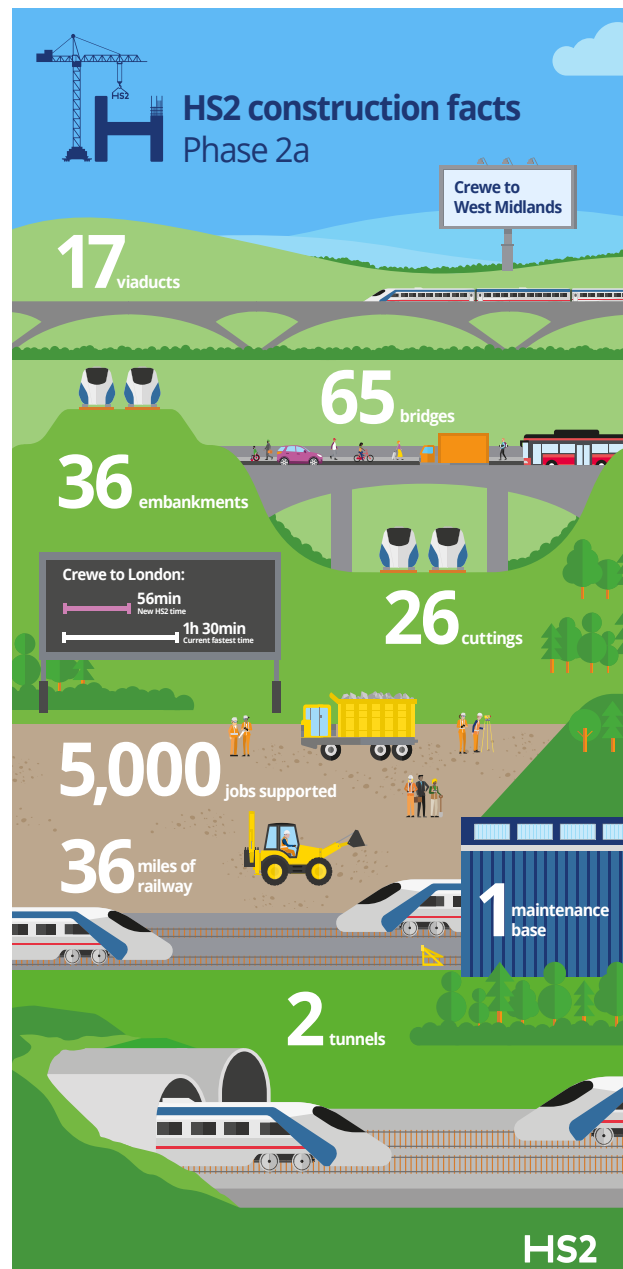
We understand that traffic management during future construction work is a key issue for local communities. Our work will lead to more vehicles being on the roads in some locations.

We have established regular Local Traffic Liaison Meetings with the highway authorities and the emergency services. These meetings will provide an opportunity for our contractors to present proposals for future works affecting the highway, allowing the highways authorities to discuss our proposals and coordinate the work.

Further detail can be found in Phase 2a Information Paper E3: Management of Traffic during Construction.



As part of our ongoing community engagement, we will regularly update and notify local residents and businesses affected by our works in advance of them taking place. This includes informing people about changes on the roads, such as the dates and duration of roadworks and diversion routes. We will use a range of methods to provide this information, ranging from delivering leaflets in the post to placing signs on roads. We'll also use our dedicated website to provide a regular flow of information.



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

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. www.gov.uk/government/publications/hs2-residents-charter

We also have an independent Residents' Commissioner whose job is to make sure we keep to the promises we make in the Charter and to keep it under constant review. Find reports at: www.gov.uk/government/collections/hs2-ltd-residents-commissioner

You can contact the Commissioner at: residentscommissioner@hs2.org.uk

Construction Commissioner

The Construction Commissioner's role is to mediate and monitor the way in which HS2 Ltd manages and responds to construction complaints. You can contact the Construction Commissioner at: complaints@hs2-cc.org.uk

Property and compensation

You can find out all about HS2 and properties along the line of route by visiting: www.gov.uk/government/collections/hs2-property

Find out if you're eligible for compensation at: www.gov.uk/claim-compensation-if-affected-by-hs2

Holding us to account

If you are unhappy for any reason, you can make a complaint by contacting our HS2 Helpdesk team. For more details on our complaints process, please visit our website: www.hs2.org.uk/how-to-complain

Contact us

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

 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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