

Contact our HS2 Helpdesk team on **08081 434 434**

HS2 Update

Old Oak and North Acton | Summer 2025

High Speed Two (HS2) is the new high speed railway for Britain. Their contractors, Balfour Beatty VINCI SYSTRA (BBVS) and Skanska Costain STRABAG (SCS) joint ventures, are continuing works in Old Oak and North Acton to build the new railway.

Victoria Road Crossover Box

Work continues to progress at pace at the Victoria Road Crossover Box (VRCB) site in North Acton.

We have started assembling the concrete framework, which will form part of the visible superstructure of the future headhouse and shaft. This milestone marks a significant step in the transformation of the site, following years of below-ground excavation and tunnelling works.

The headhouse will eventually provide vital access to the underground shaft and provide ventilation, emergency access,

and maintenance of the HS2 railway system beneath London.

This above-ground phase will see the installation of reinforced concrete and future steel components, designed to create a strong and durable frame that blends functionality with architectural design. Once complete, the headhouse will be finished with cladding and other external features in line with planning and environmental considerations.

The start of the concrete structure is a clear sign of progress, as the VRCB site evolves from having the main operations taking place underground to a visible piece of future infrastructure for the high-speed railway.



Old Oak Common Lane

As you may have seen in the media, the HS2 programme is undergoing a reset which includes reviewing the entire programme cost and schedule. As a result, we are still finalising the details for the long-term closure of Old Oak Common Lane taking into consideration the reset of the wider HS2 programme.

However, we can confirm **the road will not close before the spring of 2027.**

For more details about Old Oak Common Lane, please see the newsletter at <https://www.hs2.org.uk/about-us/documents/old-oak-common-lane-newsletter-july-2025/>



Concrete structure of headhouse being constructed



HS2 drives £10 billion into West London

A new study by the consultancy, Arcadis, shows that the arrival of Old Oak Common Station will boost the local economy by £10 billion over the next 10 years, and the area around the station is described as the capital's new development hotspot.

The study is set out in the report, *From trains to cranes: HS2 and the West London development boom*, and outlines how planning applications in the 1.5-mile radius around the station site have increased by 22% since Royal Assent for HS2 was granted in 2017. The total value of the planning applications submitted so far is £3.41 billion over the past seven years - an increase of 325% from the previous seven-year period. It is also estimated that the arrival of the station will generate over 22,000 new homes and almost 19,000 new jobs in the local area.



A view of the Old Oak area

In the past, businesses around the station were mainly in the retail, wholesale, and logistics industries – now, the area is being transformed into a hub for high-tech jobs and innovation. Along with this, annual salaries in the area are predicted to increase by over £1,500 per year.

You can read the full report here:
<http://www.hs2.org.uk/hs2-in-west-london>.

Ealing residents benefit at Old Oak Common

Two HS2 apprentices from Ealing will now enjoy a free university education and a four-year extension to their employment contract at Old Oak Common.

After completing their two-year apprenticeships with Balfour Beatty VINCI Systra (BBVS). IT Support Engineer Tyler Pearce-Scott and Apprentice Civil Engineer Charlotte Thomas impressed the site team with their hard work.

Charlotte, a former Brentside High School pupil, joined BBVS to study a Level 4 Civil Engineering apprenticeship. Since joining the company, she has played a supporting role in the design and construction of the 850-metre-long station box, and the team could see she has a promising future.

Eager to retain and upskill local talent, Charlotte was offered a new four-year contract, along with a fully funded BEng Civil Engineering degree. She now spends two weeks of every month studying at the University of Exeter and the remaining two weeks supporting construction of the new superhub station.

Charlotte, 21, from Ealing said, "My HS2 journey began at my local high school in Ealing. An initial conversation with HS2's skills and employment team led to me securing a work experience placement, and when the opportunity to apply for an apprenticeship came along, I didn't hesitate to go for it. I would have never imagined that I'd progress to studying civil engineering at the University of Exeter."

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HS2 apprentice, Charlotte Thomas with Ealing Council Leader, Cllr Peter Mason

Ealing residents benefit at Old Oak Common continued

Tyler also showed great potential after joining BBVS to study for a Level 3 Information Communication Technician apprenticeship.

Digital technology plays a huge role in the behind-the-scenes design and planning for the station's construction, and he consistently demonstrated a strong work ethic and high skillset.

He too was rewarded for his efforts and will now progress onto a Level 6 Digital and Technology Solutions apprenticeship, enabling him to study for a BSc Digital Technology Solutions degree at the University of Roehampton.

Tyler, 20, from Ealing said, "I was studying for my A-Levels and realised part way through that it just wasn't for me. I wanted a career in IT, but as a teenager, it was hard to find a way in. Securing an apprenticeship on such a huge project has opened a whole new world for me."

To see all the open HS2 apprenticeships, please visit the Careers Portal on their website:
https://jobs.hs2.org.uk/#en/sites/CX_1001

Helping Students prepare for the future

The Team at SCS's Victoria Road site recently hosted 10 students from Ealing's Alternative Provision (AP) school.

The students joined our site team for a tour of site and a speed networking carousel with our specialists.

Careers with HS2

The construction of HS2 will show the world the very best of British skills, innovation and ambition.

If you would like to be part of this ground breaking project and find out what opportunities are available, please visit <https://www.hs2.org.uk/jobs-and-skills/careers-with-hs2-ltd/>

Preparing inmates for life after release

Throughout February and April, staff from Old Oak Common volunteered at Wormwood Scrubs Prison with the charity, StandOut. During the sessions, inmates were offered mock interviews and CV building sessions.

A BBVS Employee and Industrial Relations Assurance Advisor, noted that the opportunity to volunteer at Wormwood Scrubs prison was invaluable.

It allowed staff to step into a role that demanded both empathy and professionalism, giving them a better understanding of the complexities involved in the rehabilitation and reintegration process of individuals within the criminal justice system.



A StandOut career coach supporting the volunteering at Wormwood Scrubs Prison

The positive feedback from the inmates, their growth and development, and the collaborative effort of all involved made it clear that these types of initiatives are crucial in helping individuals successfully reintegrate into society.



HS2 operative

Local playground boosted by £70,000 HS2 grant

The Old Oak Park Royal Development Corporation has received a £70,000 grant through HS2's Community and Environment Fund (CEF Local) to upgrade the children's play area at Midland Terrace.



Midland Terrace children's playground

The project improved the safety and quality of the playground, making it a more fun, welcoming and accessible space for local families. Enhancements to the soft landscaping and planting have boosted biodiversity, creating a greener more engaging environment for all.

A great example of how infrastructure investment can deliver lasting local benefits.

New little library

The revamped children's playground at Midland Terrace has a new addition from SCS – a little library.



Little Library in Midland Terrace children's playground

Located beside the benches and climbing frames, the small book house is packed with stories for all ages. Kids and adults are encouraged to take a book, leave a book, and share the joy of reading.

We hope the little library will inspire new readers. The small library is a reminder that sometimes the best adventures come not just from the playground, but from the pages of a book.

Community and Business Funds

HS2 is offering two funds that are available to local communities and businesses between the West Midlands and London, to help with the disruption caused by our construction work. These are the Community and Environment Fund (**CEF**) and the Business and Local Economy Fund (**BLEF**).

The CEF is designed to give communities the opportunity to share in the benefits of HS2. It is an allocated fund that communities can apply for, to help support local projects that aim to improve their local area.

The BLEF is designed to support local economies that may be disrupted by the construction of HS2. BLEF grants are for local business support organisations and local authorities to help maintain business activity in local communities.

For more information about each of these funds, including how to apply, please visit:

<https://www.groundwork.org.uk/hs2funds>

Supporting the community

Are you involved in a local community project or a volunteering initiative that could benefit from some extra support?

We're always looking for ways to get involved, whether it's through community investment projects that need resources, or volunteering initiatives where our team can lend a helping hand.

If you have a project or initiative in mind, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. Please contact the HS2 Helpdesk at HS2enquiries@hs2.org.uk



HS2 operatives volunteering on Grand Union Canal

SCSJV launches groundbreaking Hazard School at Willesden Euroterminal site

SCSJV has unveiled a pioneering Hazard School at its Willesden Euroterminal site — a unique training zone designed to copy real-life construction scenarios in a safe, controlled environment. The initiative provides contractors and apprentices with the opportunity to practice identifying and responding to on-site risks before facing them on live projects.

This hands-on approach supports a strong safety culture and boosts confidence among workers, making sure they're better prepared on various site tasks. The Hazard School is already proving to be a powerful learning tool and is set to be submitted as a best practice innovation to the Considerate Constructors Scheme (CCS).

SCSJV hopes the concept will set a new benchmark for construction training and inspire wider adoption across the industry, enhancing safety standards on projects nationwide.



Suspension rigging at the Hazard School

Keeping you informed

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 you.

The Residents' Commissioner

The independent Residents' Commissioner oversees and monitors our commitments to you.

The commissioner's reports and our responses can be found at www.gov.uk/government/collections/hs2-ltd-residents-commissioner

The Residents' Commissioner makes sure we fulfil the commitments in the HS2 Community Engagement Strategy (<https://bit.ly/3oOA25j>).

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

Construction Commissioner

The independent Construction Commissioner regularly meets our Chief Executive Officer to raise any concerns or emerging trends across HS2.

The Construction Commissioner's role has been developed to monitor the way we manage and respond to construction complaints.

The commissioner mediates on disputes about construction, involving individuals and organisations, that we can't resolve. The commissioner advises members of the public about how to make a complaint about construction.

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

Property and compensation

You can find out about HS2 and properties along the route by visiting:

www.gov.uk/government/collections/hs2-property

Find out if you can claim 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 the HS2 Helpdesk. For more details on our complaints process, please visit:

www.hs2.org.uk/in-your-area/contact-us/how-to-complain/

Contact us

Contact our HS2 Helpdesk team all day, every day of the year on:

 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 local area, visit: **www.HS2inyourarea.co.uk**

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