

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

HS2 Update

Aylesbury Area | Winter 2025



High Speed Two (HS2) is the new high-speed railway for Britain. Should you have any questions or enquiries regarding our works, please contact the Helpdesk details of which can be found in this newsletter. We will be keeping our local website www.hs2inbucksandox.co.uk up to date with information on our works in the local area. You can join our local mailing lists for works updates at www.hs2.org.uk/local-mailing-list



What's inside this newsletter

Our newsletter is a great way to keep up to date with all things HS2 in the Aylesbury area. In this winter edition, we'll look back at achievements across the project in 2025. We'll also review construction progress and planned works over the next few months and shine a spotlight on interesting fossil discoveries and some of the fantastic community investment and social value initiatives we've delivered this year.

You'll also find:

- HS2 reset update: testing the new railway
- Link to ariel footage showing construction progress along the HS2 trace in Buckinghamshire
- Area map
- Information on how to contact us and stay informed



Drop-in event

Over the year we have run specific community events and drop-in sessions in our Mobile Visitor Centre and local village halls and community hubs.

We are planning our programme of engagement events for next year.

Details of all upcoming events for 2026 will be listed here:

<https://www.hs2.org.uk/events>

Left: The Thame Valley Viaduct with newly installed concrete parapets

From construction to a working railway: how HS2 will take shape

A driving force behind HS2's revised scheduling plan is the completion of an initial section of the HS2 route where high-speed trains will be tested - the **'test area'**

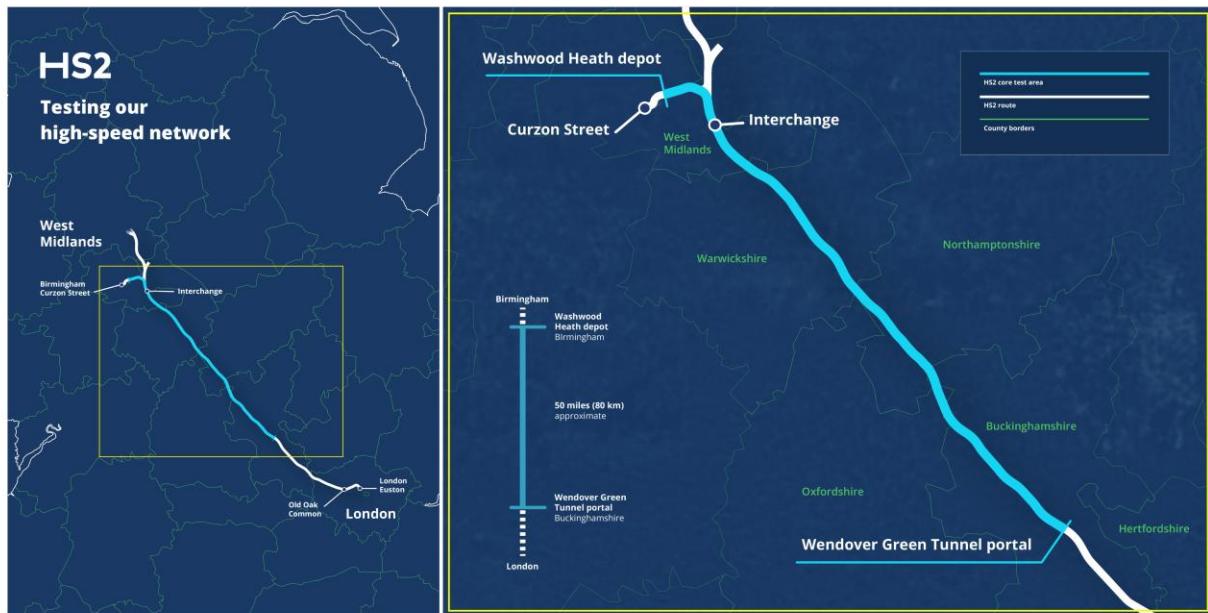
A review as part of the reset has concluded that insufficient time had been allocated to safely complete the railway's multiple testing stages. The test area will now be delivered in phases, allowing testing to start earlier and ensuring the programme remains on schedule.

The first section is approximately 50 miles long and runs from Washwood Heath in Birmingham to the north portal of the Wendover green tunnel in Buckinghamshire. This section of the trace will be overlaid with track, power, signalling and communications systems ready for testing to begin.

The completion of civil engineering works on this section of the route is now the overriding priority, ready for Rail Systems. Alongside the need to operate within the annual funding envelope from government, it is why decisions have been made to defer works elsewhere on the route.

This means that we will continue to keep building and progressing with the programme to ensure that we are able to fully deliver the critical pathway for the HS2 test area.

For more information on the transition to Rail Systems click [here](#), or visit: <https://mediacentre.hs2.org.uk/blogs/from-civils-to-systems>



Test area map above; Washwood Heath to Wendover

Key milestones

Stoke Mandeville Relief Road and A4010 realignment (Stoke Mandeville)

In early November, the finishing works to realign the A4010 Risborough Road onto the new Stoke Mandeville Relief Road (SMRR) were successfully completed.

In collaboration with Buckinghamshire Council's South East Aylesbury Link Road (SEALR) the 2.3km-long Stoke Mandeville Relief Road was opened to the public. Working around the clock during a series of road closures along the A4010, our teams completed and opened the road on 5 November, including a new footway and dedicated cycle path.

Forming part of the SMRR, the 40 meter-long Stoke Mandeville overbridge will support the local community to pass safely over the HS2 track below. Grass verges on either side will allow the bridge to blend in with its natural surroundings.

This section of new road connects the A4010 and the B4443 Lower Road, bypassing the village of Stoke Mandeville. Following the opening of the A41 Bicester Road and A418 Oxford Road realignments in 2024, this marks the third and final A road realignment we've opened in the Aylesbury area.



Above: EKFB, HS2 and Buckinghamshire Council celebrate the opening of the Stoke Mandeville Relief Road



Above: Stoke Mandeville overbridge

Material movement across Risborough Road temporary haul bridge

In September, we hit our target for material transported along our internal site haul road across Risborough Road. By the end of the month, a staggering 330,000m³ of material had passed over the temporary bridge since it was installed in 2023.

This was primarily chalk stone moved from the Wendover Green Tunnel excavation which has been used further north to create a stable base on which the railway can be built. The chalk is used to replace the unstable clay soil present in the Aylesbury area, which in turn is being used to create landscaping bunds and formations.

The temporary bridge will be dismantled this winter and replaced with a crossing at ground level.



Above: Risborough Road temporary bridge

Construction progress

Waddesdon Greenway overbridge

The steel bridge deck which will carry pedestrians and cyclists travelling along the Greenway between Aylesbury and Waddesdon was delivered to site during October. This was a huge logistical operation, requiring street furniture to be removed and traffic management to allow the 5-metre-wide sections to fit along the A41 delivery route. The two 20-metre-long sections will be lifted into position between the bridge abutments in December. This bridge is expected to open to the public in summer 2026.



Above: a section of the new Greenway bridge



Above: The Oxford Road embankment

Oxford Road embankment

Throughout this year, chalk stone has been moved from the Wendover green tunnel excavation to be used to build a stable base for the Oxford Road embankment, on the site of the former Aylesbury golf course. In this area we've also built two new culverts which are in place to manage local watercourses. Next year, we'll begin building the abutments for the footbridge crossing for the SBH32 public right of way, which will take pedestrians over the embankment between Aylesbury and Rifle Spinney.

EKFB works progress footage

One of the best ways to see the progress we are making on site is from our aerial footage. If you scan the QR code below, it will allow you to view the latest HS2 works in your area.

The footage gives an annotated overview of where different structures will be on the HS2 route, along with an update of how the landscaping is currently looking.



Schools engagement and social value

Bedgrove pump track, Aylesbury

Bedgrove Residents & Community Association opened their new BMX pump track in July this year. Situated in Bedgrove Park, the new pump track has been designed to be used by mountain bikers, BMX riders, skateboarders, wheelchair users, scooters and balance bike riders alike. The track can now be enjoyed by a variety of ages and skill levels.

£10,000 was provided from the HS2 Community and Environment Fund (CEF) to help make this project a reality.



Above: The new Bedgrove pump track

Are you a local community group or business that's looking for support from HS2? The Community and Environment (CEF) and the Business and Local Economy Fund (BLEF) schemes will provide up to £40m of funding throughout the construction of HS2, supporting community-led projects.

You can find more information about eligibility and how to apply on the HS2 website.
www.hs2.org.uk/in-your-area/community-funding/

Making Tracks in Construction schools gala

EKFB hosted its third annual schools' event in Bicester during September.

The event saw over 1000 students attend and had 25 exhibits hosted by EKFB, subcontractors and supply chain partners. Experts from a range of job roles, including geology and safety, were on hand to speak to students about careers and pathways into construction.

Students were offered the chance to drive an articulated dumper truck on simulators and try out a variety of construction-based challenges.



Above: Students and staff at the schools gala in Bicester

Supporting food banks in the Aylesbury area



Above: Coffee donation to Aylesbury Vineyard Church Food Bank

In October, EKFB donated a total of 102 500g tins of coffee to foodbanks and community larders across the Aylesbury area. The coffee was sourced with the help of our supply chain partners CMT. The recipients were Aylesbury Vineyard Church Food Bank, Southcourt Baptist Church Food Bank and Waddesdon Community Larder. These donations are a valuable supplement to foodbank supplies and will aid the important service these organisations provide to their communities.

HS2 fossil finds go on display at Oxford University Museum of Natural History

A selection of fossils discovered during the construction of the HS2 rail project were put on public display this autumn in Oxford.

The temporary display at Oxford University Museum of Natural History (OUMNH) includes finds made by HS2's main works contractor EKFB working on cuttings and tunnels across Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and West Northants.

The fossils include the partial remains of marine reptiles called ichthyosaurs, as well as smaller creatures they would have hunted. They provide a valuable insight into life beneath the warm seas which covered large parts of central England during the Jurassic Period between 201 million and 145 million years ago.



Above: Fossils discovered on the HS2 project on display at the OUMNH



The oldest ichthyosaurus found during the project is thought to date from around 183 million years ago. The remains of the 3 to 4 metre-long animal were discovered near Greatworth in Northamptonshire.

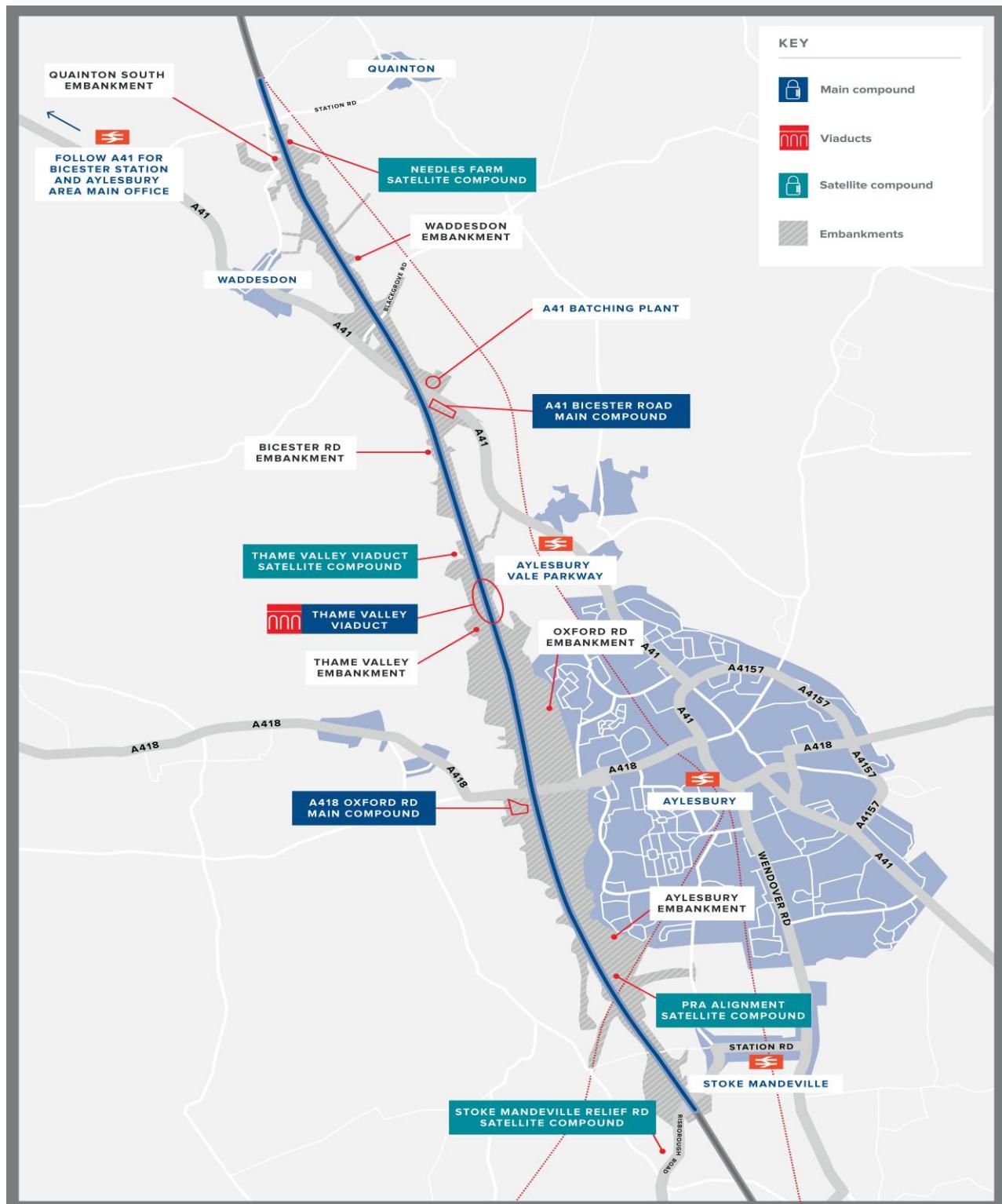
The remains of a second ichthyosaurus were discovered near Waddesdon in Buckinghamshire. It is thought to be around 25 million years younger and would have been around 5 to 6 metres long. The remains consist of 18 vertebrae along with several neural spines and ribs, indicating that the Waddesdon ichthyosaurus was likely scavenged by other predators after it died, with the bones scattered across the seabed.

Left: HS2 fossil finds go on display at Oxford University Museum of Natural History: HS2 senior engineer Simon Butler (L) and EKFB lead geologist Giles Hemmings (R) with Dr Emily Swaby at the OUMNH

Area map

Quainton to Stoke Mandeville

The map below shows the location of works in your area:



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.

Residents' and Construction Commissioner

The independent Residents' and Construction Commissioner oversees and monitors our **community engagement strategy**, making sure we fulfil our commitments to you.

The commissioner monitors the way we manage and respond to complaints about construction and advises members of the public how to make complaints.

The commissioner helps settle disputes involving individuals and organisations that we can't resolve.

You can find the commissioner's report and our responses at:

www.gov.uk/government/collections/independent-hs2-commissioner

The commissioner can be contacted on:

hs2commissioner@dft.gov.uk

Property and compensation

You can find out all about HS2 and properties along the 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/contact-us/how-to-complain

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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High Speed Two (HS2) Limited, registered in England and Wales.

Registered office: Two Snowhill, Snow Hill Queensway, Birmingham B4 6GA.

Company registration number: 06791686. VAT registration number: 888 8512 56