

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

HS2 Update

Solihull | Spring 2026

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

This update will provide key information and news on HS2 works for Solihull.

Major milestones reached for River Blythe and Balsall Common viaducts

Work continues to progress across both the River Blythe Viaduct and Balsall Common viaduct. We are reaching key structural milestones as we move toward the next phase of construction.

River Blythe viaduct

The River Blythe team has reached a major milestone with the installation of the final span of deck beams on the viaduct in March 2026.

The River Blythe viaduct is a 475-metre low-lying structure, that crosses the River Blythe and Meriden Road and extending between Diddington Lane Farm and Patrick Farm in Solihull. Construction is progressing well, with the piers complete, parapet installation and concrete being poured on the deck sections. The viaduct is planned for completion in Summer 2026.

Balsall Common viaduct

Balsall Common viaduct is 425 metres long and approximately 10 metres above ground level as it crosses over Station Road, Heart of England Way Walk, Bayleys Brook and the associated floodplain. We have completed the piers and in March 2026 we installed bridge beams over Station Road. Future phases of work include completing the bridge deck and installing the parapets. The viaduct is planned for completion in early 2027.

Once the viaducts are complete, we will landscape the area to carefully integrate the new structures into the existing environment.



CGI visual of River Blythe viaduct



CGI visual of Balsall Common viaduct



Meet the team: On site engineer Q&A – River Blythe viaduct

This month, we spoke with James McMaster Myatt, Site Engineer at River Blythe and degree apprentice at the University of Warwick. James shared insights into recent progress and key milestones.

Q: Tell us about your role on the River Blythe viaduct project.

A: My role focuses on safely delivering the structural works on site. I coordinate activities with the DJV and ensuring construction activities progress smoothly and in line with design requirements. Alongside this, I'm completing a degree apprenticeship, which has helped me grow both technically and professionally.



James McMaster Myatt, Site Engineer at River Blythe viaduct

Q: What key elements of the project have you been responsible for?

A: I've been directly responsible for key structural elements including the construction of piers and abutments, managing reinforcement & concrete works, installing polished concrete parapets and completing setting out and quality control activities. The works are now at an advanced stage, With the substructure complete, the deck now requires just one final beam span, which we're installing this week, which the full line of beams across the viaduct will be complete.

Q: What has been a major milestone for the team recently?

A: A major milestone was the successful installation of the recent beam spans, a complex lifting operation requiring close coordination between engineering teams, lifting teams, traffic management and stakeholder engagement teams. To carry out the lifts safely, we implemented a planned road closure, which we completed ahead of schedule despite weather challenges, including a diverted pedestrian footpath to maintain safe public access.

Q: Can you share an example of good teamwork that has supported progress on the viaduct?

A: A strong example of teamwork on the project has been our collaboration with the environmental team, to manage deck water runoff and the safe disposal of chromium VI generating during concrete works. By working together to implement controlled containment measures, regular testing, and compliant disposal processes, we ensured that the construction progressed safely while fully protecting the SSSI environment around the River Blythe.

Q: How do you feel about the progress so far and your development as an engineer?

A: Reflecting on the journey so far, I'm proud of my contribution to achieving such a key milestone; being part of delivering the viaducts beam installation has strengthened my confidence as an engineer, and I'm excited to continue developing my career – with the long-term ambition of working internationally within VINCI and gaining global engineering experience.

We prioritise giving local people access to jobs and training through our Recruit Local First approach, offering opportunities first to local unemployed jobseekers to support skills development and sustainable employment. Training courses are available for eligible candidates receiving state benefits. If you're looking for work or interested in joining our team, please register your interest and send your CV to see.team@balfourbeattyvinci.com

Success across key highway works

Recent successes at Waste Lane, the A452, M6 South viaduct and the A45 reflect significant progress and highlight the successful delivery of essential infrastructure improvements.

Waste Lane Overbridge and realignment

Waste Lane Overbridge opened in February 2026, marking a major step in preparing the area for the future HS2 railway, which will run beneath the new structure.

The bridge was built offline to keep traffic moving, with construction running from October 2024 to August 2025, and includes a new pavement to improve access for residents.

Road realignment works began in August 2025, involving earthworks, utility diversions, drainage, and construction of the new road layout.



CGI visual of Waste Lane Overbridge

We will continue to progress the remaining works required to complete the new infrastructure, including street lighting, road signage, the equestrian crossing, new property access points, the connection to the Kenilworth Greenway, demolition of the old bridge, and final landscaping.

These final phases will enhance safety, accessibility, and the overall environment for the local community.

A452 Kenilworth Road realignment



CGI visual of A452 Kenilworth Road

Works on the new A452 alignment continue to progress well. The road is being raised over 13 metres to pass above the new HS2 route, with the new overbridge now complete. The realigned road is expected to open in summer 2027.

A new roundabout is being built to improve access to the Lincoln Farm Truck Stop (northbound) and Mercote Mill Farm and Marsh Farm “The Nook” (southbound). Construction of the new

overbridge has been completed offline, allowing the existing road to stay open under a single-lane closure since early 2025.

From May 2026, an eight-week contraflow will be installed on the northbound carriageway to complete a section of the roundabout and temporary farm access points. A second contraflow will then be installed over the new bridge and road realignment, for approximately nine months, to complete the roundabout works and accesses to local businesses and homes. We will require a small number of temporary closures as we switch the traffic into contraflows.

M6 South viaduct - West Deck

Work is now progressing on the West Deck of the M6 South viaduct, which will be installed using the same fully restrained sliding technique developed for the East Deck.

The East Deck was successfully completed in December 2025 through a controlled 17-hour slide, positioning a 4,600-tonne structure over a live section of the M6 without requiring a full motorway closure, a first for the UK.



M6 South viaduct progress

This proven method will now be applied to the first launch of the West Deck scheduled for the weekend of Saturday 11 April to Sunday 12 April 2026. During this time, the M6 Junction 4 southbound off-slip will be closed from 5am on Saturday until 10pm on Sunday to allow the team to carry out the operation safely.

We will provide details of two further carriageway closures planned for Summer and Autumn 2026 as the programme progresses.

A45 Coventry Road



CGI visual of A45 Coventry Road

In December 2025, traffic on the A45 Coventry Road was successfully moved into a contraflow system, using the widened westbound carriageway, enabling construction of the northern half of the Coventry Road Underbridge.

This milestone was delivered two weeks ahead of schedule and followed piling works on the East Way bridge and installation of temporary sheet piles.

With the contraflow in place, teams can now progress with piling, pilecaps, deck

construction, beam installation, parapets, and roadworks throughout 2026. These works are essential to future HS2 testing operations in the region.

Collaboration with National Highways and engagement with local stakeholders, including the NEC, ensured efficient planning and delivery. Traffic will switch again once the first half of the structure is complete, allowing the remaining bridge works to be delivered into 2027.

We will continue to share updates to ensure residents and stakeholders remain well informed throughout the ongoing works at Waste Lane, the A452, M6 South viaduct, and the A45, as dates are subject to change.

Upcoming works

To ensure that the local road network is compatible with the new railway, we are remodelling and improving existing roads. **These works are subject to consent and programme adjustments.**

M42 Motorway box

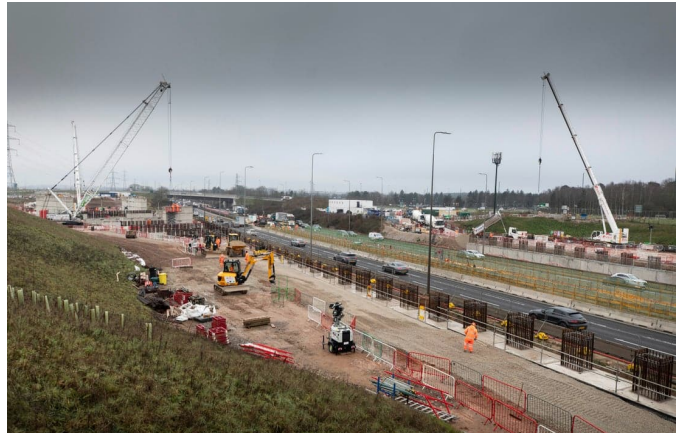
The M42 Motorway box is a 300-metre structure that will allow the high-speed line to pass over a 130-metre stretch of the M42 between junctions 6 and 7/7a. The structure is being delivered using a modular construction method, reducing the need for extended motorway closures by assembling large, prefabricated components off-site.

Works will now progress with beam installations in 2026. This next phase will require four weekend closures on the M42, three of which will be delivered jointly with Delta to safely advance the Water Orton viaducts 1 & 2 over the motorway.

We will continue to issue updates to ensure all stakeholders are fully informed, with a dedicated update on the M42 Motorway to follow soon.

Diddington Lane realignment

The design of the HS2 route through Hampton-in-Arden requires Diddington Lane to be realigned so the high-speed line can pass safely beneath it. This realignment will allow road users to continue travelling along Diddington Lane via the new purpose-built overbridge once the railway is fully operational. To complete these works, a full closure of Diddington Lane will be in place from 16 March to 19 September 2026, after which the new alignment will open. Access to all properties and businesses along the lane will be maintained throughout the closure. For more details on Diddington Lane realignment and to see the diversion routes - [Click here](#) or scan the QR code.



M42 Motorway Box Structure Progress



CGI visual of Diddington Lane



Our commitment to the environment and local wildlife

Our aim is to create a Green Corridor consisting of new wildlife habitats, woodlands, ponds, wetlands, grasslands and community spaces, integrating the railway into the surrounding landscape.

We will continue improving the local environment through extensive habitat creation and ecological enhancements. Through our Landscape programme, we will deliver 973 hectares of new grassland, 152 km of hedgerow, 528 hectares of woodland and around 1.5 million trees. Across roughly 90 HS2 mitigation sites, we will create new habitats such as ponds, grasslands, ecology features for protected species, and green bridges that maintain wildlife connectivity.

Investing in local communities

Our Community Investment programme enables us to support those communities most impacted by our works.

Beate Woods Nursery, Balsall Common

Beate Woods approached BBV for assistance with repairs to their woodland play area, which had been adversely affected by recent heavy rainfall. In response, BBV provided wood chips to help improve ground conditions and restore safe access for users. Additionally, Acorn generously contributed a further 14 tonnes of wood chip.

Eight members of the delivery team volunteered their time to help prepare the site in time for the children's return after the February half-term.



BBV volunteers supporting Beate Woods Nursery by improving the outdoor learning space.

Litter Picking on Lavender Hall Lane

During a recent stakeholder meeting, concerns were raised about an increase in litter along Lavender Hall Lane. Although they recognised the issue was not our responsibility, they asked whether any support could be offered, our team responded proactively, recognising the importance of maintaining clean and welcoming surroundings in the areas where we work.

Operatives from the BBV site carried out a full litter-pick along the verges, removing and disposing of the waste to help restore the appearance of the lane. This action reflects BBV's wider commitment to respecting the local environment and supporting the community beyond our core construction responsibilities.



BBV team members with students wearing new high-visibility jackets at Balsall Common Primary School

Balsall Common Primary School

At Balsall Common Primary School, we helped strengthen safeguarding measures by arranging for Arco to supply 30 high-visibility jackets for pupils attending the Dragons Club. With more than 100 children using the club daily, the larger jackets were urgently required for older pupils in Years 5 and 6. The donation ensures children remain clearly identifiable during outdoor activities, particularly as the weather improves and pupils spend more time outside.

This contribution supports the school's safety priorities and helps staff maintain a secure environment for all children.

Keeping local communities informed and involved

We believe building infrastructure goes hand-in-hand with building stronger communities.

Recently, we welcomed almost 100 residents to our drop-in event at Fentham Hall, Hampton in Arden on 24 February 2026, where our engineers shared detailed updates on major works taking place in Solihull.

Attendees heard the latest on the River Blythe viaduct, the realignment of Diddington Lane, and upcoming road closures.

The session provided a valuable opportunity for residents to ask questions, discuss journey planning, and speak directly with the project team. Events like these play an important role in keeping our communities informed, and we encourage attending future sessions to stay up to date and to share your views.



Team members at the Hampton in Arden, information event

Our community engagement team work across the route, providing updates, answering questions, and ensuring local views are heard. We hold regular drop-in sessions to share progress, invite feedback, and discuss any concerns directly with our teams. We also continue to work closely with community groups and local authorities to help mitigate disruption and identify opportunities to support local initiatives, including volunteering, fundraising, and providing materials or expertise.

Our helpdesk is open 24/7 – phone us on 08081 434 434 if you would like to speak with our team or discuss an idea.

Keep up to date on HS2 activity in your area

To receive notifications of our upcoming activity, sign up for email notifications:

www.hs2.org.uk/local-mailing-list

To view more detail on what work is happening near you, visit our interactive map:

www.hs2.org.uk/in-your-area/map

Find out what engagement events are coming up in your area at:

www.hs2.org.uk/events

Follow us on social channels



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

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

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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

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

www.hs2inyourarea.co.uk

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