

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

HS2 Update

Greatworth to Southam | Spring 2026

EKFB
Working in
partnership with **HS2**

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

If you have any questions or enquiries about our work, please contact our Helpdesk to find out more.

You can sign up for regular updates in your local area at www.hs2inyourarea.co.uk.

Inside our spring newsletter...

In this spring newsletter, we will be looking at the recent progress on site, our upcoming earthworks programme, our progress on the bridges in the Southam area and an update on the green tunnels. We also shine a spotlight on some of our local community investment.

Inside you will find:

- Our recent progress
- Our 2026 earthworks programme
- Bridges around Southam
- Green tunnels update
- Community support



Throughout 2026, we will be completing parapet installations along the side of our structures, as seen on this Northamptonshire bridleway bridge.

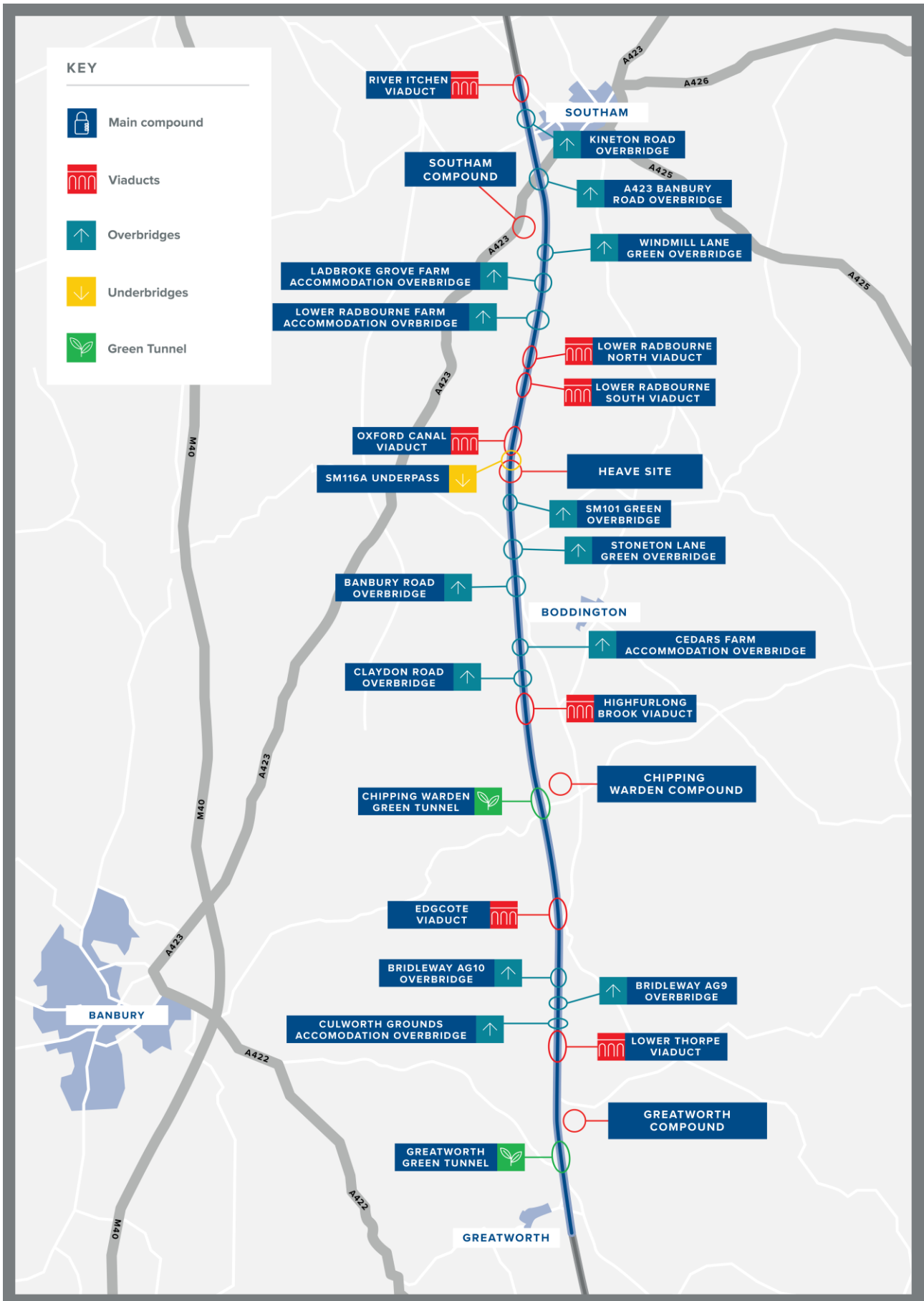


Visiting communities

Do you want to find out more about the HS2 works near you?

This spring, we will be busy visiting local communities, including Bishops Itchington, Deppers Bridge, Southam, Sulgrave, Thorpe Mandeville and Culworth.

Details of all upcoming events will be listed here: www.hs2.org.uk/events



Our recent progress

Stoneton Lane green bridge

We have begun construction on our final structure to start in the Greatworth to Southam area. Stoneton Lane is a 'green' bridge, located between Priors Hardwick and Wormleighton. This type of bridge includes a wide planted area with vegetation, creating a corridor that encourages wildlife to cross the railway safely.

The foundations for the bridge were completed in January 2026, and over the spring, our teams will begin building the piers and installing the beams.



Foundation piling at Stoneton Lane green bridge, has been completed ahead of building the main structure.



We have now completed 60% of the poured concrete deck at Edgcote viaduct.

Edgcote viaduct

This spring, we will continue to build the deck of the 515 metre Edgcote viaduct, which will carry the train over the river Cherwell and its floodplain.

Innovations in design allowed this structure to be built using single, continuous precast beams, reducing the amount of concrete used by 25% and in turn reducing the carbon emissions created during manufacturing. This has resulted in a more sustainable bridge, designed to intergrate into the surrounding environment.

Lower Thorpe viaduct

We are building the deck of the viaduct from now until the summer. A travelling platform will move along the 210-metre length of the viaduct, enabling us to work section by section whilst we pour the concrete for the deck.

Once the concrete base of the viaduct is complete, we will focus on installing the parapets later in the year.



At Lower Thorpe viaduct, the traveller is positioned above the structure, while concrete is being delivered to the deck using a crane-mounted pump.

Our 2026 earthworks programme



Earthworks play a vital role in constructing the new HS2 railway. Throughout 2026, the route of the railway will start to take shape, as we continue excavating material and forming the earthworks that sit between the bridges and viaducts, where the track bed will eventually be laid.

Every section of earthworks along the route is unique, because the ground beneath us is made up of different layers of soil and rock, formed over millions of years. As we excavate material from our cuttings, it's carefully stored in stockpiles and graded by soil type so it can be reused to build embankments and support landscaping. The geology varies across the landscape, from clay, which helps stabilise structures, to sandy material that improves drainage.

To create a stable base for the track, we must thoroughly excavate, test, and understand this complex geology. This careful approach means we can reuse more than 95% of the material we remove from cuttings, primarily in embankment construction and backfilling around our green tunnels.

In 2026, our earthworks programme will focus on some of the deepest cuttings in the area, including Ladbrooke and Lower Thorpe. A cutting is created by removing soil or rock to form a level foundation for the railway. Most of the excavated material is then repurposed to build embankments, mounded earth structures on either side of the track, which help create a smooth, even base that allows trains to travel at speeds of over 200 miles per hour.

Another key activity beginning this year is re-soiling. This involves placing different layers of subsoil and topsoil across the newly built embankments. Once re-soiling is complete, we'll move on to landscaping, using hydroseeding and planting to help the area blend naturally into the surrounding environment.



During the earthworks season, we will be working longer hours to make the best of the daylight.

Typically, this will be 7am to 7pm, full details will be published online in our working hours update.



At Highfurlong Brook, the earthworks team worked throughout 2025 to grade and stockpile earth.

Bridges in Southam

During 2026, we will be carrying out two major construction activities in the Southam area. To keep local roads connected once the railway is complete, we are realigning both the B4451 and the A423. To open these new sections of road to the public, will require tie-ins that link the newly built bridges to the existing road network, enabling road users to travel seamlessly over the HS2 route once construction is complete.

The tie-ins will be completed one after the other, with each expected to take approximately four weeks. During these periods, there will be diversions in place, which will be communicated in advance, via the HS2 mailing list, which you can sign up to here - [In your area - HS2](#).



B4451, Kinton Road bridge

This structure is now complete and we have begun the earthworks ahead of constructing the approach road.

A waterproofing layer, shown in orange on the left, has been installed in preparation for the road surfacing, alongside new utility pathways and a footpath linking the rugby club entrance to Southam.

We expect this phase of work to be completed in summer 2026.

At the Kinton road bridge, the waterproofing layer can be seen on the completed structure.

A423, Banbury Road bridge

Throughout the first half of 2026, our team have been focused on completing the main structure of the bridge. Once this is finished, we will move on to the next stages, including shaping the earthworks, installing the waterproofing layer and building the road surface and footpath.

Once the tie-in is finished, we will carry out the remaining work needed to connect utilities in the area. This will allow us to open the new public footpath, creating a new pedestrian and cycleway between Ladbroke and Southam, over the bridge.



At the A423 bridge, parapets are being installed.

Green tunnels update

Following the opening of the new road layout near Greatworth, traffic can now flow around the construction site. This has created access for our construction team to continue essential activities, including relocating utilities and the tunnel excavation. So far, we have installed over one kilometre of tunnel segments and work will continue throughout 2026 to complete the tunnel structure.

At Chipping Warden green tunnel, installation of all tunnel segments is almost complete. Our focus this year will be on completing the installation of the final 200 metres of segments, waterproofing the structure and backfilling the area between Aston le Walls and Chipping Warden.

Both the north and south portals have been installed. These include porous segments , as shown below, which are designed with holes that will dissipate the air pressure, to mitigate noise as the trains enter and exit the tunnel.

To keep this progress on track, our teams will continue working overnight at both Chipping Warden and Greatworth throughout the year as needed, ensuring the tunnel construction continues to progress.



The portal pieces at the northern end of Chipping Warden green tunnel and the earthworks towards Highfurlong Brook viaduct are progressing.

Festive donations

In the run up to Christmas, our teams came together to make a meaningful difference in the local communities. We collected donations of food, toys and toiletries, all of which were delivered to the Fosse Food Bank, who continue to support individuals and families facing crisis by working to combat poverty and hunger.

Staff from EKFB also volunteered their time to help serve meals at local community Christmas lunches. We were also delighted to support nearby schools 'Books for Christmas' initiative, and to fund Christmas trees for community festive celebrations.

We are proud to support the local communities around us and look forward to continuing this work. If you have any suggestions for community activities or initiatives we could support in 2026, we would be pleased to hear from you at hs2enquiries@hs2.org.uk.



Donations were delivered to the Fosse Food Bank by staff from the EKFB engagement team.

Community funding from HS2

The HS2 Community and Environment Fund (CEF) is a fantastic opportunity for communities impacted by HS2 construction to enhance their local environment and quality of life. This fund supports a variety of projects, such as improving pedestrian, equestrian, and cycle access, creating community gardens, restoring natural habitats, upgrading sports fields and playgrounds, and refurbishing historic buildings. These initiatives aim to leave a lasting positive impact on the communities along the HS2 route.

Applying for CEF funding is straightforward. Guidance Notes and FAQs help applicants to understand the fund's criteria and eligibility requirements. Applicants include voluntary and community sector organisations, social enterprises, community businesses, and registered charities. Successful applicants will receive an award offer letter, detailing the funding and next steps. For projects up to £100,000, decisions are typically made within eight weeks. Larger projects involve a multi-stage application process that can take up to 32 weeks.

If you have a project that could benefit from CEF funding, please follow the link to the application page on the funding website: [Community Fund website - hs2funds.org.uk/home/community-environment-fund/](https://hs2funds.org.uk/home/community-environment-fund/)

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

Please contact us if you'd like a free copy of this document in large print, Braille, audio or easy read. You can also contact us for help and information in a different language.

We are committed to protecting personal information. If you would like to know more about how we use your personal information, please see our privacy notice (www.gov.uk/government/publications/high-speed-two-ltd-privacy-notice)

Reference number: HS2-EKFB-26-1875