

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

# HS2 Update

West Midlands to Crewe Winter 2020/21

High Speed Two (HS2) is the new high speed railway for Britain. Phase 2a is the section of the planned railway between West Midlands and Crewe, passing through parts of Staffordshire and Cheshire. This newsletter explains the latest plans and community support available as we undertake the route-wide ground investigation works.

## Route-wide ground investigation

The latest round of ground investigation work 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.

## Undertaking the works - Covid-19

The health, safety and wellbeing of all those who work for us, as well as the general public is always our priority.

We support the UK Government's position to allow the construction and infrastructure industry – key to our economy and people's daily lives – to continue operating where it can do so safely. Balfour Beatty, our main contractor, continually reviews

its work and complies with Government and Public Health England Covid-19 guidelines. The Covid-19 crisis is continually evolving, and we will continue to develop our approach and keep all our stakeholders updated.

## Engaging with you

We will engage closely with landowners whose land we need to use for the work and inform communities who may be affected by them.

Due to the current social distancing measures, HS2 Ltd has postponed all face to face meetings with stakeholders. We will adapt our methods of engagement as effectively as possible – such as the use of online meetings and digital events to keep people informed. For further updates in your local area visit:

**[hs2instaffordshire.co.uk](https://hs2instaffordshire.co.uk)** and  
**[hs2incheshire.co.uk](https://hs2incheshire.co.uk)**.



## Future Phase 2a activity:

- **Online presentations to explain more about the ground investigation work**
- **Early environmental work to enable the construction of the railway**
- **Community initiatives to deliver benefits along the Phase 2a route**

## The purpose of the works

Ground investigation involves the examination and study of soil, rocks and ground water beneath the surface.

The aim of the tests is to discover the properties and the strength of the soil and rocks, along with the nature of the ground water so that we can provide detailed information to the HS2 Ltd design team. This data about the existing ground conditions will enable the design team to verify the suitability of the various structures, such as tunnels, bridges, viaducts and embankments.

### Sites and investigation methods used

Most of the 2a ground investigation site locations are in rural areas and will not be visible from the road. They are generally on private property, such as in a farmer's field, with no public access.

Several methods are used to obtain soil samples. The ground investigation techniques to be used on this project will primarily include boreholes, trial pits and cone penetration tests.

A **borehole** is a general term used to describe a deep hole. A hole, up to 300mm diameter, is drilled down to the level needed. The sides of the hole are then secured with enforced casing. **Trial pits** are used to recover large bulk samples of soil or where thorough visual examination of the sediment of the soil or rock layers is required. **Cone Penetration testing**, otherwise referred to as CPT is used to determine geotechnical properties of the soil. The cone penetrometer is mounted to a series of steel rods and vertically punched into the ground.



**Core percussion rig used for drilling boreholes**

It is used for testing a range of soils. The testing is quiet and produces no vibrations making it ideal for minimal soil disturbance in sensitive areas.



**Core samples ready for testing at a specialist laboratory**

Once we have recovered core samples these are then sent to specialist laboratories across the country where tests are carried out to supplement the information gathered on site.

## What will the sites look like afterwards?

Following completion of the works our contractors will be required to leave every site as they found it. Landowners will be compensated for any damage arising from works - although the timing of investigations and access routes will be negotiated with them to minimise the effects of the disturbance. Sites will always be left in a safe condition.

## Social values

During last years' ground investigation programme, Balfour Beatty raised a total of £8,483 for various local organisations, Including community groups, foodbanks, special needs centres, charities and hospitals. The aim is to continue with fundraising initiatives and identify opportunities for other local groups and charities along the Phase 2a route.



**Balfour Beatty raising funds at Royal Stoke University Hospital**

## Employment and skills

Balfour Beatty will continue to offer work experience to under 16s, over 16s and mature adults and accept referrals from local employment centres. All our participants are encouraged to apply for apprenticeships or jobs with us if available. We also provide work experience for vulnerable adults and disadvantaged persons who would benefit from practical support. We also collaborate with other support providers to deliver any initiatives where possible; our aim is to deliver projects to leave a positive legacy in local communities along the route of the Phase 2a project.

## Growing Spaces

Balfour Beatty has supported HS2 Ltd in delivering their 'Growing Spaces' project. The project started earlier this year and was paused due to Covid-19. It involved working with schools and charities along the Phase 2a route. The activity days involved pupils constructing and filling planters, planting seeds and plants, while completing associated STEM activities. Balfour Beatty supported the project by donating two planters to the Shavington Youth Centre and will collaborate again with HS2 Ltd once it is feasible to resume activity on the project.



**Two garden planters donated at Shavington Youth Centre**

## The Prince's Trust

Balfour Beatty works closely with The Prince's Trust to offer work experience to young people as part of a 12-week personal development course. The course helps to build confidence and boost motivation, encouraging young people to plan for their future. We provide them with training and practical skills, and they participate in community projects, ultimately achieving nationally recognised qualifications.

# 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.

## 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](http://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](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hs2-ltd-residents-commissioner)

You can contact the Commissioner at:  
[residentscommissioner@hs2.org.uk](mailto: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 by emailing:  
[complaints@hs2-cc.org.uk](mailto: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](http://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](http://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](http://www.hs2.org.uk/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](mailto:HS2enquiries@hs2.org.uk)**

Write to:

**FREEPOST**

**HS2 Community Engagement**

Website **[www.hs2.org.uk](http://www.hs2.org.uk)**

To keep up to date with what is happening in your local area, visit:  
**[www.HS2inyourarea.co.uk](http://www.HS2inyourarea.co.uk)**

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<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/high-speed-two-ltd-privacy-notice>

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