



## HS2 E Update March 2021

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### **What is Buckinghamshire Council doing on behalf of residents?**

As well as the regular pre-application meetings we hold with contractors, we also attended meetings recently with The Missendens, Wendover, Turweston, Amersham, Grendon Underwood and the Calvert box parish councils.

The HS2 Minister, Andrew Stephenson, attended the HS2/EWR Working Group of the north Bucks Community Boards, on 1 March. He showed a keen interest in the local issues and has asked civil servants to set out how independent Marshalls could operate as well as undertaking a review of the progress of HS2 in fulfilling undertakings and assurances.

We have established an Environment Working Group Meeting and recently held the second meeting. It involves officers from our Environment Team, Chilterns Conservation Board and Natural England. The Woodland Trust is also being invited to join the meeting. We have had a specific meeting on the works at Leather Lane where fantastic old oak trees are planned for removal and HS2 is now reviewing their plans to minimise the loss. We have raised this issue at a senior level with HS2. We use the meetings to challenge HS2 Ltd and make them aware of local concerns about contractor compliance, additional traffic and any other local issues.

The Council has written to Grant Shapps, the Minister for Transport, on several occasions concerning HS2, including a request for independent Marshalls as raised at the Transport Select Committee as well as an increase in the Road Safety Fund.

We launched the HS2 Road Safety Fund in February 2021 and a first tranche of funding will be released later this year.

We have also secured some loosening of the requirements for the Calvert Environmental Mitigation fund, made agreements with the four affected parishes (Calvert, Twyford, Steeple Claydon and Charndon) and have started to release funding towards two projects.

Currently, HS2 has appealed against our non-determination of 4 lorry route applications for 6 sites along the A413 corridor (and on the A422 near Turweston/Brackley). Overall, we are not satisfied that HS2 has provided sufficient information to demonstrate that the proposals will not create nor worsen congestion. We are concerned about the cumulative impact of all the HS2 sites.

We have also been highlighting the experience of residents in the North Bucks area of the double whammy of HS2 and EWR and working with EWR Company on an improvement plan for the EWR Alliance (who are actually carrying out the works).

We have held senior level meetings with HS2, chaired by the Council's Leader and issue raised with HS2 included contractor compliance, co-ordination with EWR and engagement. As a result, Align are looking to introduce a similar vehicle tracking system to EKFB to ensure that there is a single combined vehicle tracking system in Bucks.

### **Feedback on the e-bulletin**

Thank you to those who responded to the E Update Survey Monkey we sent round last month. We received some really helpful feedback and thanks generally that you find the information useful. We are currently reviewing all the feedback received and will develop the bulletin to try to respond to the feedback and make it even more useful

### **Protecting Birds in Nesting Season**

HS2 plan to carry out a lot of vegetation clearance over the next few months and we are regularly asked about the situation regarding nesting birds.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 does not define the bird breeding season, simply that if a nest is being built or contains eggs or young then it is active and therefore protected; RSPB advice is to avoid extensive tree and vegetation clearance from early March to the end of August wherever possible:

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/about-the-rspb/about-us/media-centre/press-releases/tree-and-hedge-removal/>

HS2 Ltd says on their website that HS2 Ltd contractors are keenly aware of the law around nesting birds, and during nesting season a suitably experienced ecologist is present during all habitat clearance work, in order to spot nesting birds and stop work where necessary. When nesting birds are discovered, they put an exclusion zone around any tree which has an occupied nest in it. They will not carry out any work on those trees, or within the exclusion zone, until the fledglings have left the nest and this is confirmed by an ecologist. Felling trees during the nesting season is legal as long as nesting birds are not harmed.

### **HS2 Ltd Response to the Construction Commissioner's Report Q3 2020**

This report shows that HS2 Ltd received 782 complaints between January and June 2020, compared with 295 over the same period in 2019. Of the 782 complaints, they say 97% were resolved within a maximum of 20 working days, as set out in their community commitments, and it states all were concluded at the first stage of the complaints process.

The report also includes some observations on working hours, mud on roads and notice given for road closures. You can read the full report here:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/966179/HS2\\_letter\\_to\\_Construction\\_Commissioner\\_s\\_15th\\_report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/966179/HS2_letter_to_Construction_Commissioner_s_15th_report.pdf)

However, the Construction Commissioner has only had to deal with 5 complaints which are escalated to him from dissatisfied complainants as HS2 state they resolve 100% of complaints. Following pressure from the local authorities on the Commissioner's Steering Group, he is now doing a review of HS2 responses and plans to report on this to the next meeting in June 2021. Buckinghamshire Council is a member of the Steering Group and reports on local issues. The Commissioner is well aware of issues in Buckinghamshire and attended meetings concerning the Calvert and Missendens area this year so far.

### **Be the voice of the community on The Construction Commissioner Steering Group**

HS2 Ltd have announced that from Monday, February 22, applications are now open for residents across Phase One and Phase 2a of the HS2 route to become Local Community Representatives. As part of the Construction Commissioner Steering Group (CCSG), you will represent your community, share and communicate a range of experiences and perspectives as HS2 is built, and also help to monitor the performance of the Independent Construction Commissioner (ICC). Deadline for applications is 26<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

They are seeking to recruit a number of Local Community Representatives to sit on the CCSG, which is independent of HS2 and the Department for Transport. The Group meets three to four times a year, in either Birmingham or London (when attending physical meetings) and also virtually.

For more details about these opportunities and how to apply, click on the links below. If you have any questions about the CCSG or about becoming a Local Community Representative, you can also contact: [community@hs2.org.uk](mailto:community@hs2.org.uk)

- [Local Community Representatives Role Profile](#)
- [Local Community Representatives Application Form](#)
- [Local Community Representatives Application Guidance](#)
- [Local Community Representatives Conflict of Interests Form](#)

### **HS2 ongoing work**

You can see the work that is taking place in Buckinghamshire on the HS2 website, Commonplace section, (Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire) and also sign up for automatic alerts. HS2 Ltd or contractors are committed to send out Advanced Warning Notices 2 weeks ahead of works commencing:

<https://hs2inbucksandoxfordshire.commonplace.is/schemes/proposals/works-in-your-area/details>

## Works in Buckinghamshire

Although still classed as preparatory/early works there are some quite substantial impacts already being experienced by our communities. I have listed some of the main works (but this is not a comprehensive list)

Works	Duration
Colne Valley Viaduct construction	Mar 2021-2023
Closure of DEN3/1 footpath	Oct 2020-Oct 2021
Colne Valley, tree planting works	Nov 2020-Apr 2021
Chalfont St Peter vent shaft 3 <sup>rd</sup> storey to compound	Ongoing
Amersham, Gore Hill roundabout improvement works	Nov-Spring 2021
Jones Hill Wood, site set up	Mar 2021-Summer 2021
Archaeology and bat house works, South Heath	Jan 2021-Spring 2021
Archaeology and tree planting, Rocky Lane to Leather Lane	Jan 2021 -Spring 2021
Aylesbury A418 utilities diversions	Mar 2021-Nov 2021
St Mary's church, Stoke Mandeville archaeology	Sep 2020-Summer 2021
Calvert early works	Oct 2020-Summer 2021
Chetwode compound	Jan-Jun 2021
Quainton construction activities	Sep-Spring 2021
Waddesdon works	Jul 2020-Spring 2021
Steeple Claydon utility works	Jul 2020-Aug 2021
Twyford - Newton Purcell early works	Oct 2020-Summer 2021

## HS2 Forthcoming Works Packages submission

\*Please note however, forecast dates are subject to slippage by contractors\*

Schedule 17 package	Location	Planned submission date
Twyford Embankment Twyford Viaduct Cowley Embankment Twyford Cutting Godington East Viaduct Godington East Embankment Chetwode Embankment	Twyford to Chetwode (AVDC package 14)	Mar 2021
Bicester Road Embankment Waddesdon South Cutting Bridleway FMA/1 overbridge A41 Bicester Road realignment and overbridge	Putlowes to Waddesdon (AVDC package 9)	Apr 2021

Footpath WAD/4 Accommodation overbridge		
South Heath cutting Cottage Farm accommodation overbridge TLE/2 Footbridge Bowood Lane overbridge and highway	Bowood Lane (BC package 1)	Apr 2021
South Heath cutting Footpath GMI/12 overbridge and GMI/2 accommodation overbridge Leather Lane overbridge and highway realignmen	South Heath (CDC package 1)	Apr 2021
Calvert Cutting Addison Road Overbridge IMD South Culvert IMD South Culvert IMD North Culvert Perry Hill Overbridge Portway Farm ATS West Street Overbridge Sewage Works Access Twyford East Culvert Portway Culvert	Calvert North / Steeple Claydon (AVDC Package 13b)	Apr 2021
SCL/8 Footbridge	Steeple Claydon	Apr 2021
Waddesdon Embankment Footpath WAD/3 Accommodation underbridge Needles Farm Accommodation overbridge Waddesdon North Cutting Quainton South Embankment Station Road realignment and Aylesbury link overbridge Quainton Cutting	Waddesdon to Quainton (AVDC package 10)	Apr 2021

Key Design Elements as described in [HS2 Information Paper D1: Design Policy](#) have been subject to community engagement on design developments.

### Complaints

In the first instance complaints should be made to the HS2 helpdesk which is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. A phone call is all that is needed to lodge a complaint with them.

HS2 Helpdesk: [hs2enquiries@hs2.org.uk](mailto:hs2enquiries@hs2.org.uk) Tel: Freephone 08081 434 434

**Buckinghamshire Council HS2 coordination team:**

Jackie Copcutt [jackie.copcutt@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:jackie.copcutt@buckinghamshire.gov.uk) Tel: 01296 383793

EWR and HS2 enquiries Mailbox [EWRANDHS2enquiries@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:EWRANDHS2enquiries@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)