

**What are we up against - a reminder**

- 28 trains per hour – 14 in each direction
- Trains will travel at speeds up to 260mph
- Line repairs through the night



**Timings. How long have we got?**

- **The proposed route will be officially announced later this year**
- **A consultation [where stakeholders put forward their opinions] on the principle of the scheme, the route and the next compensation scheme will start about Feb 2011**
- **A hybrid bill would be drafted in 2012**
- **A bill introduced to Parliament in 2013**
- **Construction is planned for 2015 onwards.**

## HAMMOND ANNOUNCES HS2 PLANS AT TORY CONFERENCE

**- HS2 plans to destroy our countryside now further cemented -**

Judging from Transport Secretary for State, Philip Hammond's, speech on September 10<sup>th</sup> and his announcement at the Conservative Party Conference, there seems to be little doubt that the HS2 plans for a rail line through the Chilterns will go ahead.

In his announcement at the Conference, he confirmed that the HS2 route would

continue from Birmingham in a 'Y' shape on separate lines to Leeds and Manchester and said,

'We have committed to a high-speed rail network that will change the social and economic geography of Britain..... transforming the way Britain works as profoundly as the coming of the original railways did in the mid-nineteenth century.'



All of the alternative London to Birmingham routes which had been previously considered, including the M40 corridor, have now been examined and rejected. The fact that the Chilterns route is

the only route for which a property compensation scheme is in place, is further proof that this line is the Government's preferred choice.

The Government are obviously taking every opportunity to stress HS2's strategic importance claiming that it will 'address the north/south divide'. However they are not willing to discuss the viability of the proposals, the cost of which could amount to £100bn – a huge commitment of public funds at a time when the country faces painful spending cuts in order to address its £1 trillion financial deficit.

### The argument the government won't listen to...

The case for HS2 is weak on almost every front, particularly on the issues of demand [the number of people expected to use the service], its benefits, Northern regeneration and carbon impact. As yet, the Government has failed to demonstrate that the HS2 plans represent value for money or to substantiate its business case and low carbon estimates.

HS2 Action Alliance has outlined these arguments in correspondence with both HS2 Ltd and the Department of Transport, stating that:

**The wider economic arguments are a myth.** The redistributive effects from the growth mean that 3 times as many people will have London as their destination, so the

wealth goes to London and not the regions.

**The business case is flawed.** The Government have built their case on over-estimated demand forecasts – 267% when even its own 2007 white paper forecasts put growth at half this figure.

**HS2 is not 'green'.** Even HS2 Ltd have admitted that it will be, at best, only 'broadly carbon neutral'. There are better, cheaper alternatives that have been developed by DfT that solve the capacity problem and meet forecast demand.

**TO STOP THIS HAPPENING WE NEED FUNDS. NOW. ££££**

Time is short - we now need to influence those who make

the decisions *before* the consultation begins by debating the case for HS2 and exposing its flaws. To do this we urgently need lobbyists/PR experts to help us present our case to MPs, key stakeholders and the public. However, these experts are expensive - about £10k a month.

We also desperately need funds to engage academics and legal advisors, buy advertising and print publications.

**PLEASE SUPPORT THIS WORK BY MAKING A DONATION. THIS IS THE TIME TO MAKE OUR VOICES HEARD - IF WE CAN'T ACT NOW IT WILL BE TOO LATE.**



**Cheryl Gillan**  
Secretary of State for Wales

## Campaigners call for Cheryl Gillan to resign cabinet post

**The Great Missenden Village Association have written to Cheryl Gillan MP (left) urging her to resign from her cabinet post as Secretary of State for Wales, in order to fully support her constituents in fighting the planned HS2 route.**

The letter initiated by the Missenden Village Association and signed by about 200 High Street businesses outlined their alarm at recent ministerial statements and also Philip Hammond's speech on September 10<sup>th</sup> which left no doubt that HS2 will go ahead.

They reminded Ms Gillan that just six months ago she had 'campaigning for re-election on an anti-HS2 platform, promising voters at a meeting at the Missbourne School that 'My constituency comes first in all instances but I am well placed to speak to the Secretary of State...to say that this is not a preferred route for this country.'

She also endorsed MP David Liddington's views that the proposed route is 'set to carve a swathe of destruction through the centre of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty'.

Given that commitment,

the Missenden Village Society felt that Ms Gillan should resign her cabinet post in order to fight the HS2 plans from the back benches stating that 'As a local community, we need to know that our local MP is going to stand up publicly against the route, not share in the collective responsibility for it as a senior member of the Government.

Ms Gillan responded to what she claimed were 'ridiculous' calls for her to quit her job, by saying that she intended to fight HS2 but had no intention of standing down.

## HILARY WHARF GOES HEAD TO HEAD WITH HAMMOND ON TV

Hilary Wharf of HS2Action Alliance appeared on the BBC's Daily Politics Show in an interview with Philip Hammond on 23<sup>rd</sup> September.

She questioned him again on both the HS2 business case and environmental issues but Hammond stuck to his now well-rehearsed arguments.

The exchange confirmed that the Government seems not to be approaching the forthcoming consultation with an entirely open mind.



## NO CONCESSIONS FROM HAMMOND AS HE MEETS WITH ACTION GROUPS

Over the past few weeks, Hammond has held meetings with action group campaigners beginning with a meeting in Coventry with Jeremy Wright MP and eight groups from the Kenilworth & Southam constituency. The action groups had provided Hammond with maps enabling him to visit the communities actually affected but he chose not to.

Detailed arguments on the business case were put to Hammond who replied that he stood by the 267%

projected increase in passenger numbers.

When asked about property values Hammond answered that while some properties would be adversely affected others, near to the new stations, would benefit. However, he also added that individuals should not have to bear the cost of nationally important projects themselves.

On environmental benefits the Minister replied that HS2 is 'about

sustainability, not just CO2....We can't prohibit development in the countryside. I don't want to see one inch of countryside unnecessarily under concrete, but it's Government's job to look at this in the round'.

So whilst the Government is prepared to consider tweaks to the route, it is not prepared to discuss the case for HS2 itself. He said that action groups should make their points in the consultation but they would be rebutted.

## Protestors 'wrong-footed' by meeting changes..

Peaceful demonstrations were arranged at each of the meetings though the venue for one of these and the start time for two others were changed at the last minute by Hammond's organisers, throwing plans for demonstrations in to chaos.

Penny Gaines from Stop HS2 said 'I am fairly certain they are doing this to avoid protests. We really

hope Philip Hammond will go and look at the places in Aylesbury Vale which will be devastated by High Speed 2, it is one thing to look at a line on a map and quite another to view the villages which will be dominated by viaducts and earthworks'.

Philip Hammond spoke briefly with protestors outside the meeting venues. Video footage of the Ayles-

bury meeting can be seen at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=msNA9rQyIQ4>



## THE EXCEPTIONAL HARDSHIP SCHEME NOW IN OPERATION

### Campaigners voice their objections on TV and Radio

The Exceptional Hardship Scheme opened on August 20th for property and land owners on Route 3 unable to sell their property due to the HS2 plans. This scheme is additional to the statutory arrangements in place for properties required to be demolished.

However, to be eligible for the EHS scheme, property owners must prove that they would suffer exceptional hardship if they were unable to sell their home.

HS2 Ltd have outlined eligibility criteria for the scheme

but it is still unclear how 'financial hardship' would be defined or proved.

The scheme also entails a 15% threshold so that the Department for Transport would only be obliged to buy properties if the homeowner could prove that no offers above 85% had been forthcoming.

To point up these iniquities, HS2 Action Alliance's Hilary Wharf and Kathryn Gurney appeared on the BBC Breakfast Show, Radio 2 (6.00), Five Live and the Today Programme whilst also rais-

ing questions about the economic validity of the HS2 scheme. Hilary was also part of a BBC News interview with Philip Hammond.

To date, 77 applications have been made to the Exceptional Hardship Scheme which will run until the Government settle on the final route following the public consultation in the new year.

If you would like more information about the Exceptional Hardship Scheme and its eligibility criteria, go to [www.HS2actionalliance.org](http://www.HS2actionalliance.org)

### A follow-on compensation scheme being planned

Largely as a result of the campaigning work carried out by HS2 Action Alliance and other action groups, the Government has recognised the need for a further compensation scheme which will follow on from the EHS. This scheme will be designed to help homeowners whose property is not needed to build HS2 but whose property value has been seriously blighted by the proposals.

The new scheme will apply from when the route is finally confirmed but as yet there are no details on the provisions it might include. However, HS2 Action Alliance are in discussions with HS2 Ltd about HS2 Action Alliance's Property Blight Protection Scheme details of which can be found on our website.

So far the Government has allocated the paltry amount of £15m to the EHS compensation fund - an insultingly small amount; in Kent, residents living alongside High Speed 1, saw the value of their homes fall by 30%, with some receiving nothing in compensation.

To avoid the same happening on HS2, it is vital that we gather as much evidence as possible on the extent and severity of property blight. If you are currently trying to sell a property and are experiencing difficulties, please get in touch. The information you supply will be regarded as strictly confidential but will help HS2Action Alliance strengthen the evidence in their Property Blight Pilot Study.

### BRITAIN'S LEADING TRANSPORT EXPERT CLAIMS THAT GOVERNMENT'S HS2 PLANS ARE A MISTAKE.

In September's issue of Rail Magazine, Christian Wolmer, who was named Transport Journalist of the Year in 2007, questions the Government's prediction for an increase in travel demand when, in recent years, the trend has been the other way with people taking less trips annually and travelling less distance. Wolmer asks questions HS2's benefits...

**'Saying a scheme is worth a net gain of, say, £30bn to the country as a whole simply does not stand up to scrutiny - and in their honest [private] moments transport economists and consultants will admit that'.**

The entire article can be seen on the HS2Action Alliance website.

On the Costing the Earth Programme on BBC Radio4 Norman Baker, Under Secretary of State for [Regional and Local] Transport said that the Government has an 'alternative to travel' agenda and that he is already seeing a trend towards working from home. He went on to say that this would aid the Government in spending less on new road and rail investment and that broadband would be rolled out more broadly to facilitate working from home.

Good, thank you Mr Baker, we agree - better broadband, more of us working from home and no HS2. Now he just needs to tell Philip Hammond.

The Tax Payers Alliance agrees that HS2 benefits are an illusion.

According to the TPA, High Speed rail is hugely expensive and therefore needs to deliver significant benefits to justify investing taxpayer's money. Goto [www.taxpayersalliance.com](http://www.taxpayersalliance.com) to read the full article.

### WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Write to your local MP
- Sign the new Government petition against HS2 on <http://www.gopetition.com/petitions/stop-hs2.html>
- Send a donation to HS2AA via their website to support their initiatives
- Take part in local action group initiatives.

### Lizzie walks the line

To raise awareness of HS2's impact on the countryside, Lizzie Williams of Stop HS2 walked the entire route. Lizzie said that during the 23-day walk she had been 'delighted' at the level of support she received.

Lizzie gave a local radio interview at her start point in Lichfield, Staffordshire, then

walked southwards through Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire to complete her walk at Euston Station, London. She also continued the protest by walking the spur in to Birmingham on the weekend of 2<sup>nd</sup> October to arrive at Conservative Party conference where there was a demonstration in the official

'protest zone' outside the conference.

This was a fantastic effort and a great way of highlighting the planned route and the consequent devastation to the countryside and communities she visited.

Our thanks to Lizzie for protesting on our behalf.



**Donate to HS2AA via the website or by sending a cheque (payable to HS2 Action Alliance Ltd) to c/o the Treasurer at the address below.**

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## A Small Victory!

After DfT published the results of the EHS consultation in July, HS2AA formally objected to the biased presentation and omission of its final response and Property Blight Report.

DfT initially stood by their position but after receiving the detailed objections agreed they had "made a mistake".

The public record has now been corrected.

For full details of our response go to the HS2AA website:  
[www.hs2actionalliance.org](http://www.hs2actionalliance.org)

## Next issue ....

Read about HS2AA's response to the Spending Review ...

To receive an electronic copy please join the mailing list on the website..

## PLANS AFOOT FOR A SECOND CHILTERN CONSERVATION SOCIETY PROTEST WALK

Nearly one hundred protestors walked from Amersham to Great Missenden on September 29<sup>th</sup> starting out from the point where the HS2 train would exit a six-mile tunnel just off School Lane.

The protestors lined up in a row almost 100yds wide to demonstrate the width of the tunnel portals if plans go ahead. Walkers were treated to refreshments at Origins Wine Bar where the Society held an HS2 information day.

Some campaigners, unable to take part in the full walk, congre-

gated at Great Mantle's Farm where the train re-exits.

Due to its success, organiser Carol Rainsford said that there would certainly be a repeat walk but it was still in the planning stages.

**Please lend your support to the next walk and get out there and help us send a strong message! Action Groups get lots of local and national press coverage from these events so it really does pay to protest. And the more of us who do it.....**



## Say 'No' with a t-shirt.

They get the message over and they're only £7.50 each.

The t-shirts are available from Brook Leisure, Prestwood near Great Missenden on 01494 862083/01494 866574. Brook Leisure will arrange shipping if necessary. The t-shirts are available in Small to XX large.

Car stickers at £1.50 are available from Samways newsagent, Great Missenden and Post offices around Great Missenden. All profits will go to HS2 Action Alliance.

Hope you look as good in yours as Alex does!



Photo: Rachel Raffety

**The plight of passengers must come before grandiose projects' says Andrew Gilligan** and adds that for most of us, high-speed rail is anything but...

In an article in the Daily Telegraph, Andrew Gilligan points out that due to HS1 'large numbers of rail passengers in Kent have seen their service transformed into the worst they have ever known... [with] fares on the new service between 10 and 80% higher than the old one.'

The Government is now planning to sell the rights to operate the HS1 route, which cost almost £6bn to build, claiming that this will help address the financial deficit. So how about scrapping HS2 now - that might help with the deficit too.

## Can they build this line straight through an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty?

**Yes.** If the Government deems that HS2 is in the 'national interest and that there is no other alternative' then they can devastate large areas of beautiful countryside, totally undermining years of strict planning controls and building regulations that have protected our landscape.

