

## Compensation Consultation

A further Consultation on Compensation will start this month. It is expected to run for a minimum of 6 weeks.

It is very important that everyone responds to this consultation - *help will be available*. We need to let Government know that affected communities must receive **fair** compensation.

### AGAHST update

An update is enclosed with this newsletter from AGAHST, the Federation of groups formed to campaign against HS2. Your Action Group is affiliated to this Federation.

AGAHST Campaign Director, Deanne Dukhan, will be speaking at an open meeting at the Village Club in Drayton Bassett at 7.30pm on Thursday 10th May.

### HS2 Definitions

#### Consultation

processes through which people get stuff off their chests while we press ahead anyway

**Mitigation** .....err...maybe some tree-planting?

**Community benefits** .....“Cycle Paths” !

**Not Directly Affected** House not demolished, line goes through garden

Updates can be found on the Village Website  
[www.hints-village.com](http://www.hints-village.com)

Further information can be found at:

HS2 Action Alliance  
[www.hs2aa.org](http://www.hs2aa.org)

AGAHST  
[www.betterthanhs2.org](http://www.betterthanhs2.org)

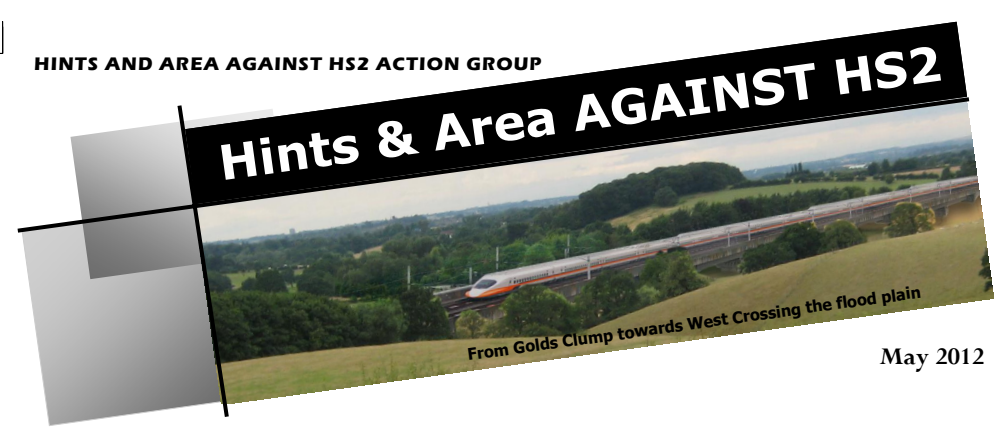
Stop HS2  
[www.stophs2.org](http://www.stophs2.org)

## Fund Raising

Urgently needed people to help Fund Raising.

The AGAHST Federation have produced a Grass-roots Fundraising guide. It contains a good many ideas for fund raising events.

### Can You Help?



May 2012

## Community Forums

The prime function of these forums is to contribute to the development of the route design, minimise potential impacts and to identify “local community benefits”. Your AG has stressed that we see it as an opportunity to mitigate the impact of HS2 on our community and our environment.

Hints and Area AG prepared in some detail for the event and as a result we believe we had a good opportunity to get a number of our key issues on the table. We will continue to progress these issues at future meetings.

HS2 have pledged to respond to questions, wherever possible, within a two week time frame.

A key comment which was voiced by one of the senior design engineers was that at this stage the line design is **indicative only**. This is not to say that there will be any discussion on the **location** of the line, but rather the form it takes, in respect of tunnelling, levels, mitigation of noise and environmental impacts etc.

A full set of minutes produced by both HS2 and separately by Lichfield D.C. will be posted on the village web site.

**Hints & Area Action Group is still against the principle of HS2 but we are equally determined not to rule out any opportunity to discuss Mitigation. A document on Mitigation for Hints & Area has been drawn up and once ratified will be formally submitted to HS2 and Justine Greening**

## Drop in Consultation

**Hints Village Hall 10 July 11am - 8pm**

Part of the Consultation Process, in particular community involvement. To be attended by representatives of HS2 Ltd, Department of Transport and Lichfield District Council.

**A prime opportunity for all Community members and local businesses to have their say and influence the design of the line. It is really important that each resident of this village and the surrounding areas makes their voice heard and expresses their views on minimising the impact.**

**Local members of the Hints Community Forum will be in attendance throughout the day.**

**Please put 10<sup>th</sup> July in your diary**

**Prepare in advance questions about line design which you wish to discuss**

# Response from DfT

After several weeks the Department of Transport have responded to the letter sent on behalf of the village. A reply has been sent. Here is a copy of both of the letters.

Dear Ms Constantine,

## Hints and Area Action Group Against HS2

Thank you for your letter of 19 January to the Secretary of State about high speed rail, and for your subsequent letter of 8 February, sent on behalf of the villagers of Hint. I have been asked to reply. Please accept my apologies for the delay.

I would like to assure you that the Government and HS2 Ltd will continue to look at ways to lessen the impacts of building a new railway. You may be aware that HS2 Ltd gave considerable attention to the area surrounding Hints in developing the consultation route. This is outlined in the *Review of possible refinements to the proposed HS2 London to West Midlands Route* which is available from the Department for Transport (DfT) website, at [www.dft.gov.uk/highspeedrail](http://www.dft.gov.uk/highspeedrail).

Following consultation, the route was revisited, and consideration given to whether the line could be moved further away from the village. HS2 Ltd found no means of making changes to the route in terms of the impact on people, or the environment. However, as the review notes, HS2 would seek to develop a package of mitigation measures, including landscaping, with the local community through the next stage of preliminary design and Environmental Impact Assessment.

You raised concerns that the Environmental Impact Assessment was not completed prior to the decision to proceed with HS2. The Government felt the Appraisal of Sustainability was a robust approach at that stage of development and gave sufficient information on matters of sustainability for a decision to be made on the future of the scheme.

However, an Environmental Impact Assessment will be developed and submitted when seeking Parliamentary approval for HS2 from London to the West Midlands, and this process will include gathering detailed datasets held by local authorities and other bodies. This will identify and, where possible, avoid or offset impacts upon heritage assets, including areas of archaeological interest.

The Environmental Impact Assessment will build on the consultation comments received and be subject to further stakeholder engagement, including extensive engagement with the communities and individuals affected by the railway. The concerns of local residents are an important priority for the Government and HS2 Ltd will ensure that local views are fed into the design process and that local communities are aware of the progress being made with the railway. HS2 Ltd is setting up Community Forums along the route which will enable local participation, including a remit to make specific local recommendations on mitigations and solutions. The membership of these will be made up of local authorities and parish councils along the route, and other local groups and representatives; the precise make up of individual Forums to be discussed with communities themselves. Details can be found online, via the HS2 Ltd website, at <http://www.hs2.org.uk/consultation-engagement>.

The detailed design of the route and the Environmental Impact Assessment will allow an Environmental Statement to be produced and consulted on in spring 2013. This statement will then be deposited before Parliament during the Hybrid Bill process, and will describe the project, the methods of environmental analysis used and the conclusions of the EIA including the proposed mitigation measures.

Finally, the Government recognises the impact that the high speed rail proposals are already having on communities and local property markets along the line of route. That is why we are developing a package of blight and compensation measures for the longer term, which we will consult on in May this year. More details on this as well as the other measures announced as part of the January 2012 decision can be found in the *Review of Property Issues*. Given the concerns raised in your letter I would encourage you, as well as all those in Hints affected or interested to respond to the consultation in order to help shape Government policy.

I hope that you, and the villagers of Hints, will continue to contribute to the discussion on HS2, through the Blight and Compensation consultation, and the community engagement in your area.

Yours sincerely,



Ben Fowler  
High Speed Rail  
Department for Transport

# ..... and the Reply

30<sup>th</sup> April 2012

Dear Mr Fowler,

Thank you for your reply to my letter and your apologies for the delay in reply. We do accept that the Secretary of State must receive a vast amount of mail, and delegates the task of replying to others with her Department. However, Ms Greening is on record urging people to actively participate in the Consultation process; please remind her that consultation is a two way process, to give and receive information. Any delay in response eats into what is a comparatively short consultation process.

You refer in your letter to the consideration given to the route in this area. We have seen and studied the various Optimisation Reports on the HS2 route as it runs through the village of Hints and surrounding area and, in response, have submitted comments to the Consultation – comments which did not appear in the composite response document. We are left with the conclusion that our responses (from the Hints and Area Action Group) as well as responses from residents within the village (including my own) were not read, were lost or were totally ignored.

Our responses included references to issues, which we would have thought had been included in the Government's Appraisal of Sustainability, which you describe as a robust approach, but to us that does not seem to be the case. We can only hope the Environmental Impact Assessment will pay more attention, to heritage assets and environmental impacts.

We are participating fully in the Community Forum process and we will ensure that representatives of HS2 are fully aware of the impact of their line design in this area. It seems to us that some of the earlier maps used did not comprehensively show heritage assets e.g. nowhere was it referenced that Hints is a designated Conservation Area.

We will be very interested to see your package of blight and compensation measures. Up to now the plight of individuals, whose home or business will be the subject of compulsory purchase orders, has been dealt with in a very perfunctory and unconcerned manner.

I can assure you that we will engage fully in the further discussions on HS2 but discussions must be meaningful and not simply an exercise in lip service.

Yours sincerely, Maureen Constantine **On behalf of the Hints & Area Action group**