

[News story: HS2 Phase 2a information events 2017](#)

We are holding a number of information events, to share all the latest details about our plans for building and running the new railway.

You'll be welcome to discuss any of this new information with us, including:

- the 3 Phase 2a route changes we consulted on last year and recently confirmed
- how you can track what's happening with the Phase 2a bill as it goes through Parliament
- assistance available to property owners

Date	Venue	Time
Saturday 12 August	Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Eastgate Street, Stafford, ST16 2LT	11am to 5pm
Wednesday 16 August	Whitmore Village Hall, Coneygreave Lane, Whitmore, ST5 5HX	2pm to 8pm
Wednesday 23 August	The Madeley Centre, New Road, Madeley (near Crewe) CW3 9DN	2pm to 8pm

Past events will be removed as new events added on a regular basis.

The section of HS2, known as Phase 2a, will extend the high speed line from the West Midlands to Crewe, and provide reduced journey times further north by connecting to the West Coast Main Line at Crewe.

It will open in 2027, 6 years earlier than planned, bringing benefits to the North of England sooner.

[News story: PHE annual conference 2017: bookings open](#)

Public Health England's (PHE) annual conference takes place at Warwick University on 12 and 13 September 2017.

The [PHE annual conference](#) brings together over 1400 participants from a wide range of organisations, to learn, and share knowledge and experience to help improve public health.

This year's conference focuses on 3 key themes across the programme:

- promoting world-class science and evidence
- making the economic case for prevention
- working towards a healthier, fairer society

Key note speakers at this year's conference will include:

- Nicola Blackwood MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Public Health and Innovation
- Sir David Spiegelhalter, Winton Professor of the Public Understanding of Risk at Cambridge University
- Professor Dame Margaret Whitehead, WH Duncan Professor of Public Health, University of Liverpool
- Dr Jennifer Dixon, Chief Executive at The Health Foundation

[Abstract submissions](#) are invited in work that clearly link to one or more of the conference themes, introducing new ideas, research findings and advances in public health practice and outcomes.

[Press release: PM meetings in Saudi Arabia: 4 April 2017](#)

The PM and the Saudi Minister of Energy, Khalid al Falih, discussed working together on energy policy, including energy diversification, as well as investment opportunities for small and medium businesses on the London Stock Exchange and in the UK.

In a second meeting, the Prime Minister and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Nayyaf, Minister of the Interior, discussed a range of issues including the shared threat posed by foreign fighters returning from Syria, and dangers posed by extremist material on the internet.

[News story: Highways England highlights dangers faced by road workers](#)

Les Bramwell was walking along the pavement after routinely assessing repairs to a pothole on the A50 near Stoke-on-Trent when he was struck by a car last

April (2016).

The 65-year-old was left with serious injuries and says it's a miracle he wasn't killed.

Nearly a year on, he has only just had a neck brace removed and is only now able to drive again.

The case was highlighted as it was revealed 12 road workers, including two traffic officers, have lost their lives on the network over the past 10 years. In three of the cases the victims were knocked down by members of the public.

Meanwhile, over the past 10 years, workers have been injured by motorists on more than 50 occasions. Seventeen of those incidents involved workers on foot.

And since May there have been around 150 recorded incidents each month of vehicles encroaching onto sites where work is taking place.

Today Mr Bramwell joined Highways England in urging drivers to take extra care around roadworks and observe speed limits.

Mr Bramwell said:

I want to highlight to people the dangers of our job.

Something that should have been a routine task has had a serious impact on my life, and that's why it's so important that we educate motorists about the dangers of the work we do day in, day out.

Highways England Midlands Regional Director Catherine Brookes said:

Nobody needs a road so badly that somebody needs to lose their life while maintaining or improving it; it is my absolute priority that people go home safely at the end of every day.

It is simply unacceptable that people run the risk of being killed or seriously injured while doing their job. While we can't eliminate risk on the road network we need to do our utmost to protect the lives of both drivers and road workers.

And motorists need to slow down near road works and obey speed limits and signs. Think what it would be like if you had to contend with lorries and cars driving through your shop, office or school.

Mr Bramwell was working for Highways England contractor Kier as an Asset Incident Watchman and had been assessing repair work as part of his day-to-day duties.

As he returned to his van, parked at a nearby petrol station, a car left the dual carriageway, mounted the pavement and ploughed into him from behind.

CCTV footage shows the car travelling behind an HGV which slows down as a car in front turns into the petrol station. At that point the vehicle behind the lorry can be seen mounting the pavement and hitting Mr Bramwell. He was taken to hospital with a broken neck and a leg broken in three places.

Mr Bramwell went on to say:

I had to sleep downstairs for six months because I couldn't go upstairs, It's been a massive strain on my family and I've had my confidence taken away.

Everything has been turned upside down. Although my injuries mean I will spend at least a year in recovery, I could have been paralysed or worse – lost my life.

Mr Bramwell, from Penkridge, Staffordshire, who has been in the job for more than nine years, is a married father-of-two with four young grandchildren. He was based at Kier's Doxey depot off the M6 in Stafford with colleague Matt Wyse before the incident.

Mr Wyse, from Hednesford, said:

I've always been aware of the dangers – working on the roads, our lives are in the hands of others – but you can never predict what may happen. I urge drivers to look out for road workers as they drive through roadworks.

Following the incident a 70-year-old man admitted driving without due care and attention and was fined £105, costs of £85 and a victim surcharge of £30 and given three points.

Highways England is committed to making the road network a safer place to use and work on and has a goal of reducing the number of people killed or injured to as close as possible to zero by 2040.

It is reminding drivers that just because workers aren't visible, it doesn't mean they are not present. This is especially true when operations take place at night, but also applies when visibility is restricted by works vehicles and equipment.

Highways England has adopted a [health and safety five year plan](#) and procedures for its workforce are constantly under review.

Press release: Environment Agency takes a stand on illegal waste

Farmers, landowners, big and small business, and members of the public are being asked to be more vigilant after a number of incidents where large amounts of processed or baled waste has been dumped across the West Midlands.

Over the last 12 months the Environment Agency in the West Midlands has seen an increase of illegally dumped waste on public and private land. Fly-tipping is the responsibility of the local council however the Environment Agency becomes involved when the waste is more than 20 tonnes (about 20 cubic metres); more than 5 cubic metres of fibrous asbestos or 75 litres of potentially hazardous waste in drums or containers; or if it is linked to criminal business activity or organised crime.

What is being done to tackle waste crime

Through the Government Spending Review 2015, nationally the Environment Agency secured an additional £23m to tackle waste crime in England, up to the end of March 2020. This is being spent across the country, targeting priority areas. £20m of this is from the landfill community's tax fund. It has been used locally to fund additional temporary staff to further target illegal waste operators and high risk sites of concern.

The Environment Agency are determined to make life hard for criminals and support legitimate business, proactively supporting these businesses by disrupting, and stopping, the criminal element backed up by the threat of tough enforcement action and prosecution. The new Disruption and Prevention team – part of the Environment Agency's National Enforcement Service – is leading the way in finding new approaches to disrupt waste crime and stop it happening. Working in partnership with law enforcement agencies, HMRC, DVLA and Companies House, as well as employing a number of techniques to track and trace vehicles and waste from different sites.

What businesses and the public can do

Everybody has a part to play to help solve the waste crime problem and make sure waste is managed responsibly. The Environment Agency is asking members of the public to be vigilant; to contact them with information on anything suspicious as long as it is safe for people to do so. Dumping commercial waste like this is a crime. Individuals involved in such illegal activity can be hostile and we would urge members of the public to not put themselves in any danger if they encounter any such activity and to avoid any direct contact with the culprits.

Lisa Pinney, Environment Agency Area Manager for West Midlands, said:

It's crucial that all businesses understand their duty of care

responsibilities for the waste they produce, who they allow to transport it and ultimately where it goes. Too often, when these responsibilities are misunderstood or ignored, we see the impact of waste crime where waste is deliberately dumped on land with no permit. This can cause serious pollution, put communities at risk and undermines legitimate businesses that are doing the right thing. And even if the landowner has no involvement, legally they may still be responsible for that waste and that could mean a large clear up bill.

Waste stored inappropriately can create issues for neighbours through smells and pests. It can also have a detrimental effect on the environment and impact on rivers and streams. If you see or suspect illegal waste activities, report it anonymously to Crimestoppers [online](#) or by calling 0800 555 111. Alternatively report it to the Environment Agency's incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

Notes to editors

We all create waste, and all have a responsibility to ensure our waste is handled correctly. Whether you're a business, local council or householder you must make sure you know where your waste goes so it doesn't end up in the hands of operators who break the law and dump it to avoid paying for its legal disposal. Illegal waste sites undercut legitimate business, can cause severe damage to the environment and misery for local residents. Many businesses don't realise they have a legal Waste Duty of Care and could be committing an offence if their waste is dumped by an illegal operator. Hauliers are at risk of unwittingly becoming involved in waste crime by not asking the right questions about the loads they're collecting.

Make sure you know what your legal responsibilities are: [manage your waste responsibly](#)

Check the [public register](#) to see if a site is permitted or a waste carrier is registered

You could be breaking the law if your waste isn't managed properly. Visit [Right Waste Right Place](#) to help you comply with the law. You can also refer to the Defra [waste duty of care code of practice](#)