

“HS2 saved our wedding!”

A bride and groom in Cheshire have thanked contractors working on Britain’s new high speed railway, after coming to the rescue on the eve of their wedding.

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Newlyweds Oliver Daniels and Holly Johnson

Days of heavy rain had flooded Oliver Daniels and Holly Johnson’s garden wedding venue in Blakenhall, making access to their marquee virtually impossible.

The couple quickly made arrangements for the wedding party to use the car park at nearby Betley Village Hall and then transport them to the venue by bus. However, they still had to find a way of getting 130 wedding guests – as well as catering staff, equipment and supplies – from the venue’s gravelled yard across the sodden, muddy field in to the marquee.

3 days to go

With 3 days to go until the big day, the mother of the groom approached a High Speed 2 (HS2) Limited contractor for help. Fortunately, [Balfour Beatty](#) are currently working at a HS2 compound in the Cheshire village, close to the home of Oliver’s parents, Jonathan and Katie, and where the reception was due to take place.

The Balfour Beatty team were expecting a delivery of 50 new MaxiTrack panels the next day and were happy to loan their track matting to ensure the bridal party could get to the venue dry and mud-free. Foreman Ian Matthews and 2 site workers hand-laid the temporary walkway just hours before the wedding took place.



Wedding marquee with MaxiTrack walkway

Iain Andrews, Head of Community Engagement at HS2 Ltd, said:

The quick thinking of the Balfour Beatty team in assisting with the Daniels' wedding is a great example of how HS2 and its supply chain is working with communities along the route to build respectful and long-term relationships, while taking opportunities to have a positive impact.

How we and our suppliers behave as we build Britain's new high speed railway is just as important as what we're creating, and that's why we aim to be a good neighbour every day in all the communities in which we're operating in.

Ground investigation works

International infrastructure group Balfour Beatty are currently providing ground investigation works in preparation for the Phase 2a section of HS2's route that will link Birmingham and Crewe in 2027 as part of Europe's largest infrastructure project.

Meanwhile, work on the section between Birmingham and London is well underway ahead of a 2026 opening. The project already supports 9,000 jobs, with this figure expected to surpass 30,000 at peak construction. The rest of Phase Two

(Phase 2b) will create a Y-shaped network, going to Manchester in the West and Leeds in the East, and is planned to be completed by 2033.

Andy Maddock, Site Agent, Balfour Beatty, said:

Wedding planning is certainly different to the boreholes and trial pits we are used to dealing with, but we had the materials and labour available, and we were glad to help.

Oliver Daniels and Holly Johnson (both aged 28) met while studying engineering in France, where they were introduced by mutual friends.

Expressing gratitude for Balfour Beatty's assistance in their hour of need, the newlyweds said:

HS2 saved our wedding! We had organised the entire day ourselves and thought we had everything covered, but unfortunately you can never rely on the Great British weather. Without the help of Balfour Beatty we would have been quite literally stuck!

We have been so overwhelmed by the kindness, efficiency and generosity of the team based in Blakenhall. Thank you from the bride and groom, and the whole wedding party!



Newlyweds Oliver Daniels and Holly Johnson arriving at their wedding reception

The wedding service was held on Saturday 15 June at Reaseheath Hall, an 18th century country house in Nantwich, and, following the garden reception, the couple jetted off on honeymoon to Iceland's capital, Reykjavík.

Press and media enquiries

For enquiries during office working hours, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm: 020 7944 6149

For enquiries outside of these hours and at the weekend: 020 7944 0550

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