

Derbyshire young people get insight into railway construction

In an interactive workshop run by HS2 Ltd, members of the Derbyshire BME Forum were tasked with taking on the role of bridge builders.

The Derbyshire BME Forum works to deliver and support activities that will increase opportunities for Black and Minority Ethnic young people (BME) and communities in Derbyshire. Fifteen youngsters participated in the HS2 Ltd session, which was held at Donut Creative Arts Studio (DCAS) in Chesterfield on Wednesday 31 July.

After learning about the complexities of constructing major infrastructure components, the young people, aged 10 to 19, were given boxes full of craft materials and challenged to build a bridge over a series of mini obstacles. Once built, the bridges were put to the test by laying track and running a model railway across them.

Skills

Prior to this, the youngsters took part in a quiz which matched their interests and skills to a potential future role helping build HS2, from design to construction, and from cyber security to customer experience.

From left to right: John Isidor; Judith Rowe, Engagement Advisor, HS2 Ltd; Sharmaine Carabana; Reece Carabana; and Antonio Pelayo.

Judith Rowe, Engagement Advisor at HS2 Ltd, said:

At the peak of construction, over 30,000 people will play a role in delivering Britain's new high speed railway. HS2 is investing in young people now to help address the country's skills shortage and ensure we leave a lasting talent legacy for the future.

At events such as these we are introducing children to a diverse range of career opportunities that HS2, and the wider construction industry, can offer. We want to encourage them to think about how they might play their own part in this once in a generation project that will bring Britain closer together.

HS2 Ltd bridge building activity.

From 2033, Chesterfield will be served by HS2, offering new, improved and faster rail services that will reduce journey times and free up space on

existing lines for more local services. The region will also be served by a new East Midlands Hub in Toton, which will provide high-speed connections to core UK cities and a journey time of just 16 minutes to Chesterfield.

Jobs

Not only will Derbyshire benefit from dedicated HS2 services at Chesterfield, the proposed HS2 Infrastructure Maintenance Depot at Staveley offers major opportunities for the area. It is estimated that the construction of the depot could support up to 75 roles and, once operational, the facility will provide 200 high skilled jobs. In addition, Derbyshire County Council's masterplan includes 1,500 new homes and 800 new jobs around the site.

12-year-old Sharmaine Carabana from Chesterfield, said:

We do need HS2, because we have so many cars that can damage the environment and pollute the earth, but using one train that goes around everywhere is better than having lots of cars that use petrol and pollute the skies.

With the bridge building activity, we had to consider things that might happen in the real world, such as building over roads or rocky ground. Working for the railway would really interest me as there's lots of different areas you can get involved with, from building to design, and you can use your skills to enable people to travel around.

10-year-old Antonio Pelayo from Chesterfield, said:

HS2 is great. If I worked on HS2, I would be a digital defender, so I could protect all the railway's information.

Reece Carabana and Antonio Pelayo.

Applicants

At HS2 Ltd, 19 per cent of its staff identify as Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME). The organisation has already taken a number of positive steps towards increasing the number of BAME applicants and staff this year, including launching its own multi-cultural employee's network, and working with its supply chain to attend BAME recruitment events to encourage more diverse young talent into the infrastructure sector.

HS2 Ltd is the first company in the sector to trial 'blind recruitment' which, like auditions on TV's 'The Voice', takes away everything other than technical ability at the very first stage of recruitment. This removes any unconscious bias – where, unknowingly people often favour those presenting in

their own image.

The Derbyshire BME Forum aims to ensure BME youngsters can play an integral role in influencing decisions made about their lives in the county. Consisting of representatives aged 10 to 25, the Forum meets every three months and helps young people to participate in social affairs, identify issues affecting their lives and their mental health and wellbeing, and exchange experiences, information and ideas. The Forum is jointly run by Links CVS – the Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire Council for Voluntary Service and Action Ltd – and Derbyshire County Council.

[Revised road closure guidance to boost children's outdoor play](#)

- updated guidance will make it easier to close streets for community events
- government has written to all councils to advise on how more 'play streets' can be created
- move will increase the opportunities for children to play outside

More children are set to enjoy playing outside safely away from traffic after government rules around closing roads for community events were simplified.

[Guidance](#) issued by the Department for Transport (DfT) is being updated today (23 August 2019) making it easier for residents who want to turn their quiet neighbourhood roads into occasional 'play streets'.

Play streets, where roads are closed to allow for small events and sports, are not only good for children's health and happiness, they give them a sense of belonging and encourage other residents to get together, creating greater community cohesion.

Roads Minister Baroness Vere said:

Play streets offer wonderful opportunities for children to get outdoors and for families and communities to get together.

A generation ago, it was common to see young people playing out in the street but today it can be a rare sight.

That's why today I'm delighted to be making it easier for those who want to create Play Streets, boosting the health and wellbeing of children, families and communities.

Alice Ferguson, Director of [Playing Out](#) which supports the street play movement, said:

We are delighted that the government has now issued guidance for councils to support play streets. Children need the chance to play out freely near home, as was the norm a generation ago. Heavy traffic and other conditions have made this increasingly difficult.

We hope this guidance will enable all councils to get behind the idea and that we will see many more children having the chance to play out and make friends on their own streets and estates over the coming years.

Long term, we want children to be safe to play out every day, without intervention, for their health, happiness and sense of belonging. This announcement is a great first step towards that.

The process for making Play Street Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) has been a costly barrier for parents because of the requirement to advertise them.

But the DfT has found an easier way to help people create regular play streets.

The department has today issued advice to councils, enabling them to make 'special event' orders, which mean roads can be temporarily closed to enable children's play – and these do not need to be advertised.

Jenni Wiggle, Senior Director at [Living Streets](#), said:

Removing traffic from our streets creates a safer environment and improves local air quality, which can help families feel happier to let their children play out.

Not only does this mean that children can enjoy being more active and sociable, our streets transform into cleaner, safer and more welcoming places for people of all ages.

There is still a way to go to ensure our streets are safe and welcoming all the time, but this updated guidance shows a commitment from the government to create friendly and thriving communities.

While consent is needed for multiple closures, to make the process easier, councils can use a single consent application to close several roads repeatedly for children's play over any 12 month period rather than submitting individual applications for each closure.

This should help to break down some of the barriers that have in the past prevented children from having the freedom to play out where they live – just

like their parents or grandparents did.

[New High Commissioner to Seychelles Patrick Lynch presents credentials](#)

President Danny Faure and High Commissioner Patrick Lynch discussed the further strengthening of well-established bilateral ties between the two countries. The new High Commissioner also expressed his enthusiasm to continue the progress that has been made across a number of priority areas.

Following the ceremony, High Commissioner Patrick Lynch said:

It is a privilege to have been posted as High Commissioner to these beautiful islands. I recognise our shared history and am also proud of our shared values of democracy, rule of law and protecting the environment. I look forward to working with the Government of the Republic of Seychelles on the global challenges that we collectively face. Cooperation on climate change, marine protection and maritime security remain important priorities for the United Kingdom, with the potential for local expertise and initiative to be at forefront of global efforts.

Further information

Know [more about Patrick Lynch](#).

[UK aid to provide life-saving support for up to one million people crippled by drought in Somalia](#)

- Somalia is one of the world's poorest and most fragile states, compounded by climate shocks that severely affect the lives and livelihoods of millions.
- Minister for Africa, Andrew Stephenson, has announced extra food and

water for Somalia to help vulnerable families in desperate need.

- He also met humanitarian partners to discuss how the international community can help Somalia build resilience to climate change.

Up to one million people in Somalia will receive lifesaving food and clean water to help stop starvation and malnutrition thanks to new UK funding announced today.

Minister for Africa Andrew Stephenson has announced that UK aid will provide extra food, water and medicine to help vulnerable families in Somalia that are desperately suffering from relentless drought.

There are close to 5 million Somalis who are hungry and a further 1.2 million who face the risk of becoming malnourished this year due to successive poor rains and failed harvests. A further 2.6 million people have fled their homes, due to conflict and the dire humanitarian crisis.

During a visit to the country this week, Minister Stephenson announced that as well as providing food and water, UK aid will help build longer-term resilience to climate change and drought. An extra £30 million of UK aid support will also provide vaccines for livestock – which Somali farmers rely on for their livelihoods to stop cattle dying from disease and starvation.

Minister for Africa, Andrew Stephenson said:

Somalia is being crippled by drought and millions of people are in desperate need of lifesaving food, clean water and treatment for malnutrition.

The UK has been at the forefront of the humanitarian response, but more needs to be done. Britain, alongside the international community, is committed to providing immediate assistance and building Somalia's ability to manage the crisis.

Somalia's security is vital for stability in the region and is firmly in the UK's national interest.

Minister Stephenson led a roundtable with humanitarian partners during his visit, where he discussed how the UK and international community can support Somalia to build their resilience to climate change and end their reliance on emergency aid.

Minister Stephenson met Somalia's Prime Minister Hassan Ali Khayre and reiterated the UK's commitment to supporting Somalia reform on security, politics and developing Somalia's economy.

He also travelled to Baidoa in Southwest State where he saw first-hand how the British Military is supporting the training of the Somali National Army

at a CSSF-funded training facility.

While there, he met Southwest State President Abdiasis Laftagareen and discussed the UK's support for stability and security in the area.

Note to Editors

This new £30 million package of UK aid builds on the £38 million in humanitarian and resilience support which the UK is already providing in Somalia. This is expected to benefit over 1 million Somalis in 2019.

The extra support will help deliver vital food, medicine and water to the most vulnerable. DFID will work with UN partners to deliver this aid.

The UK is working on long-term resilience, to improve Somalia's ability to cope with shocks and avoid repeated cycles of crisis and emergency response.

The UN's 2019 Humanitarian Response Plan for Somalia aims to help 4.2 million of the most vulnerable Somalis – nearly a third of the population – including 2.6 million internally displaced by conflict, drought, and floods.

Asset recovery scammers pose as Insolvency Service to target investors

Essex and London Properties was wound up by the courts in September 2018 on public interest grounds. The Official Receiver was appointed liquidator of the company and has been made aware of several schemes targeting the company's investors.

The 'recovery schemes' falsely claim they can retrieve invested capital from the liquidation process, pretend to be acting in co-operation with the Official Receiver and some even claim to be the Insolvency Service itself.

Joanna Caswell, Deputy Official Receiver, said:

These schemes pose a serious threat as they will attempt to illicit further funds from you which you are unlikely to see again. In the strongest possible terms, we strongly advise anyone who invested in Essex and London to not engage with anyone who claims they can recover your investments.

The Official Receiver will never contact anyone offering to recover their money for a fee or recommend another organisation offering the same service. If in doubt, contact the Official Receiver.

Creditors of Essex and London Properties Limited who have received an unsolicited letter or email should notify the Official Receiver immediately by email to: piu.or@insolvency.gov.uk.

When there are updates on the progress of the liquidation of the company, these will be contacted by the Official Receiver directly.

1. Understand the insolvency process

When a company enters liquidation, its assets are realised to repay the debts that caused the company to become insolvent. Investors in the company can register as a creditor with the company's liquidator to stake a claim on the company's assets. The liquidator will distribute any available funds to creditors once the liquidation process has been resolved.

There are no other avenues for the assets to be recovered and realised, so if you are approached by a company that offers one, you should be extremely sceptical.

2. Report anything you think could be a scam

If you think you have been contacted about a scam, contact the Financial Conduct Authority's Consumer Helpline on 0800 111 6768. If the scam relates to a case being handled by the Insolvency Service, contact the Official Receiver with details so we can investigate and warn other creditors if necessary.

Further advice on how to protect yourself from scams is available from the [Financial Conduct Authority](#).