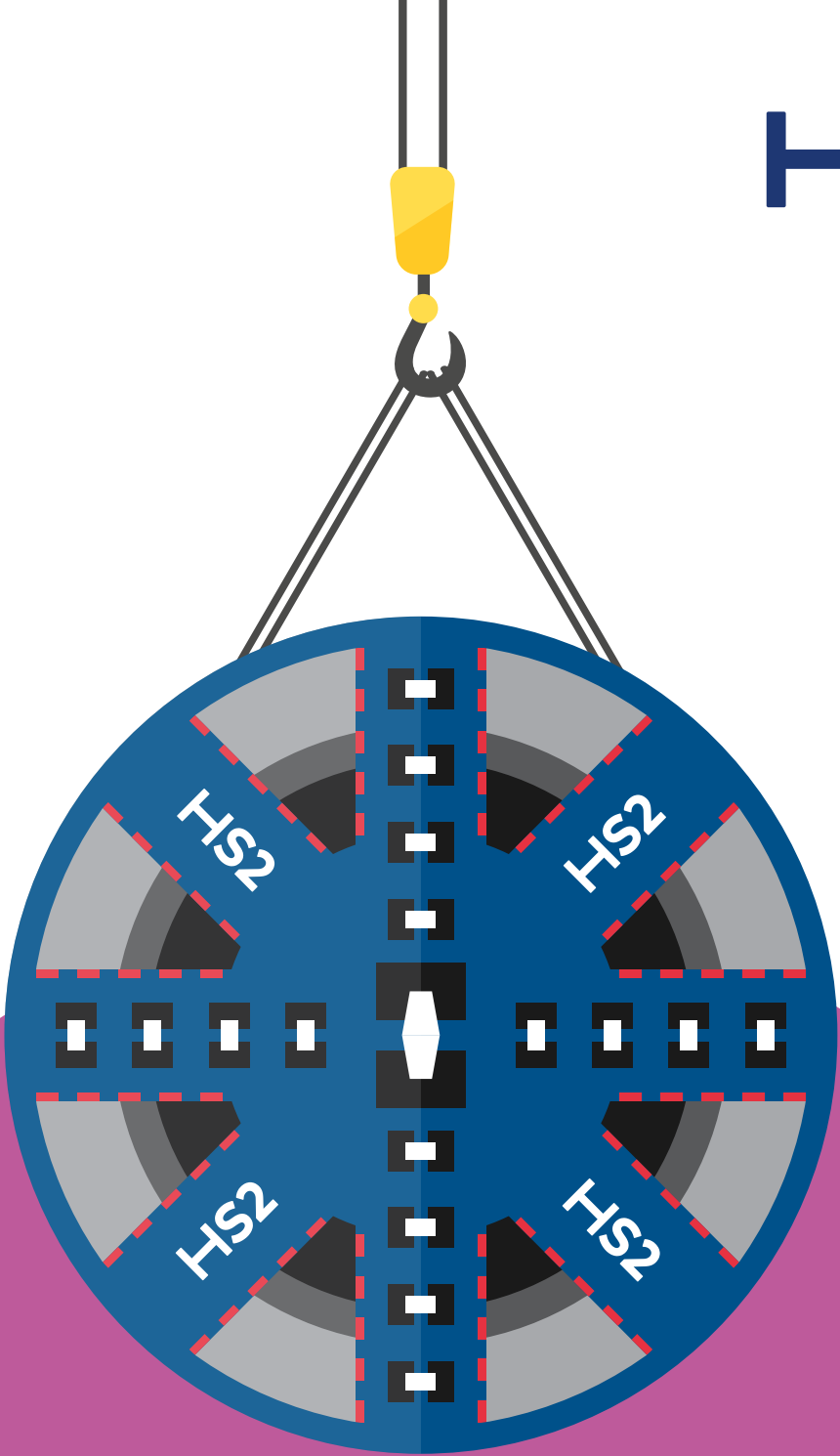


HS2

Health and Safety Strategy

2023



I care. You count. We matter.

Contents

The 'what': health and safety at HS2

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Introduction | 3 |
| Our approach: setting new standards | 4 |
| Safety is at the heart of HS2 | 6 |

The 'why': refreshing our strategy

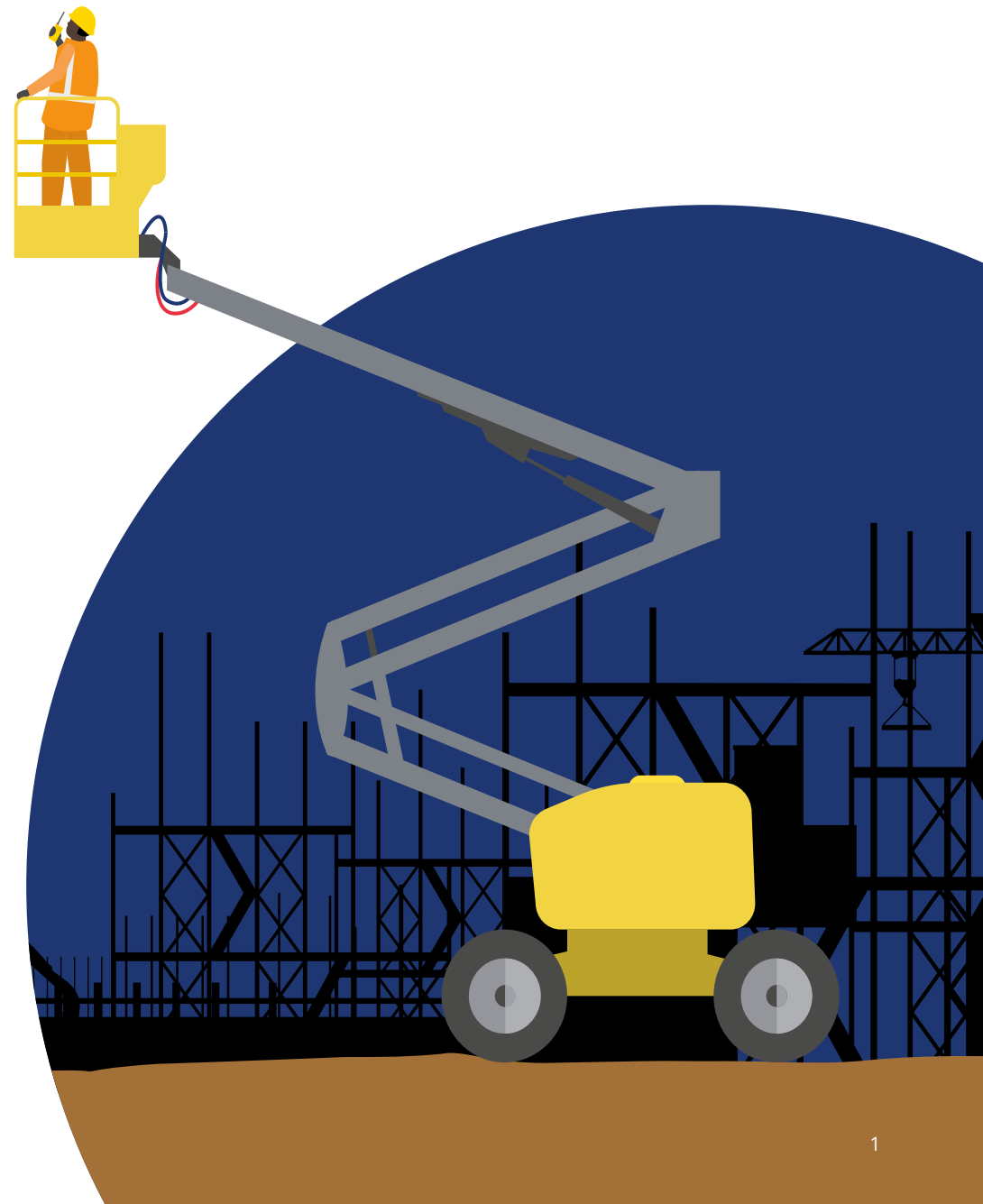
| | |
|-----------------------------|----|
| Why now | 8 |
| Why we're Safe at Heart | 9 |
| Why everyone is involved | 10 |
| Why everyone is responsible | 11 |
| Why leadership matters | 13 |

The 'how': how our strategy works

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----|
| How Safe at Heart works | 15 |
| Our health and safety focus areas | 16 |
| How our strategy will raise standards | 19 |
| How we measure our performance | 20 |

The future: monitoring our strategy

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| A strategy for today and tomorrow | 22 |
|-----------------------------------|----|





The 'what': health and safety at HS2

Introduction



The strategy details our goals, our approach and the role of our leaders in setting a culture where our focus on health and safety is exceptional.”

Our Health and Safety Strategy sets out the guiding principles and priorities we've put in place to make sure we do everything we can to keep people safe on the UK's biggest infrastructure project.

The strategy details our goals, our approach and the role of our leaders in setting a culture where our focus on health and safety is exceptional, risk aware and unwavering. It underlines how everyone across our organisation and the extended HS2 family, from the boardroom to our construction sites, is responsible for health and safety; and that this responsibility extends to everyone affected by the building of the railway and the future operation of HS2 services.

We are now in HS2's peak construction period with extensive works taking place at more than 350 sites, focused on the route between the West Midlands and London. Our work on health and safety mirrors the complexity of the wider railway programme; and it continues to evolve as this unprecedented scheme enters its different lifecycles, moving from design and planning to preparatory works, main works construction, railway systems and the launch of zero carbon services between 2029 and 2033.

In the face of this exciting progress and the myriad challenges of building the world's most sustainable high-speed railway, one thing is constant: we need to create and manage an environment where our

focus on health, safety and wellbeing is clear and resolute. We are all responsible as individuals and teams; and we're also responsible collectively, through our UK-wide network of contractors and suppliers, as we seek to raise the bar for standards across our industry and leave a legacy of safer and healthier working for major infrastructure projects.

Our responsibilities not only cover the huge number of people working on HS2, which is set to top 34,000 in the next few years. We are also responsible for the health, safety and wellbeing of the people who live and work near our sites and HS2's future customers.

Our overarching approach to health and safety is distilled in our Safe at Heart philosophy, which we use across HS2 to keep health and safety front of mind, shape our behaviours and galvanise actions, interventions and learning.

Using this strategy, remaining vigilant to existing and emerging risks and staying Safe at Heart will help us to put health, safety and wellbeing at the centre of every decision we take and every action we make, building a pathway to a safer and healthier future.

Dame Judith Hackitt

Chair of Health, Safety and Security Committee,
HS2 Ltd

Our approach: setting new standards

Everyone working on HS2 and everyone affected by the new railway has the right to remain safe and well every day. That's why health and safety is the first thing we think about as we design and build HS2 and it will be our priority when Britain's high-speed rail network starts operating in the next decade. This document sets out our strategy for meeting that challenge and outlines how we will raise standards for major infrastructure projects to follow our lead.

The scale of the challenge is unprecedented, but so is the opportunity to develop new ways of working. We are mobilising a huge, diverse workforce to build HS2 and unlock the railway's transformative potential, boost economic growth and create zero carbon travel for millions of customers. As we enter peak construction, the project is already supporting more than 28,500 jobs and this figure will grow. There are more than 350 active construction sites along the Phase One route between the West Midlands and London and further sites will be set up as we continue to make progress. We need to make sure our teams and the people who live and work near our sites are always safe and that their health and wellbeing is protected.

The challenges we face on health and safety have evolved in line with the project's expansion. We are publishing this refreshed strategy to show how we are remaining vigilant to all risks, adapting to changes and providing clear direction for a robust and consistent approach to health and safety.

Our all-encompassing commitment to health and safety is distilled in Safe at Heart, our overarching framework, approach and project-wide philosophy.



We are mobilising a huge, diverse workforce to build HS2 and unlock the railway's transformative potential."



Construction worker at Old Oak Common station.

Our approach: setting new standards

Safe at Heart guides us and puts health, safety and wellbeing at the heart of HS2. It underpins both HS2's vision 'to be a catalyst for growth across Britain' and our mission 'to build the best railway, in the best way'.

Crucially, health and safety is also one of HS2's seven strategic goals:

"We will set new standards for health, safety and security for the construction and operation of the railway."

We are working with world-class partners and we share the ambition and knowledge to improve standards for future generations. It is an opportunity we must not miss.

Statistics for health and safety performance on major projects presents us with a stark reality at HS2. Data from the Institute of Medicine tells us that every year, for each 10,000 of our workforce, we could suffer:

- 426 occupational ill-health cases,
- 290 non-fatal injuries, and
- 0.17 fatalities.

It's against this backdrop that we have devised a strategy that allows us to do everything possible to protect people's health and safety today and set high standards for tomorrow.

Ultimately, our health and safety strategy allows us to seize the unique opportunity we've been given to improve standards and leave a legacy of safer construction and safer transport for major projects that will follow us into the 21st century and beyond. We will do this by being Safe at Heart every day.

“Our health and safety strategy allows us to seize the unique opportunity we've been given to improve standards.”



Security signs at HS2's site in Kingsbury, Warwickshire.

Safety is at the heart of HS2

HS2's Health and Safety Strategy flows from both our vision – to be a catalyst for growth across Britain – and HS2's mission to deliver the best railway, in the best way.

Our Health and Safety Strategy will help us to achieve our strategic health and safety goal, setting new standards for health, safety and security for the construction and operation of the railway. It will also allow us to fulfil our legacy ambition for health and safety: doing everything we can to keep people safe and well every day and leave a legacy for future mega-projects to follow.

It's in this way that our commitment to being Safe at Heart, guided by our Health and Safety Strategy, is at the heart of HS2.





The 'why': refreshing our strategy

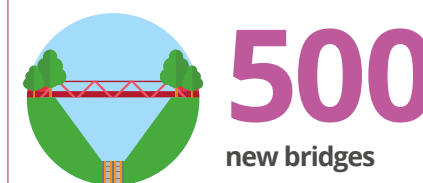
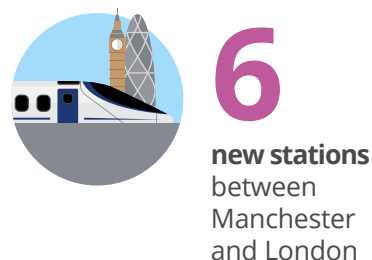
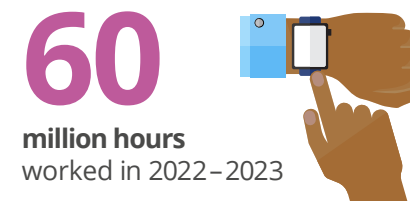
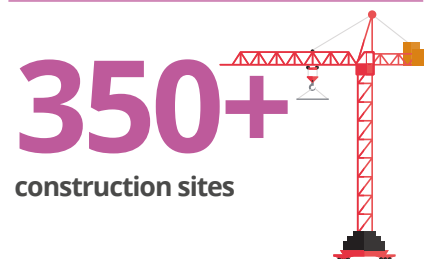
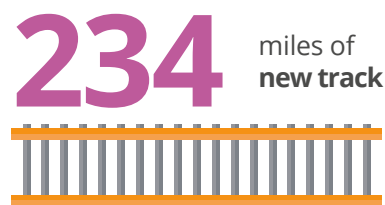
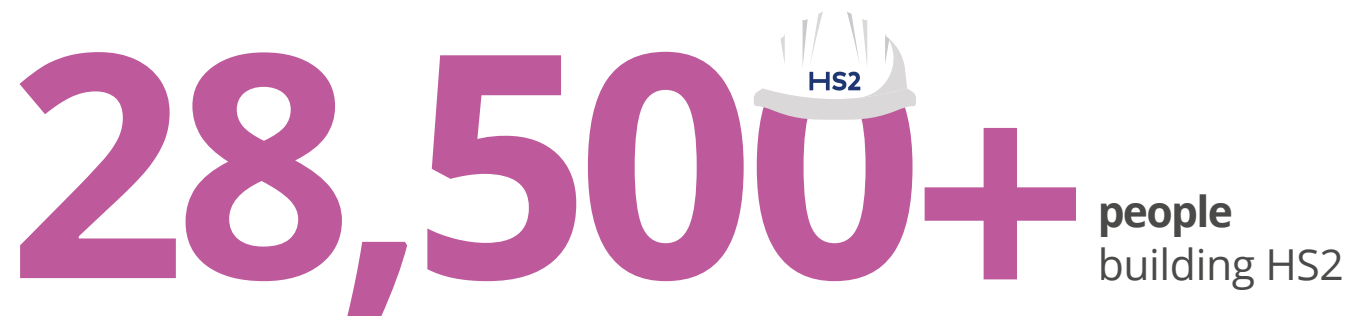


Why now

We launched HS2's Health and Safety Strategy in 2015 before we started to clear the path for the railway. At this time, most of our workforce was office-based and the vast structures we need to build – the tunnels, viaducts, stations and embankments – were on the drawing board. Today, thousands of workers are on the ground at hundreds of sites pushing ahead with building the railway.

The risks we face have changed fundamentally as the scope of works has expanded, moving from design to early works and now to our second year of peak construction. In 2015 – 2016, our workforce clocked up 2.6 million hours on the project. During 2022 – 2023, this figure soared to 60 million hours. And the rapid rate of growth is set to continue: in the last eight years, we completed about 200 million hours' work – but we're poised to register another 200 million hours in just three years. Every additional hour worked on HS2 increases our risk profile.

More than 28,500 people are now working on HS2 in challenging, high-risk environments. We need to make sure everyone is protected including the local people affected by construction and our future customers. Against this background of acute and evolving risk, we've refreshed HS2's Health and Safety Strategy so everyone understands the importance of health, safety and wellbeing on this project of unmatched size and complexity.



Why we're Safe at Heart

Safety is one of our core values and it's the starting point for everything we do: if people aren't safe, or don't feel safe, we cannot fulfil the complex task of building HS2, meet our strategic goals and deliver the transformational benefits of the railway.

It's for this reason that health and safety underpins everything we do. It's also why everyone working on HS2 is empowered to speak up and step in if they think something is unsafe.

Our overarching commitment to health and safety is brought together in our project-wide philosophy of Safe at Heart. We launched Safe at Heart in 2015/16 as a framework of risk focus areas and commitments.

The commitments allow us to measure our progress in each of the focus areas and achieve our overall strategic goal on health and safety. We examine the role of Safe at Heart and what it means for our different audiences in the section 'We are Safe at Heart'.

Living our value of safety and creating an environment of exceptional safety can't be taken for granted. It needs a strategic approach that includes:

- effective leadership;
- fairness, consistency and transparency in our work;
- respecting the people and places where we're building HS2; and
- championing diversity.

Through Safe at Heart, our approach to health and safety is integrated into every phase, or section, of the route we're building and every aspect of HS2. We achieve this in the following three ways.

- Planning health and safety into construction: health is given equal priority to safety and we respect the needs and contributions of a diverse workforce to do everything we can to stop anyone getting harmed.
- Designing health and safety into our railway systems: putting safety at the heart of HS2 railway systems and assets, like bridges and tunnels.
- Designing health and safety into the operation and maintenance of HS2: making sure rail passengers, the public and the workforce are safe in the future.



Measurements being taken at Old Oak Common station.

Why everyone is involved

Evidence from past projects shows us that exceptional health, safety and wellbeing helps to drive exceptional business performance. This means our approach to health, safety and wellbeing is fundamental to achieving our mission: to build the best railway, in the best way.

Standout infrastructure projects think and act innovatively. They harness their potential not only to keep their workforce safer and healthier than other projects; they also use the opportunity to raise the bar for future projects and the wider industry.

The choices we make as individuals, team leaders and collectively with our partners are crucial to completing our mission successfully and meeting the challenge of raising standards. Our choices are summarised in the following way.

- As **individuals**, we choose to protect ourselves and others from harm every day.
- As **team leaders**, we choose to make decisions that will better protect people now and in the future.
- **Together**, we choose to drive excellent project performance through outstanding health and safety performance.

Everyone in our organisation and our extended network of contractors – both onsite building HS2 and offsite in our offices and in support roles – has a part to play in taking action to put the health, safety and wellbeing of our workforce, local people and future HS2 customers at the heart of the project.



Working safely at height at the Kingsbury site.

Why everyone is responsible

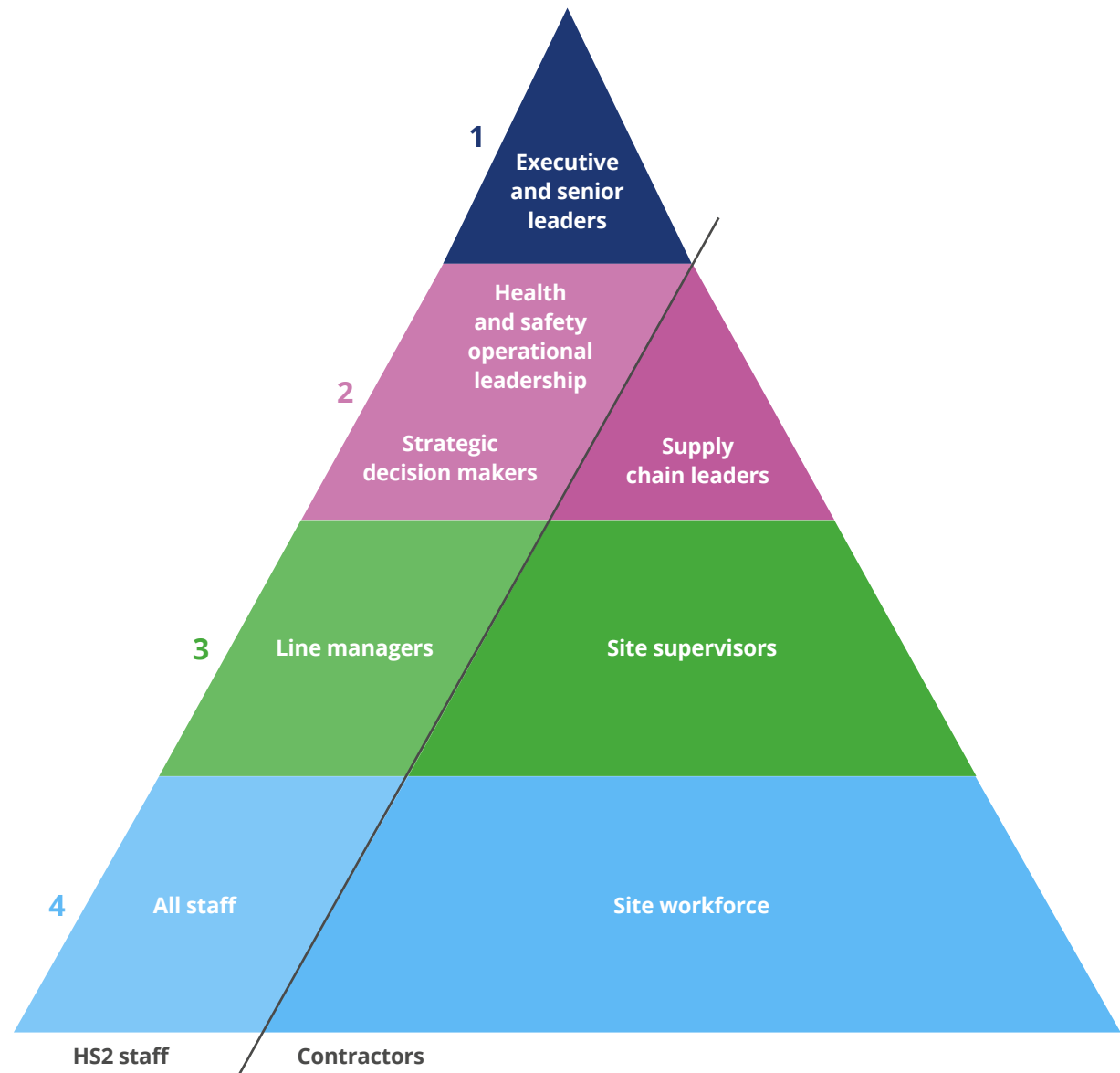
Effective leadership at all levels of HS2 is key to achieving our strategy for health and safety. Showing leadership requires every member of HS2's extended family – including HS2 Ltd staff, our contractors and the supply chain – to think, act and behave in a way that:

- puts health, safety and wellbeing first in every decision and action; and
- demonstrates integrity and respect for diversity.

Everyone is responsible for health and safety leadership, from our onsite workforce and supervisors to supply chain leaders and HS2 Ltd's Executive and Board.

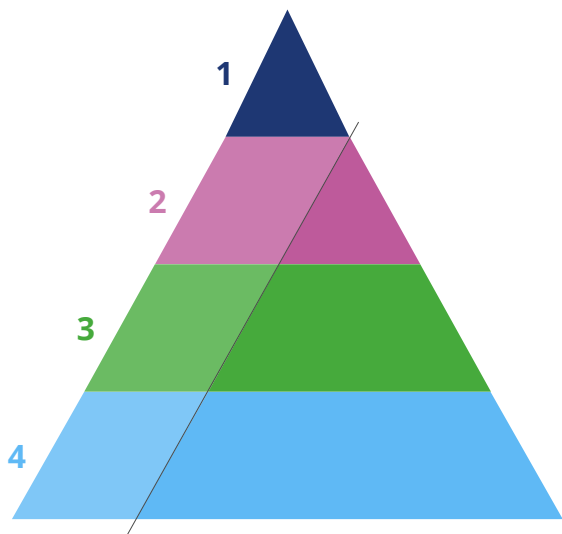
This illustration shows the leadership behaviours our strategy demands and how everyone building – and finally operating HS2 – has an important role to play.

Note: See overleaf for leadership behaviours which relate to this diagram.





Why everyone is responsible



- 1 Executive and senior leaders
- 2 **HS2 staff:** Health and safety operational leadership, strategic decision makers
Contractors: Supply chain leaders
- 3 **HS2 staff:** Line managers
Contractors: Site supervisors
- 4 **HS2 staff:** All staff
Contractors: Site workforce

Leadership behaviours

- 1
 - Consistently role model authentic leadership.
 - Leverage and celebrate the rich skills, knowledge and experience of a diverse workforce.
 - Collaborate to drive excellence in health and safety standards.
- 2
 - Make whole life safe decisions and put occupational health, safety and wellbeing first when changes are required to mitigate risk.
 - Actively seek out opportunities to build Safe at Heart legacy through sharing learning, innovation and best practice with wider industry.
 - Provide space and time for innovative thinking.
- 3
 - Always put occupational health, safety and wellbeing at the heart of decisions and actions.
 - Set clear expectations for compliance, but motivate to go beyond.
 - Continuously challenge existing norms and look for healthier, safer ways of working.
 - Collaborate with supply chain to find whole system solutions to challenges.
 - Identify, share and apply learning across the project.
- 4
 - Care about themselves, their colleagues, everyone impacted by HS2 and their work.
 - Understand risk and commit to personal accountabilities.
 - Have courage to speak up, challenge, report and stop work if they feel something is unsafe.
 - Listen and engage in honest, improvement-based and risk-focused occupational health and safety conversations.
 - Respond fairly to breaches and enable learning.
 - Have confidence they will be treated fairly if things go wrong.
 - Feel motivated to be part of the transformation journey because their 'voice' counts and their contribution matters.

Why leadership matters

Every member of the extended HS2 family has a role to play in transforming our health and safety performance from 'good' to 'outstanding'. However, it is our leaders who set the tone for our health and safety culture.



Technology being used onsite at Old Oak Common station.

Our leadership approach

Our health, safety and wellbeing leadership forums and working groups focus on the following.

- Providing collective operational leadership across all phases and areas of the project.
- Ensuring occupational health and wellbeing have equal status to safety.
- Setting new standards for occupational health and safety performance.
- Sharing and coordinating resources, innovation and best practice where beneficial to the programme.
- Establishing targeted occupational health and safety improvement workstreams.
- Identifying and creating leadership training and development interventions such as safety leadership conversation skills and experiential learning.
- Reviewing performance and identifying and implementing collective responses and interventions.

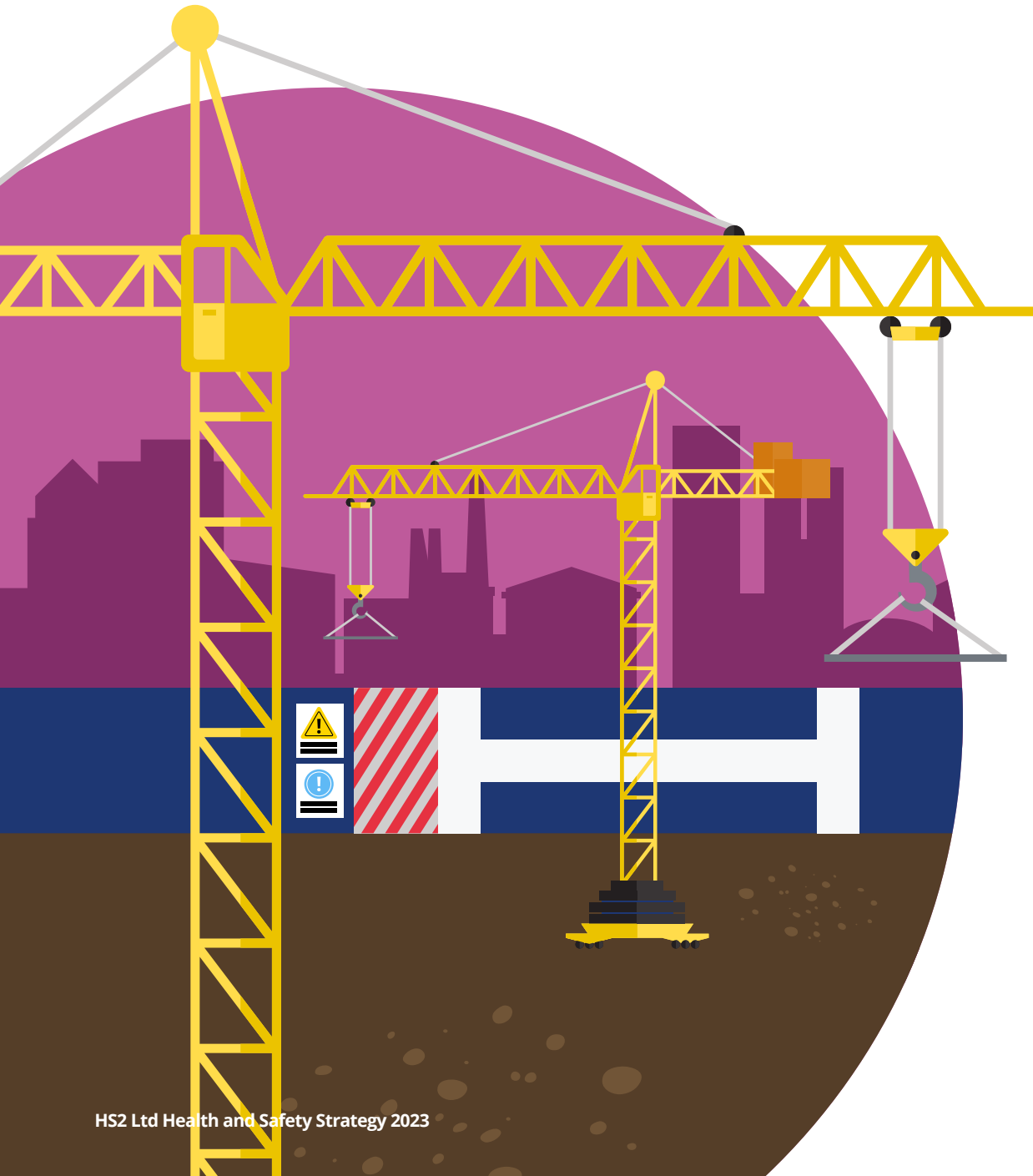
Our opportunity

We are working with world-class partners whose leaders share our values and commitment to set industry-changing health and safety standards for future projects. Through collaborative leadership and our Safe at Heart approach, we will:

- build a consistent health and safety culture that is risk aware, innovative, open, ready to learn, inclusive and fair;
- empower our workforce to take care of themselves and others; and
- motivate everyone to contribute to a legacy for future mega-projects to follow.

Our expectations

Our contracting approach with our supply chain sets out our cultural ethos and what we expect in managing occupational health, safety and wellbeing. These expectations include health and safety management systems; occupational health, safety and wellbeing plans; safety leadership and behavioural programmes; engagement activities and health and safety inductions.



The 'how': how our strategy works

How Safe at Heart works

Safe at Heart brings together our framework for health and safety at HS2. It is a guiding philosophy and a practical approach that allows everyone to feel personally connected to our actions and behaviours on health, safety and wellbeing. It is designed to make sure we do everything we can to keep everyone safe and well – and leave a legacy for future projects.

Our Safe at Heart philosophy is distilled into three distinct pillars: ‘I care. You count. We matter.’ Each of the pillars makes it clear to everyone working on HS2 that they are accountable as:

- individuals – ‘**I care**’,
- teams and organisations – ‘**You count**’, and
- collectively – ‘**We matter**’.

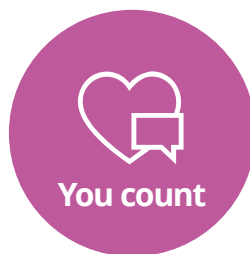
Applying our Safe at Heart approach to everything we do – and living our value of safety – allows us to focus on keeping each other safe and well and achieving our strategic goal of setting new standards for health, safety and security for the construction and operation of the railway.



I care

Caring about ourselves, our colleagues, everyone impacted by HS2 and the work we do.

‘I care’ relates to our individual accountability for occupational health and wellbeing as well as safety. Caring for ourselves, our colleagues and everyone we impact is the foundation of a thriving health, safety and wellbeing culture.



You count

Making sure that every safe decision and action we take in our teams and organisations counts.

‘You count’ relates to our team and organisational accountability for managing risk and preventing occupational ill health and injury. It’s about empowering teams to make safe decisions and take safe actions so they are actively contributing to a step-change in health, safety and wellbeing across HS2.



We matter

Recognising what we do together matters to the future of HS2, our industry and our country.

‘We matter’ is about the collective power we have as a future-focused leader to leave a history-making legacy for our industry. Through our commitment to doing things differently and sharing learning, innovation and best practice we aim to reset industry benchmarks for health, safety and wellbeing.

Our health and safety focus areas

Seven focus areas are at the core of our strategy. The focus areas target the critical risks and controls that are common to all HS2 works and contracts. They prioritise the areas where, together with our supply chain, we can focus our effort to make the biggest improvements in health and safety performance.

They are partly derived from the learning we have taken from other major projects and where we intend to continue the journey for health and safety performance improvement for the industry. The overall objective of this strategy is to keep everyone safe and well during the construction and operation of HS2, and to raise standards so future projects are even better.

This objective has been part of our strategic goals for HS2 since 2015 and it has not changed. What has changed is the scale and nature of our work, and this means the focus areas need to be considered in the context of the programme today, and how it will evolve in the future.

The seven focus areas, and their related commitments, are described here.



Occupational health and wellbeing

We believe occupational health and wellbeing matters as much as safety. Our commitment is to:

- raise the profile of occupational health and wellbeing;
- design and create positive workplaces that empower our people to thrive; and
- eradicate, wherever possible, and minimise exposure to the top five causes of occupationally acquired illness and/or disease.

Over the next five years we will pursue several key interventions to achieve this. They include: the use of independent research into the causes of those illnesses and diseases; developing next-generation systems that will monitor exposure to health risks in construction; improving worker wellbeing support; and attracting more occupational health professionals into construction.



Workforce safety

We believe every member of our workforce, during the construction and operation of the railway, has the right to go home unharmed. Our commitment is to:

- develop, promote and reward our frontline and operational supervisors for their safety leadership;
- maximise the use of technology and smarter ways of working; and
- develop a Safe at Heart culture across the programme, empowering every individual to speak up and make safe decisions.

The interventions we will manage over the next five years include: developing how we measure safety culture; using technology and innovation to improve shared learning; and enhancing leadership and recognition in our supervisor community.

Our health and safety focus areas



Informed learning

We will measure the impact and effectiveness of our health and safety interventions through robust assurance processes. Our commitment is to:

- undertake risk-based assurance to identify potential issues; and
- develop a learning culture, where people feel empowered to report and where the business takes action to embed learning.

Our emphasis over the next five years will be to further develop our processes and procedures for assurance and shared learning and ensure this is continuously improved as new contractors join the programme in Phase One and on to Phase Two.



Safe supply chain management

We will engage all tiers of the supply chain in transforming health and safety standards so they contribute to the success of the project. Our commitment is to:

- select and develop our supply chain partners based on their ability to demonstrate shared values and excellent safety leadership;
- be an empowering client, enabling, incentivising and, where beneficial, partnering with our supply chain to innovate and deliver safely; and
- hold each other to account for high standards of occupational health, safety and wellbeing.

As we continue to procure and manage our growing supply chain over the next five years we will: work with supplier relationship management to develop health and safety improvements; ensure health and safety is embedded into strategic supply chain market engagement; and develop health and safety engagement with suppliers in the tier two and below communities.



Health and safety by design

We will set new standards by building our design capability to identify and mitigate health and safety risks in construction, maintenance and the future operation of the railway. Our commitment is to:

- manage the impact of design and specification changes, ensuring health and safety is always our first consideration;
- wherever possible, design through a virtual environment to 'design out' risk and error and reduce unnecessary design-related site visits; and
- design infrastructure so all routine, planned trackside maintenance can be carried out outside operational hours.

Over the next five years, the interventions we will manage include: improving how we manage temporary works design; improving our knowledge and understanding of health risks during design stages; and facilitating the sharing of lessons in the design community.

Our health and safety focus areas



Public and community health and safety

We respect the people and the places that are affected by our work. We recognise that while the long-term benefits of HS2 will be huge, construction affects the lives of thousands of people. Our commitment is to:

- get to know the communities along the route so we can understand the effects of construction on vulnerable people and respond in the best way we can;
- invest in the communities where HS2 operates, and plan our works to minimise adverse health, safety and wellbeing impacts on communities and our workforce; and
- adopt measures to minimise road-related risks in communities and those driving to work in our supply chain.

The themes we will develop over the next five years are: enhancing our approach to road risk; developing our strategy for supporting vulnerable people affected by our works; and enhancing our approach to specialist security.



Safe operations

We will design and build a railway that is safe for our future operational and maintenance workforce and future passengers. Our commitment is to:

- always protect our workforce when they are required to work on or near the line;
- provide a safe means to access all areas of the infrastructure, including trackside, for future operations and maintenance workforce; and
- design our railway and future train service so they can be operated safely.

Our approach to managing this focus area is in line with the regulator's requirements to bring the railway into safe operation. To achieve this, work areas include: safety assurance processes; design and ergonomics; and continual engagement with Network Rail.

Delivering our strategy

We have developed an operational plan that sets out how we will achieve our goals for each of the seven focus areas. The plan's purpose is to translate the strategic objectives into tangible and measurable actions over the next five years. This is sponsored and monitored through our executive leadership and will form part of our annual health and safety performance indicators. The operational plan will be a 'live' plan, flexible to respond to the demands and challenges of the programme as it evolves.

We recognise we cannot achieve our strategic objectives in isolation and it is critical that our ambition is embraced and owned by our supply chain partners now and in the future. To achieve this, we have committed to extensive engagement and regular feedback from those who are delivering the programme on the ground. We will also ensure this is embedded in how new contractors operate as they mobilise and join the programme.



How our strategy will raise standards

The overriding aim of our strategy is to make sure that everyone connected with, and affected by HS2, is safe and that their health and wellbeing aren't put at risk by anything we do. We can't accept any actions or behaviours that conflict with our goal.

At the same time, we keep HS2's strategic goal of setting new standards for health, safety and security at the forefront of our minds as we build a culture of learning, innovation and best practice. We are building our legacy as we move through the different stages of construction to reflect the lessons we learn, find better ways of putting health, safety and wellbeing at the heart of the project and check our progress in developing outstanding practice. We invest in our people so they have the right skills and behaviours to provide outstanding health and safety and help us build our legacy.

Building a culture of trust

We will always conduct our investigations into health and safety incidents in a fair, transparent and open way, focusing on learning and improving our performance, not blaming others. This helps our workforce to feel confident and motivated to report unsafe behaviour, systems and working conditions.

Capturing and sharing good practice

We will capitalise on our collective experience and collaborate to identify, celebrate and share good practice that helps us to improve the way we eliminate and mitigate key risks across HS2. We allow our supply chain and the wider industry to access our lessons learned and good practice to drive improvements across the infrastructure sector.

Inspiring innovation

We will create the time, opportunity and space for our people to develop innovative solutions to key health and safety risks and issues. We use challenges, events, competitions and day-to-day project-wide collaboration to add value to the programme and take health and safety practice beyond the 'best achieved' on other major projects.

Accelerating learning from incidents

We will continue to improve our incident investigation processes to capture, share and embed learning from failures and incidents quickly and effectively. We work together to identify and understand the root causes of incidents to prevent repeats and create a safer, healthier working environment for everyone.

Developing skills and behaviours

We will always be clear about the skills and behaviours we expect from our workforce and work with all our supply chain to develop them and respect the diverse needs and backgrounds of everyone working on the project. We recognise and reward positive behaviours that show Safe at Heart in action and contribute to our goal.

How we measure our performance

Our HS2 Health and Safety Performance Indicators focus on 'leading' and 'lagging' indicators to drive and encourage the health and safety behaviours that prevent incidents happening.

Leading indicators are proactive and measurable, for example, training, safety initiatives and reporting near misses. Lagging indicators map past performance, for example, reported incident rates. They allow us to learn, improve standards and set new goals for health and safety.

To build a foundation for outstanding health and safety performance, we use a suite of measures comprising:

- proactive measures, holding us to account to deliver on key milestones, as well as a mixture of qualitative and quantitative measures, assuring the effectiveness of our behavioural interventions; and
- reactive performance indicators, measuring our health and safety performance across our seven key focus areas for health and safety.

We have clear targets, measuring performance over a wide range of business areas to identify performance issues and drive targeted health, safety and culture improvements.

Our measures are adjusted so they are specific to project phases and different parts of the business.

We measure the maturity of our health and safety culture annually using an industry-recognised climate survey tool and support targeted interventions.



We measure the maturity of our health and safety culture annually.”



A worker at Old Oak Common station.



The future: monitoring our strategy



A strategy for today and tomorrow

Working with our partners, we are setting new standards for health, safety and security in the way we build HS2 and in our plans for the operation of high-speed rail services.

We're committed to doing everything possible to keep people safe and well every day and leave a legacy for major infrastructure projects to follow.

Our refreshed health and safety strategy lays out our aspirations for health and safety on a project of national importance; and the foundations we've put in place will remain constant. However, our strategy will also need to adapt and evolve as we learn and gain new knowledge – and as HS2 itself evolves.

Year-on-year, through our new health and safety operational plan, we will hold ourselves to account in delivering our Safe at Heart commitments against our seven risk focus areas.

Day-by-day, we will demonstrate we care as individuals, that the decisions we make in our teams count and that our collective endeavours matter to the legacy we'll leave with Britain's new rail network.



Staying Safe at Heart at HS2.

HS2

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