

HS2 launches new podcast series “How to build a railway”

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HS2 Ltd has released the first of a [twelve-part podcast series](#) exploring the story behind the construction of the UK's new high speed rail line.

The podcast series features industry experts and special guests giving their unique insight on a whole range of topics including tunnelling, archaeology, ecology, architecture, building bridges, innovation, and rail systems.

Episode One: “The What and the Why of HS2” explores why HS2 is needed, the progress so far and upcoming goals. It features HS2 Ltd's CEO Mark Thurston, West Midlands Mayor Andy Street, HS2's former Chief Engineer Andrew McNaughton and National Railway Museum Associate Curator Bob Gwynne.

HS2 Ltd CEO Mark Thurston said: “Our new podcast series is a great opportunity to explore the world of HS2 from the perspective of some of the thousands of people currently working on the project. Unique insight from many of our experts across a whole range of disciplines, brings to life the scale and complexity of the construction of Britain's new high speed railway, which is now in full swing.”

Almost 30,000 people are now working on HS2, around 2,500 British based businesses have delivered work on the project so far, and over 350 sites are currently operational between London and the West Midlands. Over 100 ecological mitigation sites have already been established, forming the backbone of HS2's green corridor, which will include 7 million new trees and shrubs on Phase One alone.

The podcast series will feature insight into how the project is progressing, including huge feats of engineering such as tunnels, brand new stations, depots, viaducts and bridges.

Archaeologists will talk about some of their fascinating discoveries, including rare Roman busts at St. Mary's Church in Stoke Mandeville; and ecologists will look at the how one of the country's largest environmental programmes is creating a network of bigger, better-connected and climate resilient wildlife habitats.

Later in the series, episodes will cover the process of designing and building overground structures such as the Colne Valley viaduct; stations design and innovative construction methods; HS2's zero carbon action plan; and rail systems.

Across the series, Engineering Presenter and Pyrotechnician Fran Scott, known for her explosive demonstrations on CBBC's Absolute Genius with Dick and Dom and Channel 4's Lego Masters will lead listeners on a journey covering every aspect of Europe's largest infrastructure project.

Opening the series, Presenter Fran Scott said: "For as long as I can remember I have been fascinated by science and engineering, and in particular how our infrastructure, the bones of our society, works. I love discovering undercelebrated utilities and meeting those working tirelessly to make the 'everyday' happen. The latest and largest infrastructure megaproject, perhaps in British history, is HS2, so I was eager to see behind the scenes and learn from the experts building this once-in-a-lifetime project.

"As a non-car owner, I have been following the progress of HS2 closely and when invited on-site, I jumped at the chance to see the engineering and engineers in action. The work being done by the teams is certainly world-leading, and impressive from multiple angles.

"I believe communicating about this so desperately needed improvement to our public transport system is important, and so hosting this podcast, where we get to see under the bonnet of the project and hear from the experts, is intriguing and exciting in equal measure."

New episodes will be released every Tuesday across the next 12 weeks: <https://www.hs2.org.uk/building-hs2/how-to-build-a-railway-podcast/>

Photo credit: HS2 Ltd