



# News Release

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Date: 23 May 2012

## **Property owners affected feel ignored by HS2 officials but communication is starting to improve, according to Knight Frank**

An overwhelming majority of the property owners affected by the proposed [high-speed rail link](#) between London and Birmingham feel that HS2 Ltd has failed to communicate effectively with them, according to the results of a sentiment survey conducted by property consultant Knight Frank.

A poll of the firm's clients and those signed up to receive its [HS2](#) updates shows that 64% of the respondents believe overall communication has been "very poor". Only 8% said they considered it even "adequate". However, Knight Frank's experience is that HS2 Ltd is now starting to engage more constructively.

When asked to comment on specific aspects of the scheme, compensation was the area where it was felt communication was particularly lacking – almost 80% of respondents said it had been "very poor". The results were better for the scheme's route and timetable – about 25% of those completing the survey said communication regarding these areas had been "adequate". But only 1% said it could be considered "good".

Just 7% of people said the government or HS2 Ltd had been their most useful source of information regarding the new railway. Property consultants were the most valued source of advice (30%), while anti-HS2 campaign groups also scored highly (22%). National and local media were each rated as the most useful by 15% of respondents.

Commenting on the survey results, **James Del Mar, Head of Knight Frank's HS2 team**, said: "I am sure HS2 Ltd will be disappointed with the findings, but, having spoken to many property owners who are likely to be affected by HS2, I am not surprised by the strength of their feelings.

"Most tell me that they feel almost ignored, despite suffering the most because of HS2; not just from the upheaval that the scheme will create if it goes ahead, but from the worry and uncertainty it has caused in their lives already.



# News Release

“The irony is that there is a huge amount of useful information on the websites of the Department for Transport and HS2 Ltd. However, even in this digital age, people rightly expect a far more personalised level of contact, and perhaps even a modicum of sympathy regarding something that could have a very major impact on their lives.

“I think these survey results offer a valuable insight to those responsible for championing and delivering large infrastructure projects in the UK, particularly one as controversial and costly as HS2.

“The good news is that HS2 Ltd is prepared to engage with those affected, we have had numerous conversations and held a number of meetings with our clients, albeit that many of them include some of the most significant houses, farms and estates along the route. Senior members of its team have attended joint site visits with me and are willing to discuss constructively any issues raised.

“Now is the time for property owners to seek advice to take advantage of HS2 Ltd’s apparent willingness to work more closely with us, particularly as a new voluntary purchase scheme could be on the cards.”

## Results of the Knight Frank HS2 Sentiment Survey

*Respondents’ view on quality of official communication regarding HS2*

<b>How would you rate the government's/HS2's communication on the following aspects of the scheme?</b>	<b>Very poor</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Adequate</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Very good</b>
Route	39%	35%	24%	2%	0%
The specific impact on their property	69%	24%	3%	3%	1%
Scheme timetable	37%	35%	26%	1%	1%
Consultation process	67%	19%	13%	1%	0%
Compensation entitlement and procedure	78%	18%	4%	0%	0%
Overall	64%	28%	8%	0%	0%



# News Release

<b>Who has been your most trusted source of information regarding HS2?</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Property consultant	30%
Action group	22%
National media	15%
Local media	15%
Government/HS2 Ltd	7%
No single source	5%
Web searches	4%
Parish Council	1%
MP	1%
Friends/neighbours	1%

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## **Notes to editors**

HS2 Ltd is the organisation that is developing and promoting the HS2 project. It is wholly owned by the Department for Transport.

The Knight Frank sentiment survey was completed by 160 farmers, estate owners, commercial property owners and homeowners.

## **The Knight Frank HS2 team**

Knight Frank has set up a dedicated team to help those affected by HS2. The team has over 100 years' combined experience dealing with other major infrastructure schemes such as the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (HS1), the M25 and Stansted Airport. Unlike some other property consultants Knight Frank works only for affected property owners, not HS2 Ltd or the government, and therefore has no conflicts of interest.



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More details and the latest scheme updates are also available at [www.knightfrank.co.uk/hs2](http://www.knightfrank.co.uk/hs2) and you can follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/knighfrankhs2](https://www.twitter.com/knighfrankhs2)

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