

# Line not the only factor to affect housing

Leading real estate lawyer **JON MOWBRAY**, a partner with Chesham law firm IBB solicitors, gives his views on comments from the new chairman of HS2 Ltd

**T**HE new chairman of HS2, Sir David Higgins, has claimed that the railway will ease housing problems in London and the South East, as it will encourage people and businesses to locate themselves in the Midlands and further north. He argues that the existence of a high-speed link into London will result in passengers being able to reside further away than the traditional commuter areas of Buckinghamshire and the other Home Counties.

Drawing on experiences in America and China, he considers that, with improved transport infrastructure companies, will be attracted to move away from the capital and take advantage of lower occupational and employment costs.

Whether his projection of a more balanced economy will become a reality, however, undoubtedly raises some scepticism.

In terms of housing, there are many factors aside from rail connectivity to London that support high prices in the South East.

Key among these is the lack of supply and recent government initiatives to stimulate the housing market, for example the Help to Buy schemes, do not directly secure increased development.

In Buckinghamshire, one would also point to factors such as proximity to major road networks and air hubs, environmental factors and quality schooling as underpinning high prices.

For business, there have already been signs over recent years that the very high rents in Central London have provoked



**STOP HS2**

■ **SCEPTIC:** Jon Mowbray, who is a partner in the real estate litigation team at Chesham-based IBB Solicitors

some corporates to move staff and sometimes their entire head office operations outside the capital. However, it is difficult to envisage that HS2 alone would result in, for example, the banks, other major financial institutions and the professional firms that support them leaving the City. As a result, it is unlikely that Sir David's claim will persuade those MPs who are not on side during what he acknowledges will be a challenging parliamentary process.

# Teachers can get tips on spending extra sport cash

BUCKS schools are to benefit from £7.5million in funding to improve their sports and PE lessons.

Every primary school in the county is being given about £9,000 a year for the next three years.

The scheme is designed to build on the legacy of the 2012 London Olympic Games by giving extra support to the schools.

Teachers can find out how to make the best use of the money at the Bucks and MK Primary PE Conference at Stoke Mandeville Stadium on Wednesday next week.

The conference, organised by Bucks Sport with local partners, is open to 180 delegates.

There will be a series of workshops including A Guide to the New Curriculum and How to Assess and Outstanding PE Lesson.

Keynote speakers will be the assistant director of the Youth Sport Trust, Annette Montague, and the head of Newton Longville School, Krys Kuzminska.

School engagement manager for Bucks Sport Sally Mapley said: "There's no other way of getting so many primary schools together in one place.

"This is a fantastic local chance to learn about the new ways of spending the funding that is coming into schools and make the

best use of the opportunity that is going to be there for primaries over the next three years."

The manager of Bucks Legacy, Ian Barham, said: "The event is also a way of helping local Bucks companies connect with and support schools in delivering a better-value PE offer.

"This conference is a great way of showing schools how to spend this money as wisely as possible and wherever possible also support local business."

Schools can book places at the conference by emailing [gherbert@bucksport.org](mailto:gherbert@bucksport.org), calling 01296 585 215 or via [www.bucksport.org](http://www.bucksport.org).

## Drama classes come with celebration cake

BIRTHDAY cake and other treats were enjoyed when a drama school celebrated its fourth anniversary.

The Pauline Quirke Academy of Performing Arts at Amersham held a party for students on Saturday, January 25.

Principal Liz Charleston said "Four years has just flown by and the students have even more to look forward to.

"They will be performing at Her Majesty's Theatre London in June in front of an audience of over a thousand. We can't wait to see what the next four years bring."

The academy – which was founded by Pauline Quirke, star of the TV comedy series *Birds of a Feather* – teaches comedy, drama, musical theatre and film and television skills to children aged four to 18.

Its classes are held at the weekend at Dr Challoner's Grammar School, Chesham Road, Amersham.



■ **LOOKING FORWARD:** Students at the Pauline Quirke Academy celebrating the school's fourth anniversary

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