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## **Borders to Edinburgh rail line: Workers begin digging route**

**Construction of the new Borders Railway has got under way at a site in Edinburgh.**

The first works involve digging the new line through the Monktonhall area and the excavation of the site for the new Shawfair station.

It follows six months of preparations, including mining remediation work at the old Monktonhall colliery.

Last year Network Rail appointed BAM Nuttall as main contractor for the £220m project.

Network Rail estimated that about 500 jobs would be created between now and the 2015 deadline for reopening the line.

The railway will re-establish a passenger rail link between Edinburgh and the Scottish Borders for the first time in more than 40 years.

### **'Coming to life'**

The line will include 30 miles of new railway and seven new stations at Shawfair, Eskbank, Newtongrange, Gorebridge, Stow, Galashiels and Tweedbank.

The construction works will continue throughout the summer and autumn to create the line of the route and the base for the railway track.

Transport Minister Keith Brown said: "The start of the construction works is a hugely exciting milestone and will allow those communities to witness the scheme coming to life.

"I very much look forward to seeing the Borders Railway take shape from here with all the social, economic and environmental benefits that will bring for the area."

David Simpson, Network Rail route managing director for Scotland, said: "The start of the main construction works is a major milestone in the delivery of the new line.

"From today, local communities will be able to see their new railway beginning to take shape and we look forward to working with them, our contractors and the Scottish government to re-establish this vital transport link for the Borders."