



NJUG CASE STUDY

CASE STUDY 6: Collaboration and Coordination

The National Joint Utilities Group (NJUG) is the UK industry association representing utilities on street works issues. The thirty-eight companies¹ we represent work to deliver gas, electricity, water and telecommunications to both individual consumers and UK plc.

NJUG members need to continue to drive forward further improvements. We have therefore developed the NJUG Vision for Street Works, which revolves around six main principles:

1. Safety is the number one priority
2. Damage to underground assets is avoided
3. Utilities work together and in partnership with local authorities to minimise disruption
4. Utilities deliver consistent high quality
5. Utilities maximise the use of sustainable methods and materials
6. Street works in the UK are regarded as world class

This case study is an example of NJUG delivering on these principles and turning the Vision into a reality.

Overview:

With both the UK population and vehicle usage increasing, congestion is a problem now more than ever before. While utilities have the same effect on traffic flow as they have always done, the problem is heightened by the increasing demand on our roads. There is a need now more than ever before for utilities to coordinate their works where possible to minimise disruption and improve efficiency.

The traditional utopian view of coordinated street works is typified by the ‘Heineken advert’ depicting many utilities all sharing the same open trench. In reality, for numerous operational, commercial and safety reasons, this is often not possible.

However utilities do make concerted efforts to plan and collaborate on works wherever possible, for the benefit of all those involved. Such coordination is particularly challenging the more involved parties there are, especially when each has their own commercial pursuits, safety priorities, and conflicting timeframes. Nonetheless success stories do exist, and one such example is Cromwell Road.

In this instance, National Grid Gas and their contractors Morrison Utility Services (MUS) agreed a gas mains replacement programme with Transport for London (TfL). However, when a water main burst and Thames Water obtained a road closure to undertake immediate repairs, the National Grid Gas / MUS team mobilised at immediate notice to bring forward their programme and make best use of the road closure. Through their efforts, the original works plan of 26 weeks was cut in half, to only 13 weeks.



¹ NJUG's current members are Energy Networks Association (representing electricity and gas), Water UK (representing all water and wastewater companies), National Grid, Openreach, Virgin Media and THUS plc, and our associate members are Clancy Docwra, Skanska McNicholas, Balfour Beatty, Morrison, Morgan Est, NACAP, PJ Keary, First Intervention, Carillion and Enterprise. Including members through trade associations, NJUG represents thirty-eight utility companies

Case Study

Morrison's National Grid team made an impressive achievement in October 2008, completing a challenging mains replacement programme along one of London's busiest commuter routes in half the scheduled time. To help achieve a clear and effective strategy, planning started very early with National Grid Gas, Morrison, Transport for London (TfL) and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. Collaboration with all interested parties is a high priority and in this case helped the teams involved finish 13 weeks ahead of schedule.

The gas main replacement programme on West London's Cromwell Road (A4) was scheduled for completion in 26 weeks but thanks to close co-operation between Morrison and three key partners: National Grid, Transport for London (TfL) and Thames Water, the work was completed in just 13 weeks. The Morrison team put in many long hours to achieve this result even working through the night on one occasion to upgrade service to the Cromwell Hospital.

The works started ahead of schedule in July when a mains water leak under the road caused subsidence. Morrison was able to make use of Thames Water's road closure, which had been obtained to deal with the burst water main, and bring their own works forward, mobilising immediately to make the most of the unfortunate situation.

The Morrison team also offered Thames Water use the solar powered signs it had commissioned to advise drivers of the disruption. The use of the signs was an innovative move significantly contributing towards the speedy progress of the main replacement programme. The Morrison team worked closely with TfL, providing weekly updates and holding visits to site in order to constantly update the four 2.34 metre x 1.5 metre solar powered signs. As the works progressed the updates provided to motorists proved invaluable especially in the final phase of work when the work required the eastbound carriageway to be closed.

As if the project was not a challenge enough, the final twist came when work had to be brought forward by four days and completed in time for the opening of the brand new Westfield Shopping Centre in White City. Not only was this deadline met but also further benefit was taken from the project with TfL taking advantage of the road's closure to undertake major resurfacing.

National Grid and Thames Water (the latter through Water UK) are members of the National Joint Utilities Group (NJUG). In addition, Morrison Utility Services hold Associate Membership of NJUG.



MORRISON 
Utility Services  **nationalgrid**

