



NJUG CASE STUDY

CASE STUDY 50: Bewdley Town Centre Mains Replacement

Winner of the 2010 NJUG Award for Communication

The National Joint Utilities Group (NJUG) is the UK industry association representing utilities on street works issues. The 39 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 World Class Street Works, which revolves around six main principles:

1. Safety is the number one priority
2. Utilities deliver consistent high quality
3. Utilities work together and in partnership with local authorities and contractors to minimise disruption
4. Utilities keep the public fully informed on all aspects of works
5. Utilities maximise use of sustainable methods and materials
6. Damage to underground assets is avoided

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

Overview:

November 2009 saw Severn Trent Water, National Grid Gas, Enterprise and Worcestershire County Council take on the challenge of two projects which had been previously postponed due to public concern about the amount of disruption and the potential loss of business the essential works would cause to the residents of Bewdley. These were the complete resurfacing of Load Street as well as essential gas and water mains works in Bewdley town centre.

Case Study:

Bewdley attracts tourists from around the world with the Safari Park, Severn Valley Railway and its Georgian charm. Severn Trent Water, National Grid, Enterprise and Worcestershire County Council wanted this to remain the case after the essential works were completed.

The works couldn't be postponed again as Severn Trent Water required this work to be completed by June 2010 as the asset had reached an unacceptable level of service and the Gas project was part of National Grid's 30 year programme to improve the safety and reliability of the gas supply network. Despite the urgency, the customers still had to remain at the heart of the solution.

Other utilities were approached at the Highways Coordination meeting to see whether they could work together and share the road space to minimise any disruption. This was endorsed by Worcestershire County Council's Street Works Management Team who decided that they would totally resurface Load Street on completion of the works. It was decided that the impending gas and water mains works could be combined, and replaced at the same time; this resulted in a considerable reduction in the duration of the

¹ NJUG's current members are Energy Networks Association (representing electricity and gas), Water UK (representing all water and wastewater companies), National Grid, Openreach, and Virgin Media. Our associate members are Clancy Docwra, Skanska Utilities, Balfour Beatty, Morrison Utility Services, Morgan Est, Nacap UK, PJ Keary, First Intervention, Carillion, Enterprise, Laing O'Rourke, Amec and SQS. Including members through trade associations, NJUG represents thirty-nine utility companies, and thirteen utility contractors.

works and inconvenience to the community of Bewdley as a whole. The scheme was approved in November 2009 and works had to start in January 2010 with completion deadline of July 2010 to minimise the effects on the tourist trade. However this left little time for preparation and consultation.

A public meeting was convened on 30th November 2009 at which all stakeholders were invited to attend to discuss the proposals for Bewdley Town Centre mains replacement. It was highlighted that a “joined up” approach between Severn Trent Water, National Grid Gas and Enterprise was to be adopted to minimise disruption to the local community. A customer service survey of the area was subsequently undertaken, and all businesses and sensitive customers received a visit from the Customer Liaison to address any concerns raised and to provide personal contact details. Consultations with Severn Trent Water database DDA (Disabled Discrimination Act) customers were also undertaken, with the information recorded and individual needs catered for. Severn Trent Water, National Grid Gas, Enterprise and Worcestershire County Council understood that to ensure that the project was successful everybody involved adopted the TEAM approach: **T**ogether **E**veryone **A**chieves **M**ore.

The works were planned in detail; particular attention was paid to forthcoming events by suspending works and maintaining access during major public holidays such as the Easter and May Day Bank Holidays. Unplanned events such as the march through the town by the Mercian regiment on return from Afghanistan were also catered for. Buses, waste collection, business deliveries, church appointments, were all logged, recorded and also attended to.

On one occasion as a result of the measures taken by the gang on site, to facilitate a Wedding Party at the Methodist Church, High Street Bewdley, a plate of Wedding Cake was delivered to the gang directly from the wedding reception by way of thanks. To ensure that we spread the word and communicated activities to our Bewdley stakeholders Severn Trent Water, National Grid Gas via Enterprise undertook the following:

- A local Press/Radio campaign before, during and after the works.
- A 4,000 leaflet drop to the surrounding area explaining the works and that Bewdley was still open for business.
- Active road signs updating the progress of the works and advertising that Bewdley was open for business.
- A dedicated proactive site representative visited businesses and sensitive customers and was available to deal with day to day enquiries and concerns. Additionally, a 24/7 call centre number was advertised on all plant barriers and written communication with the customer.
- Regular dialogue was undertaken with the Mayor, Town Clerk and Street Authority.

The works were completed on time despite being the worst winter for 30 years. Severn Trent Water, National Grid Gas, Enterprise and Worcestershire County Council worked together and completed the works in the agreed timescale to the satisfaction of the stakeholders, customers and tourists. This was a prime example of the utilities working together and in partnership with local authorities and contractors to minimise disruption.

Bewdley Carnival took place a week after the final completion of the project, and continuing the good spirit that had been evident throughout the works the Enterprise Customer Service Team facilitated two stands. Proceeds raised were equally donated back to the carnival committee and Wateraid.



nationalgrid



Enterprise
maintaining the infrastructure of the UK

