

**Notes from presentation and Q&A session with UK Power Networks
Tuesday 3rd September 2024 at 19:00**

Present:

Phil Burke (PB) – Lead Field Engineer at UKPN

Ross Hillman (RH) – Area Manager at UKPN

9 members of the public.

Introductions were made and RH started the meeting by apologising the residents for the fault. It is not something they are proud of, they recognise the issue, and they have a plan to address.

Background on faults. There have been 7 high voltage faults:

- 5 of these due to the auto reclosures, short interruptions but still disruptive.
- 2 permanent cable faults, longer durations.

Why do they have blips? It is their network protection, they see a fault, they open up the lines which causes the outages, if the fault clears, the power will go back on. They can do this up to 4 times before an engineer is flagged to attend.

What causes them? Common reasons are debris falling on the lines, fallen trees, vermin, and 3rd party damage. The reason for the majority of faults in Hadlow Down are old cable terminations.

Tree cutting update – 138 spans were identified in Hadlow Down, 134 of them have been cut. The 4 remain, 1 due to permit needed and the final 3 are landowner access refusals. The plan is to clear either side up to 5m, no longer 3m, by the end of 2024. You still may get tree related faults on overhead cables, but more likely due to dead or diseased trees that fall easily due to high wind.

Network improvements – There is a long section of underground cable, 1.4km along the A272 that needs replacing from Five Chimneys Eggs all the way along A272 to the top of School Lane and down School lane to the sub station. The project has been through many planning phases, but RH confirmed that the project has been agreed, funding has been secured and the work will start within the next 1-2 months. Exact timescales not yet known but PB will keep the Clerk up to date with this information.

PB updated that there is a register that residents should sign up to receive a priority service especially for the elderly and vulnerable. More information and to be sign up can be found here: www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk/power-cut/priority-services

Q+A session

Q. At Coopers Farm by the A272, there is a manual switch which you have just said will be changed to an automatic one. At a recent outage for 48 hours, the farm was the last to receive power and this was devastating to a working farm with a lot of losses. An engineer stated they require to reinstate a 10m stretch of 3 phase as there was a back feed causing problems, but they have not heard anything and would like this before winter to prevent any further losses. The person who said this was Eddie O'Connell who had come from East Croyden.

A. RH apologised for this and said he would look into this and will take the contact details for the resident after the meeting.

Q. It was asked why the landowners are not allowing access for tree cuttings, surely, they have a statutory power to get on the land?

A. PB explained that there are various reasons. It is key to work with the landowners and try to agree a way leave rather go straight to a Court order.

Q. Is the cable replacement going to do done in lots of little stages with minimal workload time by Highways?

A. RH stated that he would expect the work to take place continuously but not 24/7. It could possibly continue at weekends but no bank holidays. BP explained that the new cable will be installed and then a switch over will take place so there should only be one main outage for this project, but this could be 8-9 hours, but this information will be communicated to the Clerk with notice.

Q. There will be disruption on the roads though with constant traffic lights. What about School Lane cable with the school run traffic?

A. RH explained they would want to minimise the impact and if they need to do in stages and possibly do the School Lane work in the October half term, this will be looked into.

Q. They were asked what their plan is to reinstate the roads after the works?

A. RH explained that they are bound by regulations, so they are liable for any backfill and reinstatement. If it does sink, they will return to repair. They will co-ordinate with ESH on any resurfacing works they are due to undertake.

Q. A resident asked what the time frame on liability for the repairs is, it is 5 or 10 years.

A. RH did not know but said he would find out and confirm with the Clerk.

A resident wanted to express his thanks to UKPN on behalf of the Village Hall Committee following a positive experience when an engineer came to assist with a new connection. Another resident wanted it noted that the telephone staff at UKPN are brilliant, they always update and polite at all times.

ML ended the meeting by thanking both PB and RH for attending and said the key thing moving forward is communication to residents are aware of what is upcoming and for how long.

Meeting ended at 19:45