



***United Utilities Electricity Plc
Schedule 9 Statement***



United Utilities is the country's leading multi-utility company, providing essential services to millions of people in the UK and abroad. We aim to carry out all our activities in a responsible manner, in line with our Sustainable Development Policy and balancing the needs of communities, the environment and the economy.

For our electricity distribution operations, specific legal requirements were placed on electricity companies at the time of privatisation. This Statement outlines the specific commitments we have made to the environment under Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act 1989 (as amended by the Utilities Act 2000), relating to preservation of amenity.

In revising our Schedule 9 Statement, we have taken the opportunity to update previous commitments to ensure that they are appropriate for our new business structure. We have also sought comment from a number of statutory and non-statutory consultees and I am grateful for their advice in developing our commitments.

We will continue to monitor our performance against the commitments that we make under Schedule 9, and will report examples of that performance in our annual Corporate Responsibility Report.

Introduction

Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act, 1989

(As amended by the Utilities Act, 2000)

United Utilities Electricity plc has a duty under Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act 1989 to preserve amenity. The statement which follows explains how we will fulfil our obligations under the Act.

Schedule 9

Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act 1989 (As amended by the Utilities Act 2000) imposes specific obligations on electricity companies in respect of the environment. Extracts from Schedule 9 are printed below.

1 (1) *In formulating any relevant proposals, a licence holder or a person authorised by exemption to generate or supply electricity –*

(a) shall have regard to the desirability of preserving natural beauty, of conserving flora, fauna and geological or physiographical features of special interest and of protecting sites, buildings and objects of architectural, historic or archaeological interest; and

(b) shall do what he reasonably can to mitigate any effect which the proposals would have on the natural beauty of the countryside or on any such flora, fauna, features, sites, buildings or objects.

2. (1) *A licence holder shall within 12 months from the grant of his licence prepare, and from time to time modify, a statement setting out the manner in which he proposes to perform his duty under paragraph 1(1) above, including in particular the consultation process he intends to follow.*

(2) Before preparing or modifying a statement under this paragraph, a licence holder shall consult with the Countryside Agency and

(a) where the activities which he is authorised by his licence to carry on include activities in England, the Nature Conservancy Council for England and, the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England.

In the context of this legislation, 'relevant proposals' for United Utilities are:

*"...the installation (whether above or below ground) of an electric line; or
...the execution of any other works for or in connection with the transmission or supply of electricity."*



Statement Preparation

In 1990, the then Norweb plc published its Schedule 9 document as required by the section 2(1) above. This was reviewed in 1996 to reflect changes in the business and, following the merger of Norweb and North West Water, we have decided to review the document again to ensure that our commitments are appropriate and applicable to the new business.

Since the Electricity Act (as amended by the Utilities Act 2000) was passed, the names of two of the bodies to be consulted have changed. The Nature Conservancy Council for England is now English Nature, and the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England is now English Heritage. We have therefore met with these bodies.

In addition to these bodies, we have also discussed this document with our independent advisory committee, CARAC (Conservation Access and Recreation Advisory Committee) and the Council for National Parks.



Scope

This Schedule 9 statement is specific to the electricity distribution activities of United Utilities through UU Electricity plc, which is the licence holder referred to in the legislation above. Its scope is limited to those aspects detailed in paragraph 1(1) above and does not cover wider issues of environmental concern such as climate change, waste disposal or pollution prevention. These, and other aspects of sustainable development, are covered by our Sustainable Development Policy and accompanying Strategy, which are applicable to all our business worldwide. Information on United Utilities' Social and Environmental Performance is published annually in our Social and Environmental Performance report and on our website (www.unitedutilities.com).

Company Background

United Utilities provides an electricity distribution network for 2.2 million consumers throughout Cumbria, Lancashire, Greater Manchester and parts of Yorkshire, Cheshire, Derbyshire and Merseyside.

This 58,000-kilometre electricity distribution network delivers 24,479 gigawatt hours of electricity annually from the National Grid to consumer premises (domestic and business) across North West England through a series of voltages from 132kV to low voltage. We charge supplier companies for using our distribution network.

Underground cables, overhead lines and substations are utilised to distribute the electricity. Underground cables supply dense urban areas, a mix of underground cables and overhead lines is used for smaller towns and semi-urban areas whilst agricultural and remote areas are predominantly supplied by overhead lines.



United Utilities' distribution area includes the whole of the Lake District National Park, parts of the Yorkshire Dales and Peak District National Parks, numerous Conservation Areas, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and National Nature Reserves, and a diverse mix of other countryside and townscapes.

The provision of a reliable supply of electricity is a requirement for a high quality of life. Without it many of the essentials of modern society would be unavailable, from domestic heating and lighting to industry and hospitals. The need for electricity is as important to communities in remote rural areas as to those in major cities. We have a duty to distribute electricity in the most cost-effective manner whilst at the same time achieving, or exceeding, standards set by the regulator Ofgem (Office of Gas and Electricity Markets). Distributing electricity via overhead lines is normally significantly cheaper than by underground cable, particularly in rural areas. We recognise, however, that the distribution of electricity can have an effect on the environment and take care to minimise this impact through careful planning of installations.

Our Commitments

Planning

We will seek to build new electricity installations only where the existing infrastructure cannot be upgraded. This may involve new network extensions, or network reinforcements, to connect customers or distributed generators, and to ensure the network reliability and standards of service set by the Regulator, Ofgem.

We will include the duty of environmental care as an objective at all stages in the planning, construction, operation and maintenance of our assets.

We will ensure that appropriate environmental assessments are carried out.

Minimisation of Impact

When planning the construction of a new building or electric line (whether overhead or underground), we will strive to locate and screen that structure or line so as to minimise visual impact and noise and to avoid, wherever practicable, adverse effects on flora fauna, archaeological remains, listed buildings, conservation areas and other designated historic sites and their settings. We will use appropriate architectural styles and building materials in our construction work to retain local distinctiveness. We will also take account of landscape character based on any relevant guidance.

When replacing time-expired apparatus we will take the opportunity to both reduce costs and to improve environmental aspects. This could include the exploitation of new technology to replace bulky equipment with compact, remove equipment or enclosures no longer required and re-think siting in the light of any changes which may have taken place in the surroundings.

If funding is available for minimisation of environmental impact, this will be prioritised to bring the greatest environmental benefit to the largest number of people.



Consultation

We will seek to identify those groups most likely to be affected by our works and instigate the earliest possible consultation with them. Where work may impact on specific sites, such as land designated as a SSSI, we will consult at an early stage.

Re-use of assets

We will seek to re-use historic assets wherever possible. If not, then when buildings and plant become surplus to the company requirements, we will consider whether features of industrial archaeology (or other conservation aspects) require special measures to be taken.

Training and awareness

We will promote environmental awareness amongst staff, through appropriate training and dissemination of information. We will also make contractors aware of the relevant parts of this statement and of our Sustainable Development Policy.

Reporting and review

We will report examples of our performance against Schedule 9 in our Corporate Responsibility report.

We will review this Schedule 9 statement every five years or following major changes to legislation or our business.





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