

Schedule 9 Statement

August 2025



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What we do

UK Power Networks distributes electricity to over a quarter of the United Kingdom's population. We serve 8.5 million connected customers across our three licensed areas covering London, the South East and East of England.

Our electricity distribution network covers an area of 29,250km², extending from The Wash on the North of the Norfolk coast to Littlehampton on the Sussex coast, and our substantial assets include 146,816km of underground cable and 45,223km of overhead line.

Within this footprint we encounter a wide array of natural environmental features, with seven National Landscapes (formerly Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty), two National Parks and many Sites of Special Scientific Interest. There are also many sites which are protected for their historic or archaeological significance, often in densely populated areas. Each aspect brings a unique mixture of environmental factors that we must consider when planning and carrying out our work.

Why we've produced this document

As an electricity Distribution Network Operator, we have a statutory duty for the 'preservation of amenity' under Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act 1989 (see extract below). In this context amenity includes the natural environment, plants and animals, the built environment and archaeological and historic features. We must do whatever we reasonably can to mitigate any negative environmental impact of our activities. We must also publish a statement which sets out how we are going to achieve these aims.

Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act 1989

Preservation of amenity: England and Wales

Paragraph 1 (1)

1 (1) in formulating any relevant proposals, a licence holder or a person authorised by exemption to generate, distribute, supply or participate in the transmission of 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 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.

Paragraph 2 (1)

2 (1) A licence holder shall within twelve 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 procedures which he intends to follow.

Planning and Design

When we need to build new electricity installations, we make sure that the environment is considered right from the start. Every effort is made to identify potential environmental issues at the earliest planning and design stage of a project, and to avoid or minimise any potential harm. We use our electronic mapping systems to check for environmental features that could be impacted and need to be considered. These include sites designated for their ecological or historic importance, surface waters, and groundwater sensitivity.

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Consultation

Whenever we have to install new overhead lines or underground cables, or build a new substation, we consult with the relevant statutory authorities such as Natural England and Historic England at the earliest possible opportunity.

Protecting Nature

When we are planning work, we consider whether it could affect sites that are designated for their landscape, ecological or geological value, such as National Landscapes, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar Sites. If it could, we will consult Natural England and other relevant organisations at the earliest opportunity. Similarly, if we think that a protected species could be present and affected, we will take steps to ensure that they are not harmed. We engage professional ecologists and other specialists to assess the potential impact of the work and provide guidance to ensure that we proceed in a way that complies with environmental legislation, including applying for protected species licences when required.

Protecting History

When planning work, we consult relevant records to identify sites designated for their archaeological or historic significance that could be affected, particularly when installing underground cables. Where necessary we engage professional archaeological consultants to undertake surveys and put in place measures to ensure that our heritage is protected. When consent might be required, we consult Historic England at the earliest opportunity.

Training and Awareness

We promote environmental awareness amongst our staff through training and engagement events and providing readily accessible information and guidance on topics ranging from pollution prevention to protected species. We also require our contractors to ensure that their staff have appropriate environmental training and awareness.

Sharing environmental knowledge in an open forum is something we do through the Energy Networks Association (our trade body). Engaging with our industry peers provides us with valuable information that enables us to work towards environmental best practice.

Environmental Management

Our environmental management system is certified to ISO14001, an internationally recognised standard. We assess the potential impacts of what we do, put in place suitable control measures and conduct regular reviews and audits to ensure that we are complying with environmental legislation and our own procedures. A condition of ISO14001 accreditation is that we show evidence of continuous improvement of our organisation's systems and approaches to environmental concerns.

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Statement Consultation

In preparing this statement we consulted with:

Natural England
Historic England

Contact

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