N Yorks Release – 16th March 09

NJUG

Award Winning North Yorkshire Utilities Present to Street Works Forum
Survey shows Yorkshire utilities' works are more important than reducing congestion

16 March 2009 – Utilities will be publicising some of the efforts being made to improve the quality of street works at an event in York on the 23rd March organised by the National Joint Utilities Group (NJUG). The event follows an independent survey by ComRes showing that 88 per cent of people in Yorkshire believe providing gas and electricity is more important than reducing congestion on the roads.

The event at the Hospitium in York will include the presentation of two award-winning good practice case studies by Northern Gas Networks and Balfour Beatty Utility Solutions who both operate in the North Yorkshire area.

John O'Grady of Northern Gas Networks will present on his firm's 'Play Safe, Stay Safe' initiative, which won the 2008 NJUG Safety Award. The 'Play Safe Stay Safe' programme was developed as a means of presenting fun, interesting, and effective safety information to primary schools close to where street works are taking place.

Anthony Murray of Balfour Beatty Utility Solutions will be delivering the second presentation on his company's 'Belief Based Behavioural Safety Programme', winner of the 2008 NJUG World Class Award. The programme is designed to change the way employees go about their work, promoting end-to-end ownership by teams and individuals, and incorporating workshops and practical resources to make real changes in workplace behaviors.

Les Guest, currently NJUG Traffic Director and CEO elect, will host the Forum. Mr Guest explained, "NJUG has been holding various street works forums around the UK since the launch of NJUG's *Vision for Street Works* in 2007. Now, following the inaugural NJUG Awards held last year, we are able to demonstrate through the forums concrete examples of NJUG Members turning the Vision into reality".

The event follows on from a recent ComRes survey commissioned by NJUG into the public's opinion of street works. The results indicated that 88 per cent of people in Yorkshire agree that making sure that electricity and water supplies are maintained is more important than reducing congestion on the roads.

The survey also found that 34 per cent of people in the region think utility companies are 'poor' at communicating with the public about planned street works. Les Guest, who will be in position as CEO by the time of the Forum, said: "Utility companies have a challenge to take up when it comes to improving their communication with the public about street works".

He added, "The survey shows that 90 per cent of the public in Yorkshire would expect to see roadside signs about upcoming road works and this is something NJUG members have already recognised and started reviewing. The findings indicate real public recognition of the essential service street works provide and their necessity for the smooth running of modern life."

The full results of the survey can be found on the ComRes website - http://www.comres.co.uk/page184144924.aspx and the NJUG website - http://www.njug.org.uk/category/3/pageid/73.

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Notes To Editors

For further information or to arrange an interview please contact the NJUG press office at pressoffice@njug.org.uk or telephone 020 7340 1423.

About the survey

ComRes interviewed 1000 GB adults by telephone between 16th and 18th January 2009. Data was weighted to be representative demographically of all GB adults. ComRes is a member of the British Polling Council and abides by its rules. Full tables available at www.comres.co.uk and www.njug.org.uk. Results listed in this release are specific to Yorkshire. While based on a sample of 88 they are broadly in line with results from the wider survey of 1000 people that have been weighted to be demographically representative.

About The National Joint Utility Group (NJUG)

NJUG is the only UK industry association representing utilities on street works issues. Our full members include the Energy Networks Association (representing electricity and gas companies), Water UK (representing water companies), National Grid, BT, Virgin Media and Thus, a Cable and Wireless Business. Our Associate Members are Clancy Docwra, Skanska McNicholas, Balfour Beatty, Morrison, Morgan Est, NACAP, PJ Keary, First Intervention, Carillion, Enterprise and Laing O'Rourke. Including members through trade associations, NJUG represents thirty-eight utility companies.

NJUG is the utility arm of the Highway Authorities and Utilities Committee representing street works in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales known as HAUC (UK). Please see http://www.hauc-uk.org.uk/ for further information.

NJUG's focus is on promoting best practice, safety, quality and co-ordination of works as well as representing utilities in discussions with Government and other stakeholders on street work issues.

Street works are essential activities carried out by electricity, water, gas and communications utilities to maintain, enhance, extend, renew and repair their networks.

NJUG's good practice case studies can be viewed at:
http://www.njug.org.uk/category/3/pageid/7/

URL: www.njug.org.uk

About ComRes

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