

**Twitter Q&A with Matt Rudling, Director of Customer Services on
3 September**

Q: Here's one! With all the different voltages in London, isn't it time to convert to standard 132_33_11kv network?

A: We look to rationalise voltages when the business need is there. More info on this can be found here: <http://bit.ly/1hE4gll>

Q: If electricity and gas had a fight, who would win?

A: The key thing is to make sure there's no sparks flying around as they don't mix well together! Matt

Q: Home in a rural area, literally at end of line power cuts/dips frequent trees shroud line what can you do?

A: You shouldn't be having these issues William, if you could DM us your details and we'll get this checked for you – Matt

Q: Matt, you have multiple contractors working for you, why are they not on your website to show they are legit?

A: Thank you Lou. I think this is a great idea and one that I will make sure is implemented. Thank you for your question.

Q: Is it stressful to be a customer services director?

A: It's one of the best jobs in the world, of course it's stressful at times however there's nothing more rewarding when our customers tell me that we've done a fantastic job. Matt

Q: [You'll answer] ALL of my questions?

A: Depends what you want to know! Fire away. Matt

Q: Ok smart Aleck...Power wise, is it more efficient to cook a baked potato in an electric fan oven or a microwave oven?

A: I would say microwave but they always taste better in the oven. Matt

[More in conversation]

Comment from Andy: I would say a microwave...don't have the figures to hand but I'm sure an oven is higher wattage than a microwave.

Comment from Angela: Sorry to interrupt, but I bake potatoes in the woodburner.

Matt: I've never done that Angela but I will now! Good call – Matt

Comment from Angela: Burn a bit of apple wood or cherry wood to give a nice flavour- works on bonfires and bbq's as well.

Q: Hi Matt, do you base your hair on Tony from no doubt? [Based on pic posted of Matt]

A: Have you been speaking with my barber? Matt/Tony

Q: Contacted several times about unsafe, unsecure substation. Told would be sorted 8 months ago. How to escalate?

A: consider it escalated, if you could DM me over the details I'll follow this up ASAP – Matt

Q: Question from a customer on the phone: "Why is it so hard to find your telephone number?"

A: We've worked hard to make our number clear on our site & in phone books. Next yr there will be one emergency 3 digit number for power cuts.

Q: How does UKPN decide where gets refurbished and when?

A: Refurb is based on age/condition of assets to ensure reliability of electricity supply

Q: Question from the phones: "Why did you use a generator to get me power back on when they are so noisy?"

A: We only use generators to restore power when it's the quickest way to get you on.

Read more here: bit.ly/1IN3vMO

Q: Can I ask if you think 20 outages since 24/08/14 is ok?

A: This is completely unacceptable Alison. Can I get one of the team to call you about this straight away? Matt

Alison: I already have a complaint in process [Ref no.] but I have had 3 more outages since Mon. Also more worried about my elderly father in same postcode.

Matt: Thanks for the reference number; we'll take action to rectify the issue for you as soon as we can. Matt

Alison: Thx Matt. Just been speaking to Joseph. He has till 11/9 to email resolution #helpful

Q: Why is Markyate in Hertfordshire plagued with brief power cuts all the time?

A: I'm aware of several issues in that area, if you could DM me your details now and we'll give you a call – Matt

Q: What was the most intense day of your working life at UKPN?

A: I would say it would be Christmas eve 2013 following terrible storms, knowing many of our customers would have their Christmas impacted – Matt

Q: How big is the team you manage and how does someone get a job in that team?

A: I have over 300 in my team dedicated in delivering great customer service however UKPN has many diverse roles, check out our careers page on our website for further information, Matt

Q: @Sarah_35LL and I are worried about your Will's pot noodle addiction. Do all UKPN staff get a 'pasta high'?

A: No this is unique to Will. We are worried too. Matt

Sarah: Me too!

Matt: Clearly I need to ban Pot Noodles form the Office! Matt

Sarah: Do employees do meet and greets? Would Will like to come to Aylesbury to discuss all our power needs?

Matt: You'll never get Will away from the comfort of his office with his beloved Pot Noodles! Matt

Q: I need meters installed in 6 small commercial units and already have a landlord supply. Any idea of cost?

A: So many variables with this it's hard to give an idea of cost. Would be best to go through this with the connections team.

Q: Question from customer on the phone: Why does it cost so much to upgrade/have a new connection? #askourdirector

A: We try our best to keep connection costs to a minimum, the price will vary depending on whether traffic management or other factors apply. M

Q: Question from the phone "What are UKPN's plans for the future?"

A: We've got an 8 year business plan so you can see all our future plans here:

<http://bit.ly/1KMvKkJ>

Q: Being an expert in power, what's your opinion on electric eels? Did you create them? I flipping hate them!

A: Hmmmm potential source of renewable energy, perhaps we'd call it eeltricity?

Mss Trout: But I flipping hate eels! They are only good for one thing #jelliedeels

Matt: I think this is going to be an alternative diet for Will, better than his pot noodle habits. Matt

Mss Trout: Flipping excellent news! Nice chatting, I must dash, my motorbike is parked on double yellows, don't want to get clammed!

Matt: Hope you're going to a nice place. We've haddock a good chat, couldn't have been better. Matt

Q: Evening! My question is: What are UKPN doing to ensure a low carbon future?

A: A low carbon future is an integral part of our vision going forward. This link details this further: bit.ly/1fncnOG Matt

Question from Matt: Do you think we can improve service to our customers who need extra support in a power cut?

Comment from NorfolkFESS: Use us more..... ;)

Matt: It's a fab partnership we have with you and the Red Cross delivering service to those most in need – Matt

NorfolkFESS: A great partnership @CambsFESS are training 15 new volunteers tomorrow #readytorespond for power cuts.

Matt: Excellent news. Best of luck to the new trainees.

New Comment from William: Send out portable wind turbines, temporary solar panels and throw in a disposable barbeque with Rib Eye steaks.

Matt: that would be a better set up that I have at my home with the power on, and that's without the wind turbine and panels!

Q: Question from the phone "Why does something go wrong when there's a little bit of rain?"

A: Sometimes rain can get in to our cables if they have been damaged causing them to fault.

Matt: It's really important to me that anyone who is eligible for our priority service is registered. Apply here: <http://bit.ly/1c3CkOO> Matt

Q from Richard: Can I complete this on behalf of an elderly parent?

Matt: You certainly can do Richard. If you have any problems let me know and I will get one of our team to call you. Matt

Q: Why can't you stop power cuts altogether?

A: We'd love to; over the last 5 years we've managed to reduce powercuts by over 40%, always looking to do better. Matt

Follow up Q: That's pretty good. In the event of a power cut how can I contact you quickly?

A: We proactively contact you via SMS and telephone. Our contact methods are here on our live power cut map [h/bit.ly/1wTQNWN](http://bit.ly/1wTQNWN)

Question from the phone "Why don't you put all overhead cables underground?"

A: the primary reason is cost, as it's 9 times more expensive to put cables underground. A cost that we'd have to bear in our electricity.

Q: What affect do you think the proposed FITs for solar will have on the solar and distribution industries?

A: I think this will lead to a notable reduction on the number of solar instillations. Matt

Q: Thanks Matt. A bad thing or a good thing for UKPN? Have we been a bit of a pain in the?

A: Not at all Robert. We want to encourage and enable the transition to a low carbon future. Matt

Comment: Thanks Matt. Good responses. UKPN are my favourite DNO.

Comment: No trouble at all Robert, happy to hear of the support for our DNO, have a nice evening. Let us know if you need anything else.

Q: What have you done to prepare for any forthcoming storms we might have this winter?

A: We spend 20m a year clearing trees from overhead lines and we use insulated conductors where appropriate. We've trained 900 extra call takers, damage assessment teams and info officers to restore power quicker and update you – Matt

Q: We've a massive pole with transformer in our garden leafing mains in—neighbours were sunk – any plans to sink others?

A: We may more cables underground due to reliability or safety issues. Matt

Q: Thanks for the quick reply! Also do poles in domestic gardens get any sort of regular checks, if so, how often?

A: All of our overhead supplies are regularly checked and maintained annually. Matt

Q: Question from the phones #askourdirector What training do UKPN staff receive?

A: Depends on their roles. Whether operational or office based, we have extensive programmes and excellent training teams. Matt #askourdirector

Q: Question from customer on the phone: 'What are you doing to resolve power cuts quicker?' #askourdirector

A: We've reduced the duration of power cuts by 47% and we're looking at smarter ways of working and new technology to reduce even further, Matt

Q: What causes power cuts?

A: Extreme weather, 3rd party cable damage and failure of assets. The good news is we've reduced the number of power cuts by 40%

Q: Is there a time frame to do away with overhead cables in some areas? Must admit it's more reliable in our village now

A: We're pleased it's more reliable and overhead networks will always be around due to significant costs in undergrounding – Matt

Q: Energy saving, the fewer KWH we use, the less £££ you make, so why promote it?!

#NotEasyBeingGreen

A: We all have an obligation to see less energy being used in particular to help those who may fall in to fuel poverty. Matt

Q: Matt, would you rather fight a hundred duck sized horses or 1 horse sized duck?

A: I must say I fancy my chances against the horse sized duck Daniel – Matt

Q: I agree. Final question to determine whether we can be friends, Brown sauce or red sauce on a bacon sandwich?

A: It's gotta be brown sauce with the veggie bacon...

Comment: Veggie bacon? Sorry mate, I'm out!

Matt: :(

Q: Why can't you arrange work with other utilities so you need only dig up a road once?

A: Often asked that, for new developments collaboration will occur. Often our works are emergency situations so not possible - Matt