

Date issued: 22 January 2020

Information for residents: gas works in Cullompton

Wales & West Utilities has now started its essential work to upgrade the gas pipe scheme in the Fore Street area of Cullompton.

The work is needed to keep the gas flowing to heat homes and power businesses in the area so that people are safe and warm for generations to come. Barring any engineering difficulties, the work is expected to be completed by April.

To plan the work Wales & West Utilities has worked closely with Devon County Council to make sure disruption is kept to a minimum. It has been agreed that to keep the local community, road users and engineers safe whilst the scheme is ongoing, rolling traffic lights will be in place along Fore Street from 6-27 January. For the remainder of the scheme it has been agreed that Fore Street will be closed from its junction with Tiverton Road to Exeter Hill and a diversion route will be clearly signposted.

While the work is not being undertaken by Mid Devon District Council, our officers have been liaising with Wales & West Utilities to ensure the works are managed appropriately and that the impact of the work on residents and businesses is kept to a minimum.

MDDC's Group Manager for Public Health and Regulatory Services, Simon Newcombe, said: "Whilst MDDC have no direct role in the approval or management of these works, we have met with Wales & West Utilities directly to agree temporary waste/recycling collection arrangements and to formalise operating arrangements to ensure works are managed as effectively as possible to limit noise and other nuisances to residents. Further site meetings between MDDC, Wales & West Utilities and the principal site contractor are planned to ensure everything possible has been done whilst balancing the obvious need to complete these essential utility works as expediently as possible."

Wales & West Utilities, Roxanne Whittaker, is managing the work and said:

"While most of the gas network is underground and out of sight, it plays a central role in the daily lives of people across the Cullompton area. Whether it's heating your home, making the family dinner or having a hot bath, we understand how important it is for your gas supply to be safe and reliable and there when you need it.

"We know that working in areas like this is not ideal, but it really is essential. We'll have a team of gas engineers on site throughout the project to make sure our work is completed as safely and as quickly as possible while keeping disruption to a minimum.

"This work will not only keep the gas flowing safely and reliably today, it will also help make sure the gas network is fit for the future and can play its part in delivering reliable and affordable green energy."

Residents and business owners who live or work in the vicinity of the works may find the following information useful:

- General complaints about the work should be referred to the Wales & West Customer Service team on freephone 0800 912 2999 or enquiries@wwwutilities.co.uk.
Alternatively, you can contact them on Twitter @WWUtilities or Facebook.com/WWUtilities.
Wales & West is also the first place you should contact if there is an unexpected disruption to your gas supply.
- If you smell gas you should always contact the national gas emergency number on 0800 111 999
- Waste and Recycling Collection arrangements
Mid Devon District Council has agreed a system to continue waste and recycling collections in the Fore Street area affected by the works. Collections will remain on the normal collection day but due to the road closures operators will be collecting earlier in the day than usual. Residents and businesses must make sure waste and recycling is left at the kerbside by 6am as any waste and recycling put out later may be missed and we won't be able to come back and collect until your next collection day due to access.
- Culm Valley Leisure Centre
The centre will remain open throughout the works and there is full access to the site. Customers may need to leave extra time for their journeys to attend classes or sessions. Details of the diversion routes are currently displayed in the centre's reception area. Culm Valley Leisure Centre can be contacted on 01884 234320.
- Noise/nuisance complaints
The Council has limited the hours of operation for certain works attached to the project. The aim of this action is to try and find a balance between the rights of local residents and the requirements of Wales & West Utilities to complete the required project as soon as possible and minimise disruption. In striking this balance the hours of noisy work activities have been limited to the following hours:
 - Mondays to Fridays 7.30 am and 6.00 pm
 - Saturdays 8.00 am and 2.00 pm
 - No working on Sundays, Public Holidays and Bank/Statutory Holidays

However, this does not mean that noisy works will not take place outside of the hours specified within the notice. In certain situations noisy works are permitted to take place. This includes the following:

- Any emergency works
- Late property gas connections
- Noisy operations where prior permission has been sort and agreed in advance by the Council

If you have a noise or nuisance complaint to raise please contact Wales & West Utilities in the first instance. If this does not resolve the issue and the works are still impacting on you at home or during work the Council can investigate this matter for you, please provide your Wales & West log number). An example of the types of nuisances we can investigate for you is; noise, light, gases, fumes and dust. If you are being affected by any of these please contact Public Health on 01884 255255 or email customerfirst@middevon.gov.uk

- Traffic issue including public transport and pedestrian access. Please use Devon County Council's online reporting tool via www.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/ or alternatively ring them on 0345 155 1004
- Non domestic rates (business rate) enquiries
If a customer is suffering a loss of earnings due to the work, they can make an application directly to Wales and West relevant to this. The Council can assist with businesses by checking our records to make sure they are receiving all the reductions they are entitled to such as small business rate relief and retail relief. The customer can also contact the Valuation Office for a Check Challenge and Appeal at www.voa.gov.uk
- Council Tax enquiries
Council tax is a tax that includes money paid to fund the police and fire services and county council, not just to pay for district wide services and there is no rebate when one element of the service may be disrupted. One of the main visible services Mid Devon customers receive, which is paid for through their council tax, is waste collection. It has been agreed with our waste and recycling team that customers can leave rubbish out earlier than usual and this collection has been agreed with Wales and West.

Customers who have any other queries regarding their council tax should contact Customer First on 01884 255255 or email customerfirst@middevon.gov.uk

ENDS

For more information contact:

Communications on 01884 234232.