

Guernsey Utilities Join for the Good of the Community

Guernsey's utility companies are meeting up on a regular basis as the Guernsey Joint Utilities Group (GJUG) to decide how they can help each other to provide better service to islanders.

Representatives from Guernsey Water, Guernsey Electricity, Guernsey Gas, Cable and Wireless, Wave Telecom and the Public Services Department are getting together to discuss issues such as planning and coordination, sharing of resources, training, health and safety and emergency contact details.

As an example of joined-up working, the group, with the help of Digimap, is already looking into introducing a new asset information sharing system that will make working both safer and more efficient.

Director of water services Andrew Redhead said: "This initiative with Digimap will allow Guernsey to have access to cross-utility maps of each others assets. These can then be referred to when carrying out excavating works and will prevent damage to other utilities' assets."

The forum will also enable utilities to share 'best practice' in the Bailiwick and to avoid duplication of effort.

At its last meeting, the Senior Traffic Services Officer Colin Le Page attended, and stressed the need to plan as far ahead as possible and to give the Environment Department plenty of notice of intended works. It was acknowledged that developers, architects and builders must also make known their requirements at the earliest stage possible.

The Public Services Department's Head of Transport Services Peter Tidd added: "We are pleased that the Department's Roads and Drainage sections are being included in this group. It is vital that government links and input are included in discussions with local utilities to maximise co-ordination."

Given the similar methods of working and the need to amend and improve services within the public highway, the utilities have much to gain from GJUG and it is hoped that progress made so far will continue. The chairmanship for this first year has been held by Guernsey Water but it is hoped that others will share this responsibility in due course.

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