



Mrs Sally Lock
72 Main Street
Wheldrake
York
YO19 6AA

Dear Mrs Lock

Thank you for contacting us about the power cuts affecting residents in the YO8 area and letting us know about your concerns.

I understand the impact of a power cut, especially when they become frequent. I am grateful for your patience while I have looked into your concerns and I hope the following information is helpful in understanding the reasons for the power cuts.

The area is mainly supplied by a 20,000 volt overhead line. As is normal electricity distribution practice, the line incorporates an automatic switching device to cut supplies off in the event of a fault. This is a safety requirement, but also reduces the risk of significant damage to the line, which could result in extended power cuts.

Some faults are transient events, and it is not always possible to locate the cause, particularly if wildlife, such as birds or squirrels, rest on the overhead network and then moves away. They do not always cause permanent damage provided the power is cut when the incident occurs.

Windborne debris, bird strikes and extreme weather conditions can cause this device to operate and the interruptions are normally short. Although annoying, it means our engineers do not need to attend to manually inspect the line, when the fault has already cleared. However, if this keeps happening or the switch does not bring the power back on, we have to inspect the overhead line at each pole position.

The auto recloser is set to reclose automatically after a few seconds, keeping the power cuts as short as possible. When more permanent faults occur, this switch will cut supplies until our staff investigate and rectify the situation. Unfortunately, lightning strikes can cause latent damage to components, which is not immediately apparent, but may develop into equipment failure at a later date.

The recent power cuts were due to faults on different sections of our main overhead distribution network with different causes. Therefore, we cannot carry out any remedial action as the faults were not connected. We do try our very best to keep the power on and when it does go off our engineers make repairs and restore supplies as quickly as possible.

We carry out a rolling programme of tree trimming throughout the year to prevent trees growing into the overhead network. The Wayleaves team works closely with landowners in relation to land access allowing any required works planned or unplanned.

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The power network in your area normally operates reliably and our engineers work as quickly as possible to restore supply when the power does go off. However, there are many reasons why the power goes off which is beyond our control and we cannot guarantee to provide a supply that is never disrupted.

Our Control team are aware of the frequent power cuts in the area and are closely monitoring the network. I assure you that we work hard to keep the lights on and provide you with a reliable electricity supply, by investing in our electricity network every day. Sometimes things go wrong and when they do, we try to get your power back on as quickly and safely as possible.

We also do try our very best to make our overhead network as secure as possible. We also carry out regular overhead line refurbishment and strengthening programmes.

Since 2005 we have reinvested 95% of our profits, after tax, back into our business. This approach has supported our current £3bn 2015-23 investment plan and we have submitted our five year business plan (2023-28) which sets out our proposals to invest a further £3bn to help improve network resilience and reliability, support decarbonisation and help create a greener energy system for the communities we serve.

We are always here to help, if you do need us again in the future, you can call our 24 hour Contact Centre on 105. This number is free to call from both mobiles and landlines.

Once again, I would like to say thank you for contacting us and making me aware of your concerns. If you do have any further questions about this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me and I will be happy to help you.

Yours sincerely

J Morgan

Joanne Morgan
Customer Care Team

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