

The Great Grid Upgrade

Bramford to Twinstead

Project update

April 2026

As part of the biggest overhaul of the electricity grid in generations, National Grid is upgrading the transmission network between Bramford substation in Suffolk and Twinstead Tee in Essex through a new overhead line and underground cable route.

By doing this, we are helping to meet future demand for electricity, boosting energy security and supporting the nation to become more self-sufficient.

Over the past year, we have been preparing to start construction activity across the project route, whilst construction of a new grid supply point substation near Sudbury (which started in 2024) has continued.

In this update, you can:

- find out more about the work that is taking place over the next year
- learn about some of the feedback we received to our community benefit survey
- learn how our team has been supporting local communities in Suffolk and Essex.

About the project

Our approved plans for the Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement include:



building around 18 km of new 400 kilovolt (kV) overhead line



planting in the local area to benefit nature and delivering biodiversity net gain



building a new grid supply point substation at Butler's Wood



placing around 11 km of new 400 kV underground cable in areas including the Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley



removing around 27 km of existing 132 kV and 400 kV overhead line between Burstall Bridge and Twinstead Tee



a Community Fund of more than £4 million to support projects and programmes that benefit your area.

Upcoming activity

During January and February of this year, preparatory works have been continuing across the route of the project. This has included clearing vegetation, creating new internal haul roads (which will reduce the volume of construction traffic on local roads) and road junctions. As part of this, you will start to see activity at locations different from where we've worked so far, and one of these locations will be near Hintlesham Woods.

Before we can start to remove the existing 132 kV overhead line between Burstall Bridge and Twinstead Tee, we will be carrying out further construction works at the Butler's Wood grid supply point substation. This will include energising a new supergrid transformer, a vital piece of equipment that steps voltage up or down so electricity can safely distributed to homes and businesses via regional networks.

Further information on our upcoming activity is shown below.

This programme is subject to change - any updates will be shared in future newsletters.



Now

Haul road construction and other preparatory works



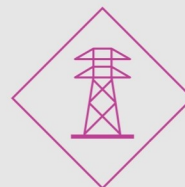
Spring/summer 2026

Construction of new overhead line starts



Autumn 2026

Underground cable construction work starts



Winter 2026/spring 2027

Start of 132 kV overhead line removal

Looking back on the last year

Significant progress has been made across the project over the past year:

Site preparation

we cleared vegetation across the project route, built a main site compound between Leavenheath and Assington and created site access routes.

GSP construction progress

completion of major works across the site, including foundations, equipment installation, steel structure erection, construction of the perimeter fence and access road, and finalisation of the cable sealing end compound.

Overhead line works

removal of the existing 132 kV pylon and installation of a new pylon to connect the cables from the main GSP site.

Construction updates

We know how important it is to keep you informed about upcoming construction activity, particularly when it might impact your journey.

We will always aim to give as much notice as possible.

We are using a range of channels to share information, including:

- email updates to parish councils, councillors and local representatives
- postcard notifications delivered to neighbouring properties for significant or disruptive works
- our e-newsletter, which you can register for via our website
- regular updates to the 'What's happening now?' page of our website.

All work that requires traffic management (such as temporary traffic lights) is approved in advance by the local highways authority (your county council) prior to taking place.



Investing in your community

National Grid has a long-standing commitment to the communities we work alongside, and we want to ensure lasting benefits for the people and places that host our new energy infrastructure.

We will deliver a Community Fund worth over £4 million, shaped by the community, for the community, to invest in projects that benefit local people into the future. This will begin with a dedicated local fund, a grant-based programme designed to support community projects.

We are also working to develop a strategic fund to invest in wider partnerships and programmes that support the area's longer-term priorities.

To make sure the Community Fund reflects local need, in October and November 2025 we asked you to share your priorities on where the money could be best spent. Our activity included:

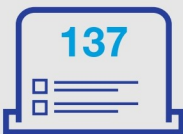


postcards sent to homes and businesses near to our project, to encourage the local community to complete the online survey.

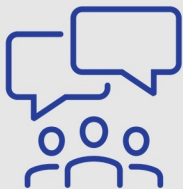
11,000+



people reached on social media.



We received 137 responses to help shape how the Community Fund will be delivered.



Alongside the survey, we have also been speaking with local organisations and representatives, including district and county councillors, parish and town councils, health organisations, charities and community groups.

What happens next?

In the coming weeks, we will produce a document that shows how insights from the survey and our conversations will inform our decision making.

After this, we will open our local fund to applicants from local groups. Alongside this, we will continue to develop our plans to support wider strategic partnerships and programmes. An update will be shared later in the year.

We asked:

What types of projects would be most beneficial for your community?

Some of the ideas we received included:

- **upgrades** to village halls
- **investment** in solar panels to support wider energy and sustainability initiatives
- environment improvements and **nature conservation**
- **community facilities** and social spaces that provide activities for local people
- **opportunities for young people**
- **flood management** and river restoration
- programmes to **help people improve skills** and/or find employment
- **hubs for people** living in rural areas
- mentoring and **work experience support**
- improvements to public paths and **open spaces**.



Which areas do you believe community funding could support?

We asked which areas you believe community funding could support:

80%

supported protecting the environment and ensuring access to green spaces

70%

supported improving community spaces and saving energy

47%

supported encouraging physical health and activity

37%

supported encouraging mental health and wellbeing

30%

supported helping with the cost of living and employability

27%

supported providing education and science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) opportunities.

How volunteering connects people with the Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement

Volunteering is an important part of how our project team supports local communities, and since 2022 our colleagues have contributed more than 1,000 volunteer hours across Suffolk and Essex.

When you meet Jenny Minnis, it's immediately clear how much she cares about people. As a Community Liaison Officer, Jenny works closely with communities affected by the project, helping ensure local voices shape how the project connects with the area.

Jenny joined National Grid four years ago, initially working part-time in an administrative support role before progressing into her current position. Her career path hasn't been a straight line, but it's one driven by a desire to do meaningful work and support others.

Alongside the technical work, Jenny plays a key role in identifying opportunities where the project team can make a positive local impact, particularly through volunteering.

"I love my job – it puts a smile on my face when I say I work for National Grid," she added. "I want to keep doing good work and helping people where I can."

You can learn more about the work Jenny does by visiting our website, nationalgrid.com/bramford-twinstead.



Jenny Minnis

An example of our project team's volunteering: supporting Suffolk Scouts

Our project team has been working with Suffolk Scouts to support improvements at the Hallowtree Scout Activity Centre in Ipswich.

As part of this, eight colleagues from the Butler's Wood grid supply point substation team recently spent a day helping deliver a major upgrade at Hallowtree Activity Centre. The team excavated a 200 metre trench, clearing tree roots and rocks to prepare the ground for new electricity cables, fibre optic ducting and water pipes. This will help the site support future events, including Suffolk Punch 2026, a week long camp for more than 1,000 scouts.

Alongside the hands-on work, the team donated 10 laptops to Suffolk Scouts. These will be used to support outdoor first aid training at Bramford Scout Group, helping volunteers gain the qualifications needed to run activities such as mountaineering, rock climbing and sailing. These skills will benefit the wider community too, including volunteers who also support Suffolk Lowland Search and Rescue, and Suffolk Ambulance Service Community First Responders.

Gary Burden, Lead Volunteer for Suffolk Scouts, commented:

"We are incredibly grateful to National Grid for their outstanding support. Their team rolled up their sleeves at Hallowtree Scout Campsite to help us upgrade the site, which will benefit schools, cadets, and youth groups across the region for many years to come."

