

## Directional Drilling in the Dedham Vale

EDF Energy Networks

Dedham Vale, Suffolk

Term: Three months



This complex project saw Morrison Utility Services work closely with EDF Energy Networks to remove approximately 3500m of overhead cables and place them underground in the picturesque Dedham Vale.

The Dedham Vale, part of the Stour Valley is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and inspired many of renowned artist John Constable's landscape paintings. It is also home to several sites of interest including Bronze Age settlements, land owned by the National Trust, grazing for rare breed sheep and the River Stour floodplain, which is thought could contain remains and surviving palaeo-environmental evidence. These all presented significant challenges to overcome.

The majority of the route for the new underground cable was within agricultural farmland and cable could therefore be laid in a trench. However, where the landscape needed to be preserved in its natural state, for example in crossing the River Stour, going under major hedgerows and crossing drains and floodplains, directional drilling techniques were used.

Directional drilling is the first choice and most widely used 'trenchless technology'. Morrison Utility Services employed horizontal directional drilling as it is fast, efficient and environmentally friendly, saving valuable time and money. Ultimately twenty five per cent of the cable was laid in this way with drilling taken to a depth of five meters to ensure the cables were installed safely.