

INCENTIVE ON CONNECTIONS ENGAGEMENT (ICE)

2018/19 MID-YEAR UPDATE

**POWERING
CONNECTIONS**



CONTENTS

- 3 FOREWORD
- 4 WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO
- 6 ENGAGEMENT UPDATE
- 8 WHAT WE'VE DONE
- 12 WHAT WE'RE STILL WORKING ON
- 18 WHAT'S NEW
- 24 OUR 2018/19 ICE WORK PLAN

FOREWORD

New connections and changes to existing connections, are central to the major changes we are seeing across our electricity distribution networks today.

Across the country, we are readying our infrastructure for some significant changes. These include the mass rollout of Electric Vehicles (EVs), the growth of low-carbon electric heating and the rise of the 'prosumer' (producers, storers and consumers of energy) who are connecting new types of generation to the electricity network with SMART control systems. Here at Northern Powergrid, we are working hard to meet the evolving needs of the communities we serve and to implement new measures to improve our connections process, whilst maintaining the integrity of the energy system.

This mid-year update on the commitments we are delivering as part of our Incentive on Connections Engagement (ICE) work plan for 2018/19 has been created to offer our connections customers and other interested parties an overview of the programme created as a direct result of sustained stakeholder engagement throughout the year.

Every customer – every time

Working in partnership, we have built a programme of connections engagement that delivers real value and we are delighted that our stakeholders and customers continue to invest their time and effort into helping us develop our service improvement plans.

As a critical infrastructure operator and major employer, we recognise that we have a vital role to play in the development of the northern economy. All our connections engagements are led with this in mind, and we remain committed to making the connections process as efficient as possible for every customer – every time.

Dialogue at the forefront

The connections process is grounded in statutory duties that are intrinsically formulaic and methodical – we seek

to temper this with a creative and open approach. Our conversations focus on the outcomes our customers are looking to achieve. Our dedicated connections sessions home in on key issues that influence the wider agenda – from our transition to a Distribution Systems Operator (DSO) to the rise of EVs. Giving a platform for group debate opens up dialogue between us and our stakeholders – leading to both invaluable knowledge transfer and important feedback for our connections team, as well as the wider business. For example, stakeholder engagement around connections is helping shape our forthcoming Distribution System Operator (DSO) development plan.

Acting on your feedback

- This mid-year ICE update highlights five new actions we have added to our 2018/19 ICE plan, taking the total for the year to 22.
- We are making use of new technology to steer a thoroughly modern approach to engagement. The introduction of webinars in particular has been well received. This month also saw our first use of digital Q&A technology that allowed delegates to vote for the questions they wanted us to prioritise at our engagement events.
- We have delivered sustained, prolonged programme of engagement on Connections Offer Expenses (also known as Assessment & Design or A&D fees) stretching far beyond formal consultation and the introduction of fees. The early signs suggest that we are seeing a positive reduction in overtly speculative applications, an important step towards improving the connections experience for all our customers.
- We are delivering a dedicated programme of engagement focused on new EV connections, which started with a workshop in October, delivering information en-mass to highly relevant

and specially targeted stakeholders. The addition of a flagship external address from an EV owner at this event contributed important perspective to the discussion with 68 delegates.

- We have worked to link the ICE process to our wider stakeholder engagement programme. Building a sustained, open and accessible approach enables us to better understand the needs of our connections customers and help support the wider communities that we are proud to serve.

Continuous improvement is a core principle for our business. We acknowledge that we still have work to do in order to provide a seamless connections process for our customers and we are grateful for the opportunity to reflect on our actions during this update.

Over the past few months we have been pleased that feedback from Ofgem and our stakeholders has been generally positive. Many of the actions we're now adding to our work plan have come directly from the feedback received during the ICE consultation process – proving its continued worth to both us, and our stakeholders.

Again, I cannot stress enough how much we value your feedback as part of our continued effort to engage meaningfully with our stakeholders. As always, our focus remains firmly on the people and communities we serve, the new homes we will power, the new businesses that can start trading, the new generation brought on stream and the new services delivered to the energy system through the new connections we deliver.

I hope you find this update informative, and please do continue to engage with us and provide your thoughts and feedback wherever you can.



PATRICK ERWIN

POLICY AND MARKETS DIRECTOR



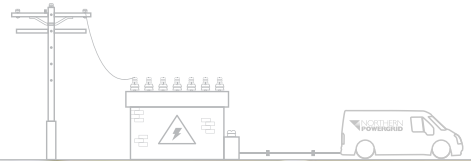
WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

TEAM POWERGRID

At Northern Powergrid we look after the electricity distribution network that keeps the lights on across the Northeast, Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire.

We deliver power to 3.9 million homes and businesses via our network of more than 63,000 substations, some 60,000 miles of overhead lines and underground cables spanning 9,650 square miles. Team Powergrid is dedicated to delivering a safe and reliable electricity supply to our customers. We keep the power flowing 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and if our customers ever do experience a power cut, we will be there to fix it.





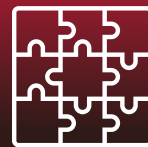
8 million
people

We serve a population
of 8 million people.



2,500
strong

Team Powergrid is 2,500 strong.



nine
zones

Nine zones meet the specific needs of
our diverse operating area.



30,000
connections

We deliver in excess of 30,000 new
connections each year.



3.5GW
connected

We have more than 3.5GW of distributed
generation connected to our network.



2,000
applications

We process almost 2,000 new
distributed generation applications.

ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

HOW WE'RE LISTENING AND ACTING ON YOUR FEEDBACK

We work hard to understand the needs of all our connections stakeholders and to continually improve the service we provide.

We have a clearly defined strategy for engaging with our connections stakeholders that informs our business planning and priorities and delivers measurable and positive outcomes. Our engagement strategy also aligns closely to the overarching Northern Powergrid strategy, ensuring that our customers stay at the centre of everything we do.

Effective engagement is fundamental to ICE. We employ a robust, stakeholder-driven process when forming our ICE plans and are confident that we give our major works stakeholders plenty of opportunities to help to shape and influence our service improvement plans.

Our strategy continues to be well received and endorsed by our stakeholders. In a recent survey, 88% of respondents agreed that we engage with our connections stakeholders and do a good job of facilitating joint discussions.

Developing our 2018/19 ICE work plan

In forming our ICE plans, we collate, consider and where appropriate act upon feedback received from a broad and inclusive range of connections stakeholders.

Once again, we are very grateful to all those that shared their suggestions for improvement with us and the level of engagement ensured that we had a diverse range of feedback to work with.

Following a comprehensive review of the 280 comments we received last year, we were able to define 17 proposed service improvement actions, which were presented in our 2018/19 ICE plan.

We then went out to consultation in Spring 2018 to ensure that the service improvement commitments we were proposing would be valuable to a broad and inclusive range of connections stakeholders and not only the individual requesting the change, in doing so we;

- contacted 5,800 connections stakeholders via email to invite their feedback on our proposed plan;
- conducted in-depth telephone interviews with 300 customers, facilitated by independent market research firm Explain; and
- presented our plan at our Connections Customer Forum in April 2018 and asked attendees to vote live on whether they would endorse our plans.

But our work didn't stop there. We have continued to engage with our connections stakeholders and encourage them to tell us what we do well and what we could be doing better, this on-going and sustained engagement has resulted in us adding five new actions to our work plan at this, the mid-year point in the 2018/19 ICE plan year.

For each of these new actions, we have clearly stated the action, the outcome we will deliver and have set measurable performance targets that let our stakeholders judge how well we have delivered against the commitments we made. As part of this, we are providing a forecast completion date for each new action, however in every case, our commitment is to deliver the action and associated outcomes in the remainder of this ICE plan year.

We also took into consideration some feedback from this year's ICE consultation that our target measures could be more specific and stretching. We have therefore developed them with this in mind.



I can honestly say it is refreshing to attend a meeting that was not rushed to a point that not everything was covered. We left feeling that the NPG team had looked into as many different options for our scheme, and were able to share (in as much details as we required), the thoughts and engineering constraints behind the solutions offered.

Marc Scambler, Ambleside Energy
 via email

Continuing to improve our approach

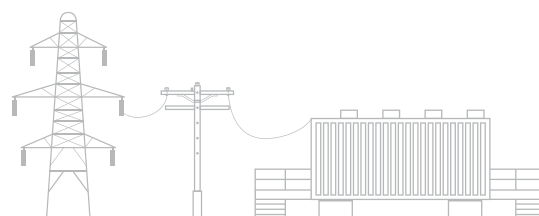
We continue to strengthen and improve our approach to engagement based on what our stakeholders are telling us.

We give our stakeholders lots of opportunities to give us feedback on our connections service - at our bi-annual Connections Customer Forums and dedicated ICP seminars, at our workshops, monthly connections surgeries and during the day to day interactions of our team.

However, we're always looking for ways to do more. Extending our engagement activities to reach more stakeholders – particularly those that find it difficult to attend our engagement sessions or work with us via a third party – is a key area of focus for us. More frequent and targeted email updates, an increased social media presence, webinars and live webcasting from selected connections events are all examples of how we're extending the reach of our engagement, and we'll continue to explore new ideas based on what our stakeholders tell us about the ways they want to interact with us.

Many thanks for today, it was very useful. If you could pass that on to your colleagues I'd appreciate it. Until the next time!

Charles Deacon, Lightsource BP
 via email



WHAT WE'VE DONE

THE COMMITMENTS WE'VE ALREADY DELIVERED

As well as being proactive in our approach to engagement, we've been working hard to deliver the service improvement commitments we made in our 2018/19 ICE work plan.

These improvements have been delivered within the timeframes we outlined, ensuring that customers benefit from them as quickly as possible. On the following pages, we've outlined the work we've already completed. Anyone that would like to keep track of how we're performing against our ICE plan can take advantage of our online work plan. This plan shows the real-time status of each of our actions, provides links to useful outputs and online resources, and can be filtered to show only those actions applicable to selected stakeholder groups.

 Our online ICE work plan is available on our website at: www.northernpowergrid.com/ice-work-plan



ACTION

1.1 AND 1.2

Greater access to network information

As part of our commitment to facilitate fair and open competition in connections, we make our network design standards and network information available to Independent Connections Providers (ICPs) that request it. However, developers and consultants told us that they too would benefit from access to this information in order to carry out preliminary

feasibility studies and also to validate the work completed by ICPs.

With this in mind, we pledged to deliver two actions – to make our network information available to developers and consultants who request it and to provide the network data in KMZ and GIS formats compatible with the IT platform and the applications they operate.

Our network information is valuable for connections stakeholders because it provides data on assets across our network – everything from a substation to an overhead line or an underground cable.

This information can allow ICPs to create their own designs or third parties to create their own feasibility studies with regards to securing a connection on our network.

The new process we have implemented means that any of our connections customers can now contact us directly, and within 10-working days we will reply to clarify and confirm their specific requirements. Then, by using a bespoke feature manipulation engine (FME) tool, we are able to extract the data from our system and make it available to the customer.

The FME tool also allows us to supply data to our customers in a variety of different formats including KMZ, GIS and others depending on the IT specifications and requirements of our customers. This data is made available via a secure portal and we will grant customers access through a password and login that allows them to securely download the information directly to their systems.





ACTION

1.4

Distributed Generation (DG) Connections Guides

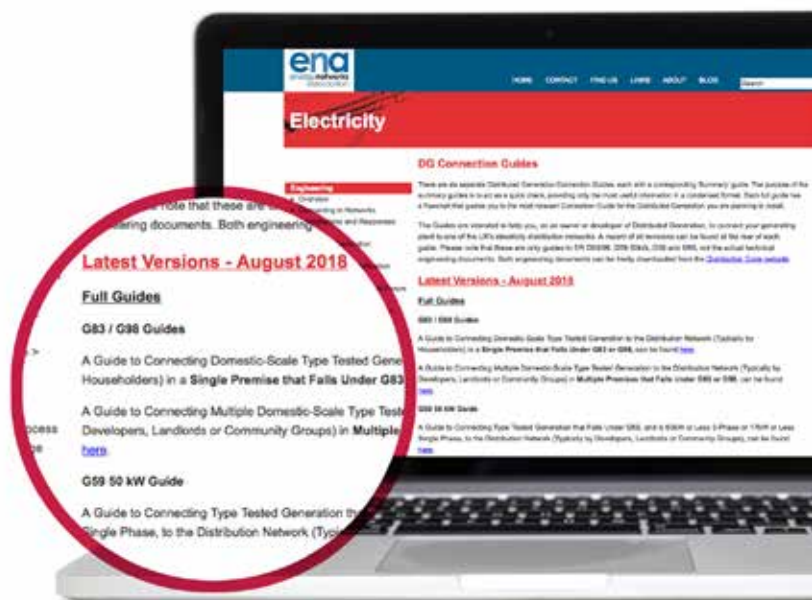
In line with feedback from our generation customers, we agreed to work collaboratively with the Energy Networks Association (ENA) and other network operators to update its Distributed Generation Connections Guides and include technologies like storage and export limiting devices. Collaborating with the ENA and the wider industry on this ensured that we could provide our customers with the most up-to-date information and incorporate some of the emerging technologies customers are looking to connect.

In total, there are five separate Distributed Generation Connections Guides now available – each of which provides a valuable source of information for generation customers.

Recognising that these guides are long and detailed, the ENA has also provided quick-reference summary guides for each of the five documents, providing the most useful information in a condensed format.

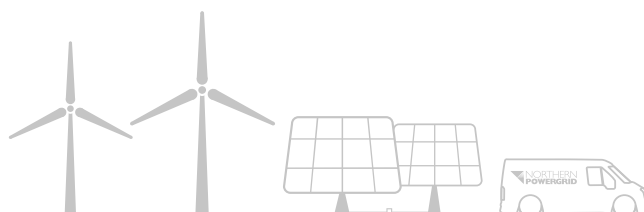
The target outcome was the completion of a revised set of ENA Distributed Generation Connection Guides and this action was delivered to forecast. We played an active role in the development of the new guides providing valuable input to ensure they become a useful resource and provide clarity for customers at every stage of the connections process.

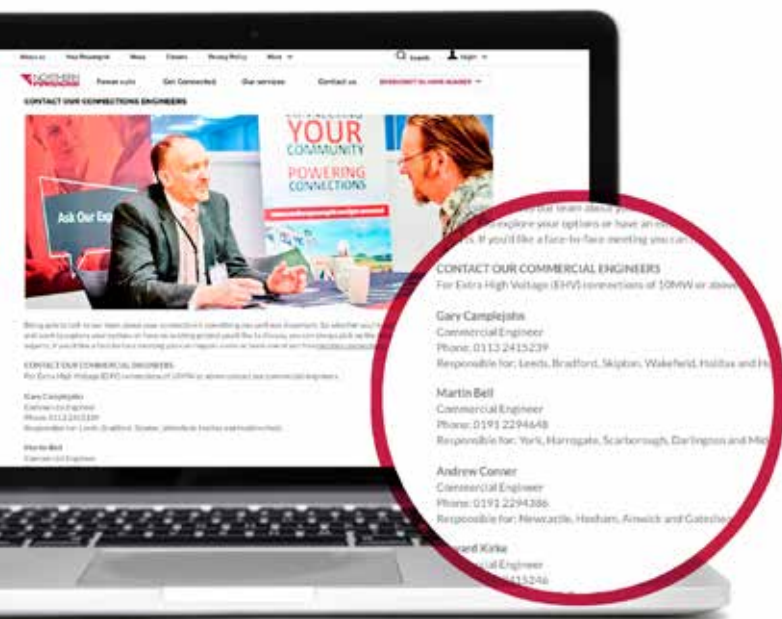
☑ The guides are now available on the ENA website at www.energynetworks.org/electricity/engineering/distributed-generation/dg-connection-guides.html



DG

COMPLETE ✓





ACTION

2.1

Contact information for our connections engineers

Customers told us that being able to pick up the telephone and speak to one of the team about their connections project was important.

We listened and made a commitment to publish the contact details for all our connections engineers on our website. The aim was to make it quicker and easier for our customers to connect with our connections engineers. Facilitating these upfront conversations is especially important following the introduction of A&D fees, as customers will often require a discussion ahead of making a formal application.

Now, whether our customers are thinking of applying for a new connection and want to explore their options or have an existing project they'd like to discuss, they can pick up the telephone and speak to one of our experts. Equally, if a face-to-face meeting would be more preferable, they can request a visit or book a place at one of our monthly connections surgeries, meaning our engineers are more accessible than ever before.

- ✎ The new webpage which features the contact details of all our commercial, design and delivery engineers alongside the areas of our region they are responsible for is available on our website at www.northernpowergrid.com/contact-our-connections-engineers

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COMPLETE

ACTION

2.3

Updates on the status of our connections offers

At our Connections Customer Forums we ask attendees what we can do to improve our overall connections service. One of our customers said that they would benefit from an update on the status of their connection quotation mid-way through preparation, particularly for Extra High Voltage (EHV) or High Voltage (HV) generation applications where a 65-day guaranteed standard applies.

After implementing this improvement, our customers are now better informed on the status and timescales of their expected offer. Updates are being delivered by our team – typically over the phone unless otherwise requested by the customer – wherever a 65-day guaranteed standard applies. This is in addition to the call we make five days after receiving an application, whereby one of our team will contact the customer to introduce themselves as their single point of contact. This was a service improvement delivered as part of a previous ICE action plan.

During the call, we inform customers of the progress we've made on the assessment and let them know how long we expect to take with the remainder of the work preparing their quotation. This change has already been well received by our customers and has enhanced the level of customer service we provide.

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ACTION

3.1

More targeted communications

Recognising that not every stakeholder will have an interest in every piece of information we have to share, we made a commitment to create a new process where connections stakeholders can register to receive information that is interesting to them. Doing this will enable us to deliver more targeted and relevant emails and improve the quality of our communications.

We acted quickly to implement a new process, introducing a page on our website where stakeholders can register by type and area of interest. This will be replaced with an automated process which we will roll out to our 4000+ connections email subscribers.

M DG

COMPLETE



ACTION

3.2

Engaging with hard to reach stakeholders

One of the key themes in our current ICE plan is to engage with 'hard to reach' stakeholders who may choose not to interact with us on a regular basis

but will still have a interest in our connections process. This included members of the National Farmers Union (NFU), Community Energy groups and off-grid customers. Engaging with these stakeholder groups would enable us to understand their specific needs, provide specialist help and support and ultimately, help them to get connected in a quicker, more efficient way.

To engage with our agricultural stakeholders; we have taken part in popular agricultural shows including the Great Yorkshire Show (attended by an estimated 130,000 people); the Kilmsey Show (15,000 people) and the Nidderdale Show (20,000 people). At each of these shows, our connections team were on hand to engage with attendees, answer any questions and get a better understanding of the specific needs of this community.

We've also established a closer working relationship with the NFU and our team were invited to attend a Regional Board Meeting in October 2018 to build relationships and understand more about the priorities and concerns of NFU members.

To engage with Community Energy stakeholders; we have formalised a partnership with Community Energy England and are now working closely with them on a range of activities, including sponsorship of a Community Energy England Innovation Guide.

In September 2018 we hosted our first, dedicated connections surgery for anyone developing small-scale community energy projects. The aim of the surgery was to provide specialist support and help guide these stakeholders through our connections process. We are hoping to run a second surgery before the end of 2018, potentially in partnership with Sheffield Hallam University and Voluntary Organisations' Networks North East (VONNE).

Although the activities we have already delivered satisfy the performance measure for this action (to hold two dedicated engagements) we view this activity as a kicking off point for a more embedded programme of engagement and have therefore chosen to leave this action open.



ON TRACK

ACTION

5.1

Self-service adoption agreements for ICPs

In line with our commitment to minimise input services for ICPs, one commitment from our 2018/19 ICE plan outlined how we would

develop, test and implement a new self-service adoption agreement process.

For every new site – whether it is a single street light connection or new housing development – ICPs are required to enter into a new adoption agreement with us. Previously, we would issue this agreement to ICPs on request, this action was designed to help speed up that process and reduce the connection input services we're required to provide through a new self-service function.

To achieve this, we created a new adoption agreement template which allows ICPs to create their own asset adoption agreements. ICPs simply need to complete a few details bespoke to the site on the template and make a declaration that the works have been done in such a way that meets our adoption standards. The agreement can then be submitted to us for legal completion.

The action was delivered to target in August 2018 and we communicated the change to all ICPs operating in our region in a letter from our dedicated Competition in Connections (CiC) team.

A number of ICPs are already using the template to complete their own adoption agreements and we continue to proactively promote them at our monthly surgeries. There will also be a presentation on this new process at our ICP Seminar in November 2018.

ICP

COMPLETE

WHAT WE'RE STILL WORKING ON

THE COMMITMENTS WE'RE WORKING HARD TO DELIVER
IN THE REMAINDER OF THIS ICE PLAN YEAR



In addition to the commitments we've already delivered, there are a number of actions we're still working hard to deliver.

You can read more about them in the pages that follow, in each case our commitment is to deliver these actions before the end of the 2018/19 ICE plan year.

ACTION

1.3

DG owner operator forum

New types of generation are being introduced all the time and it is imperative that our network is able to respond to these new demands.

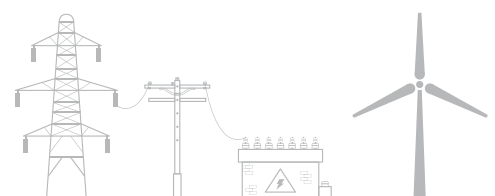
Regular dialogue with generation operators in our region plays a central role in this, giving us the opportunity to understand new developments, share outage planning information and discuss network issues and forward planning constraints. That's why in this year's plan – at the request of our generation customers – we committed to establish a quarterly DG owner operator forum. We have already hosted two forums and in line with the commitment we made, will host another two before the end of this ICE plan year.

These forums give our customers the chance to discuss outage information with our operational planning experts. We've also delivered them in a surgery-type format, which gives attendees an opportunity to tell us about any emerging technologies or connections challenges they may be facing.

✉ If you would like more information on this forum or are interested in getting involved please email yourpowergrid@northernpowergrid.com

DG

ON TRACK ✓



**ACTION****2.2****Improved customer communications**

At our Connections Customer Forum in November 2017, a delegate from East Riding Council gave us some feedback on our application and delivery process, highlighting an aspect of our customer communications that could be improved.

They told us that when we send emails we quote the Northern Powergrid enquiry reference number (ENQ) but don't always include a description of the actual connections project. It was highlighted that this can be confusing for the recipient, especially if they have multiple connections applications pending.

Following this feedback, we made a commitment to include a brief description of the project, as well as the ENQ number in any correspondence that we send, making it easier for customers to identify the project we are referring to. We remain on course to deliver this improvement before the end of 2018.

**ON TRACK** **ACTION****2.4****Self-service budget tool**

An important part of the connections process and our role as a new connections provider is to help customers understand the viability of their project – both in terms of network connectivity and cost.

One of the commitments we made this year was to allow customers greater access to our network information to carry out initial assessments themselves. But, in cases where customers do not have design or assessment capability, we understand that a budget view of costs would be a significant benefit.

Our current target is a maximum 15-day turnaround for a >1MVA budget cost, but we have been exploring ways to make this faster by developing a new self-service budget tool. The commitment was to involve customers in the development of this new tool and we are planning to present a first prototype at our Connections Customer Forum in November 2018, where attendees will have the opportunity to give feedback and help shape its development.

**ON TRACK**

ACTION**4.1****Network constraint and curtailment information**

The issue of network constraints is one that effects every Distribution Network Operator (DNO) in the country and there is an ongoing national debate on

how best to provide connections to constrained networks. This issue is very important for generation developers, who in their assessment of the viability of any proposed project need to understand the potential level of curtailment they might experience when accepting a connection offer.

Although we currently provide operational network information that assists the developer in their assessment of potential levels of curtailment, we acknowledge that our customers place a lot of importance on this assessment and have told us that they would like better quantification of curtailment levels.

Understanding the importance of this subject, we committed to conduct a review of the provision of network constraint and curtailment and are seeking deeper engagement with our stakeholders on this topic. The issue was discussed at our DG owner operator forum in September and we are organising a workshop at our Connections Customer Forum in November to understand our stakeholders views and further explore their requirements.



ON TRACK

ACTION**4.2****Active Network Management (ANM)**

We have engaged closely with our stakeholders on the development and roll out of ANM solutions, providing updates at our Connections Customer

Forums, as well as a dedicated workshop, webinar and online Q&A on the topic. The continued development of these solutions is important because it enables network operators to provide more connections in areas of its network where capacity is constrained, but where there is potential network flexibility available.

We are committed to developing innovative solutions that address constraints on our network and to helping more of our customers connect to our network. An example of this is the deployment of our first, replicable ANM scheme on our network in Driffield, East Yorkshire.

Our stakeholders have expressed an interest in how this solution could be applied to other areas of our network. There is more work to do before we roll this technology out more widely but we will continue to engage in active dialogue and keep stakeholders informed about the development and roll-out of ANM throughout the remainder of the ICE plan year.

DG

ON TRACK



**ACTION****4.3****The Transmission/Distribution (T/D) interface and Statement of Works process**

We play an active role in the activities and outputs of the national working group tasked with reforming

the Statement of Works process, which identifies constraints on the National Grid network.

As part of this collaborative effort, a number of trials have already taken place at different locations across the country that will help shape a more efficient process and give customers greater visibility on transmission costs and liabilities as early as possible in the process. These trials included bulk Statement of Works requests, materiality limits, planning limits and regional development programmes. Some of the more successful elements of the trials have already been adopted into Northern Powergrid policies.

We will continue to play an active role in the work of the nationally sponsored Open Networks Project, acting on the outcomes wherever possible and building them into the service we offer for the benefit of our connections customers.

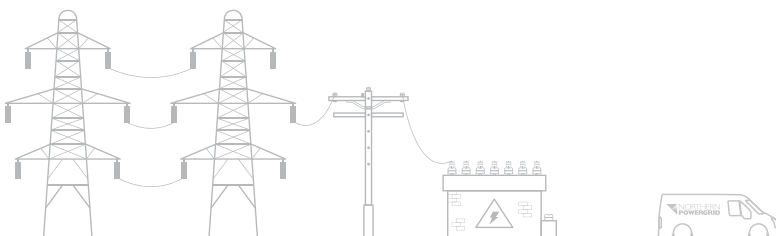
**ON TRACK** **ACTION****6.1****Better technical guidance for generators**

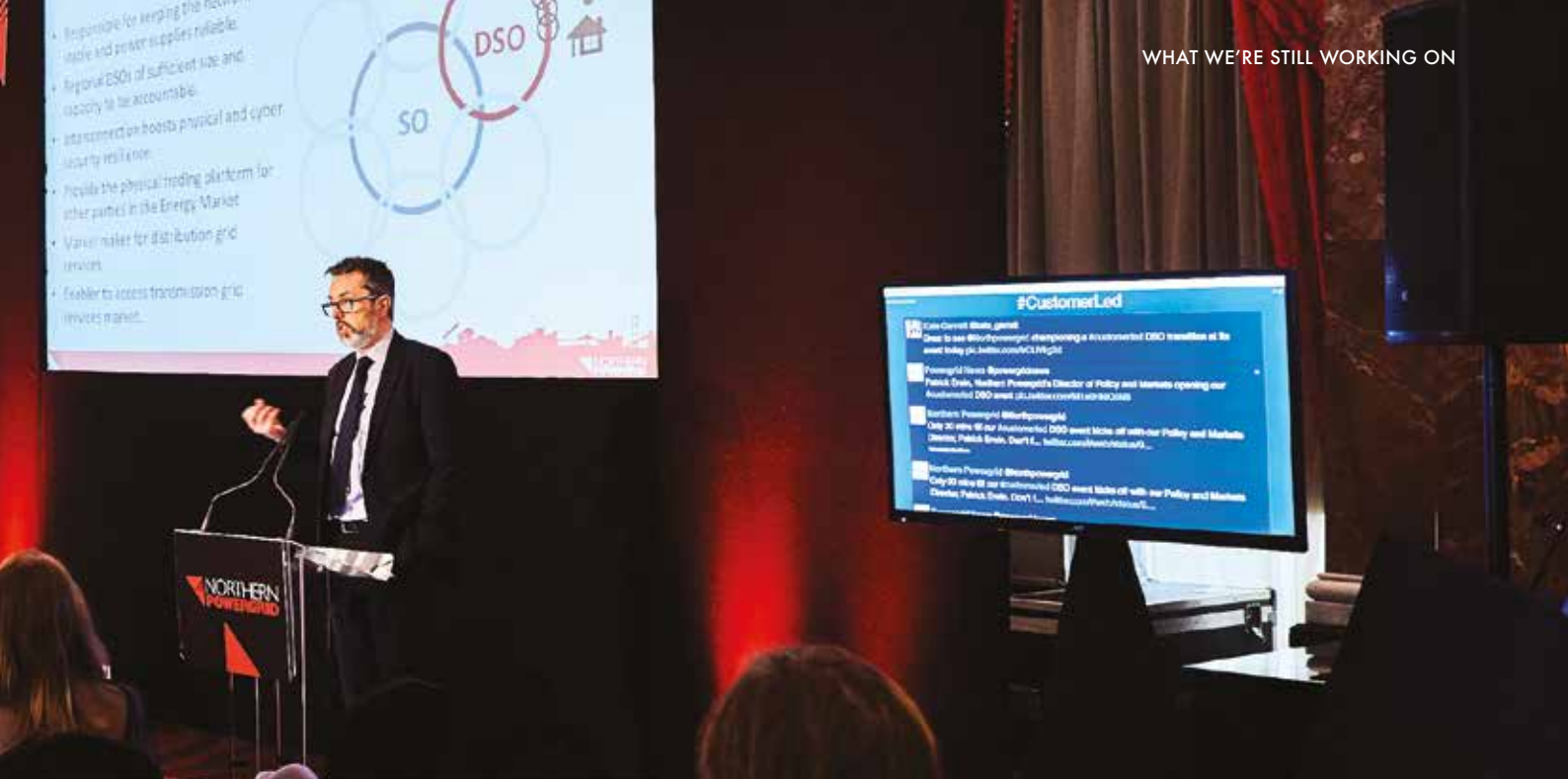
Providing customers with information on how to connect emerging technologies is one of our responsibilities as a regional network operator.

We already provide a range of application guidance for our customers but one of the commitments we have made in this ICE plan year, in response to a direct request made by one of our generation customers, was to include information on hybrid generation-storage.

This would include technical parameters, so that when customers decide to apply for a connection offer they have a clearer understanding of what information they are required to provide us with, helping to speed up the process.

We remain committed to delivering this improvement action and plan to have completed it by the end of this ICE plan year.

**ON TRACK** 

**ACTION****6.2****Our DSO transition**

We made a commitment to keep stakeholders fully involved as our vision for our transition to a DSO evolves. We want to make sure our stakeholders have the opportunity to help shape future outputs and contribute towards our strategy.

The activities of the Open Networks Project, the group tasked with leading the discussion, remain on-going, and for that reason we will continue an open dialogue on this subject with our customers, so they can fully understand what market opportunities exist and how best they can be utilised in the future.

We have a number of DSO engagement sessions planned over the remainder of this ICE plan year including a Stakeholder Summit in December 2018. We will encourage our connections stakeholders to take part and give feedback that will help shape our strategy and approach.

**ON TRACK** **ACTION****6.3****Our engagement with flexibility service providers**

The ability of DNOs to connect and manage all types of electrical loads, whether demand or generation is imperative to the efficient and effective running of a distribution network. There is an increasing number of flexibility service providers that are cultivating new ideas and bringing new technologies to the market, so it is important that we understand what we can do to facilitate the continued growth of distributed energy sources including demand side response (DSR), energy storage and flexible generation.

We have already engaged directly with three of our largest customers to explore how they might be able to provide DSR solutions and in addition to this, we have confirmed a partnership with a flexibility provider platform. This collaboration acts as an introductory service between us and potential flexibility service providers, helping them to navigate through the onboarding process of becoming a provider.

We will continue to engage with other flexibility service providers and work with them to progress our end-to-end process roadmap and ensure the flexibility procurement method is optimised for both us and individual providers. These are the first few steps of a much bigger objective to create a roadmap that will ensure flexibility operators can provide these services successfully.

We will present our approach and progress at a dedicated workshop at our Connections Customer Forum in November 2018. We will provide attendees with an update on the work done to date, and open up a discussion on how we can aid new and existing connections customers with the on boarding process should they wish to provide services in the future.

**ON TRACK**

WHAT'S NEW

NEW COMMITMENTS WE'RE MAKING IN
RESPONSE TO THE FEEDBACK WE'VE RECEIVED





ACTION

2.5

Quotation expiry dates

IMPROVING OUR APPLICATION AND DELIVERY PROCESS

Action	The outcome	Measures of performance, impact and success	Voltage	Market segments	Target completion date
We will include the actual date on which the offer expires in each quotation we issue.	Customers will have firm confirmation of the date their quotations expire.	All new quotations will include the expiry date of the offer. 100% of new quotation offers.	All		 28/02/19

31/10/18

28/02/19

Our design engineers highlighted that customers will often call to check the date when their connection offer expires. Connections offers expire 90-days after issue, after which point the customer will have to make a new application. Although customers are aware of this, many were unclear whether the 90-day expiry date was calculated by working days or calendar dates and were calling our engineers to check. The suggestion was made to include the actual date the offer expires on all new connections quotations we offer.

We thought this was a sensible suggestion which would benefit customers and improve our service. We are therefore committing to include this information in 100% of all new offers we issue.




ACTION

4.4

New EV connections

TECHNICAL AND COMMERCIAL INNOVATION

Action	The outcome	Measures of performance, impact and success	Voltage	Market segments	Target completion date
We will engage with those stakeholders who are interested in new Electric Vehicle (EV) connections by delivering a minimum of two dedicated engagement sessions.	Stakeholders will be better informed about our approach to EV connections and our associated processes.	Two engagements sessions held. 85% stakeholder satisfaction rate.	LV	M UM	 28/02/19

31/10/18

28/02/19

Our customers said...

*Excellent, informative and engaging*

**Matt Gladstone, Executive Director,
Barnsley Council**
Connecting EVs workshop, 10 October 2018

*Very useful and informative*

Sheridan Paterson, Calderdale MBC
Connecting EVs workshop, 10 October 2018

The UK government has an ambition that the majority of cars sold by 2040 should be electric or hybrid.

The uptake in electric and hybrid vehicles and the development of the charging infrastructure required to support this transition, will lead to requests for new and larger connections. As a regional network operator we have a responsibility to engage with stakeholders who have an interest in EV charging and to facilitate these new connections.

We have made a commitment to hold two dedicated engagement sessions in the remainder of this ICE plan year, the first of which took place on 10 October 2018 in York. 68 stakeholders representing Local Authorities in our region, housing developers, consultants and other interested parties attended on the day.

The response to our first EV connections event was overwhelmingly positive and identified a clear appetite for further engagement on the topic. We will follow this up with a workshop at our Connections Customer Forum in November 2018 and further targeted engagement planned for 2019.




ACTION

4.5

Continued engagement on A&D fees

TECHNICAL AND COMMERCIAL INNOVATION

Action	The outcome	Measures of performance, impact and success	Voltage	Market segments	Target completion date
We will continue to engage with stakeholders about the Connection Offer Expenses (A&D fees) we charge.	Stakeholders will be better informed about the A&D fees we charge, including how we apply those charges and the information that is available to them to consider before making a quotation application.	Two engagements sessions held. 85% stakeholder satisfaction rate.	All	M DG	 28/02/19

31/10/18

28/02/19

On 6 April 2018, we introduced Connection Offer Expenses (also known as A&D fees) for all new budget estimates, feasibility studies and connection offers we produce making the process fairer for all involved.

Previously, and irrespective of the complexity or number of applications made, the costs associated with preparing this work were not charged to the individual making the request, the costs were recovered from the customers who accepted a connection offer and proceeded with the work. This led to high volumes of speculative applications and resulted in DNOs spending significant periods of time on work that did not proceed.

Early indications suggest that the introduction of charges has had the desired effect and we have observed a reduction in the number of overtly speculative applications we receive. We acknowledge however that this is a major change to our processes and that further engagement is needed to ensure that all our stakeholders are informed about the fees we charge, including how we apply those charges and the information that is available to them for their consideration before making an application.

We have therefore made a commitment to continue to engage on this topic for the remainder of this ICE plan year.




ACTION

4.6

Knocked down telecommunications street furniture

TECHNICAL AND COMMERCIAL INNOVATION

Action	The outcome	Measures of performance, impact and success	Voltage	Market segments	Target completion date
We will develop a more efficient process in respect of the reconnection of 'knocked down' telecommunications street furniture.	Faster reconnection of "knocked down" telecommunication street furniture.	New process developed. Customer feedback.	LV	M UM	 31/03/19

31/10/18

31/03/19

During Ofgem's consultation on the previous regulatory year's ICE, an issue was raised by telecommunications provider BT Openreach.

Openreach typically require unmetered connections for new Fibre to the Cabinet (FTTC) installations. During the ICE consultation Openreach highlighted an issue that FTTC cabinets that are damaged through road traffic accidents need to be reconnected more quickly.

We have acknowledged this feedback and met with Openreach to discuss their requirements. As a result, we are making a commitment to work together to develop a process that will enable us to reconnect telecommunication street furniture that is damaged, in an acceptable timescale. On the successful conclusion of this trial we will roll the process out for all telecommunication providers in our region who require it.




ACTION

5.2

Connections agreements for ICPs

ENABLING COMPETITION

Action	The outcome	Measures of performance, impact and success	Voltage	Market segments	Target completion date
We will implement a new process to enable IDNOs to accept an agreement by signing it electronically.	The process will become quicker and more streamlined for Independent Distribution Network Operators (IDNOs).	New process implemented. Number of documents submitted electronically.	All	ICP	 31/12/18

01/09/18

31/12/18

We remain committed to facilitating fair and open competition in connections and our dedicated CiC team continue to engage with ICPs operating in our region to understand how we can work together to improve the service they can offer their clients.

We made a commitment in our 2018/19 ICE plan to develop and implement a new process that would allow ICPs to produce their own asset adoption agreements and then submit to us for legal completion. This was a direct request from Independent Connections Provider GTC and the action was completed to forecast.

When we contacted GTC to check what we had delivered met their expectations, they made a further suggestion that the agreements we require them to complete should be able to be submitted electronically. They told us this would make the process more streamlined and efficient. We agreed and made a commitment to deliver this improvement by end of 2018.



Theme	Area for improvement and action ref.	Action	The outcome for customers	Performance metric	Our measure of impact/success	Voltage	Status	Applicable to		Q2 2018			Q3 2018			Q4 2018			Q1 2019			More info on this action
										Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
1.0 Provision of information	1.1 Access to network information	We will develop a new process to provide customers who request it with access to more detailed network information.	Customers will have access to more detailed network information and asset records to support and inform their own design activity.	New process implemented.	Customer feedback.	EHV HV	Completed to target	M		DG											PAGE 8	
	1.2 Network information	We will develop a new process to provide customers who request it with access to network information in KMZ and GIS formats.	Customers will have better access and the ability to work with our network data.	New process implemented.	Customer feedback.	EHV HV	Completed to target	M		DG	ICP										PAGE 8	
	1.3 DG owner operator forum	We will hold a DG owner operators forum each quarter.	DG customers will have a forum to discuss operational issues and obtain accurate and up-to-date outage information enabling them to plan more efficiently and strategically.	Four DG owner operator forums held during 2018/19.	Feedback received from DG owner operator forum members.	EHV	On track			DG											PAGE 13	
	1.4 DG connections guide	We will work with the ENA to update the DG connections guide and incorporate new technologies like storage and export limiting devices.	Customers will have more accurate and up-to-date information on the requirements for connection of distributed energy resources.	Completion of a revised ENA DG connection guide.	Number of downloads of the revised ENA guide.	ALL	Completed to target			DG												PAGE 9
2.0 Improving our application and delivery processes	2.1 Contact information for connection engineers	We will create a new web page where customers can find the contact details for our regional connections engineers.	Customers will be able to access the contact details of our connections engineers quickly and easily.	New web page created and published on our website.	Web page usage and customer feedback.	ALL	Completed early	M	UM	DG											PAGE 10	
	2.2 Improved customer communications	We will include a description of the connection project as well as the enquiry reference at the beginning of all our customer correspondences.	Customers with multiple connections will be able to identify the project we are referring to more quickly and easily.	Customer correspondence reviewed and new standards applied.	Customer feedback.	ALL	On track	M	UM	DG											PAGE 14	
	2.3 Updates on our connection offers	We will provide customers with an update on the progress of their connection quotation midway through its preparation, where a 65-day guaranteed standard applies.	Customers will be better informed on the status and timescales of their expected offer.	Feedback being delivered.	Customer feedback.	EHV HV	Completed to target	M		DG											PAGE 10	
	2.4 Self-service budget tool	We will mobilise a project to build a self-service budget tool and keep our customers informed and involved.	Customers will have the opportunity to influence and contribute to the development of a new tool.	Project mobilised and customers engaged.	Customers involved in development of the new tool.	LV	On track	M		DG											PAGE 14	
	NEW 2.5 Connection offer expiry dates	We will include the actual date on which the offer expires in each quotation we issue.	Customers will have firm confirmation of the date their quotations expire.	All new quotations will include the expiry date of the offer.	100% of new quotation offers.	All	On track	M	UM	DG	ICP											PAGE 19

Theme	Area for improvement and action ref.	Action	The outcome for customers	Performance metric	Our measure of impact/success	Voltage	Status	Applicable to			Q2 2018			Q3 2018			Q4 2018			Q1 2019			More info on this action
											Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
5.0 Enabling competition	5.1 Self-service adoption agreements for Independent Connections Providers (ICPs)	We will develop, trial, and if the trial is successful, implement a new self-service adoption agreement process for ICPs.	ICPs will be able to create their own asset adoption agreements using simple agreement templates and submit them to Northern Powergrid for legal completion, further minimising the connection input services we are required to provide.	New ICP self-service adoption agreements implemented.	Number of self-service adoption agreements completed and ICP feedback.	ALL	Completed to target			ICP													PAGE 11
	NEW 5.2 Connection agreements	We will implement a new process to enable IDNOs to accept an agreement by signing it electronically.	The process will become quicker and more streamlined for IDNOs.	New process implemented.	Number of documents submitted electronically.	ALL	On track			ICP													PAGE 23
6.0 Innovation	6.1 Better technical guidance for generators	We will publish technical guidance for generators on how to go about making a connection application for hybrid generation-storage sites.	Generators will have access to improved technical guidance and be better informed about how to make a connection application for hybrid generation-storage sites.	Guidance published.	Document downloads and feedback received.	EHV HV	On track			DG													PAGE 16
	6.2 Our transition to a Distribution System Operator (DSO)	We will continue to engage with stakeholders on our vision and strategy for our transition to a DSO.	Stakeholders will be better informed and have the opportunity to engage, share their views and shape future outputs.	Vision and strategy shared.	Stakeholder feedback.	ALL	On track	M		DG													PAGE 17
	6.3 Our engagement with flexibility service providers	We will engage with flexibility service providers to understand any improvements to our connections process that are required to support the continued growth of distributed energy resources such as storage, flexible generation and demand side response.	Stakeholders will be able to engage with our experts and can influence and inform changes to our connection process.	Stakeholder engagement session delivered.	Stakeholder feedback.	ALL	On track	M		DG													PAGE 17

KEY: ACTION STARTS OUR FORECAST TIMESCALE FOR COMPLETION FORECAST COMPLETION DATE ACTUAL COMPLETION DATE

METERED DEMAND CUSTOMERS UNMETERED CUSTOMERS DISTRIBUTED GENERATION CUSTOMERS INDEPENDENT CONNECTIONS PROVIDERS



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