

Heat Strategy Webinar

Your Questions and our Response:

Question 1: What evidence do you have that these outreach programmes work - what % of customers who went through the programmes are now out of fuel poverty?

Response 1: Mitigating the impact of fuel poverty on our customers has been key areas of focus in 2019-20. We've increased the scale of our fuel poverty initiatives and continue to focus on innovative and collaborative approaches to target areas that are hard to reach or have greatest potential to add the most value for customers.

Through innovative fuel poverty programmes we have funded in partnership with Citizens Advice and Citizens Advice Scotland over 500 customers were helped in the first nine months of 2019/20, saving them over £89,000. 2,323 households were helped with fuel poverty overall, up 105% on last year.

We made improvements to our YES Energy Solutions and Home Energy Scotland referral processes and additional training resulting in a 79% increase in referrals, and hard to reach communities were also supported via energy efficiency projects.

We have also made improvements in our Vulnerability Strategy for 2019/20 by adding Local Government Authority (LGA) data into our customer mapping tool (CMT) which displays the incidence of fuel poverty for each area. We have applied analytics to show how each LGA compares with the average across our licence areas, proactively engaging with local authorities to devise the most appropriate way to support customers in vulnerable situations.

For 2019/20 we identify that £2.97 average net benefit has been achieved per £1 spent on six initiatives measured.

Question 2: how do you (SSEN) define 'fair and equitable'?

Response 2: Fair and equitable is about making sure that the cost of the transition to net zero is shared and opportunities are accessible to communities. In terms of heat decarbonisation, it means not exacerbating fuel poverty, giving local communities a voice in the transition and supporting the homes, businesses and communities we serve by accommodating their chosen solution.

Question 3: BEIS suggested that homes had enough energy efficiency. Won't energy efficiency be crucial inc to reduce load on networks

Response 3: Absolutely, we have asked as part of actions to accelerate the net zero transition that Government Incentivise energy efficiency and low carbon heating delivery as markets develop and mature.

BEIS Response: Our Simple Energy Advice service provides info about HPs, but we're also using research to inform a major forthcoming net zero public engagement.

Question 4: What methods and messages are you proposing to use when communicating to the general public on decarbonising heat?

Response 4: We are hosting webinars on the heat strategy consultation and will develop an action plan for engagement once it is finalised. We are also hosting workshops with local authorities to understand their plans to decarbonise heat as part of ED2 business plan.

Improving customer awareness, as highlighted in the Heat Strategy Proposal, is a key challenge in the transition to decarbonised heat. SSEN supports the UK and Scottish Governments undertaking a consumer awareness campaign to address this, and will work as part of industrywide efforts to ensure the benefits and opportunities associated with shifting to zero-emission heating systems is more widely understood.

Question 5: Would it be cheaper to invest in fabric first efficiency alongside HP install to reduce need to invest in LV & grid networks? Or not?

Response 5: We know that energy efficiency has an important role to play. We need to understand more, the impacts of heat pump clustering on the network to identify the impacts on the LV network. SSEN is working with REGEN to publish a first of its kind forecast on the uptake of energy efficiency measures in its distribution areas aligned with net zero targets. We will share this with the communities we serve to support the roll out of energy efficiency measures. SSEN strongly supports a "fabric first" approach to the transition to decarbonised heat. This will help lower carbon emissions and households and businesses energy usage.

Question 6: How will you engage with communities and local authorities?

Response 6: We are hosting webinars on the heat strategy consultation and will develop an action plan for engagement once it is finalised. We are also hosting workshops with local authorities to understand their plans to decarbonise heat as part of ED2 business plan.

SSEN actively works with local authorities in our distribution areas to support and enable their decarbonisation ambitions. We will be seeking their views on the Heat Strategy Proposal to ensure the principles we will embed reflect their needs in this transition.

Question 7: Talk electrification adding to fuel poverty - how will reliance on green H2 help when it's a manufactured fuel using (more of) the same 'expensive' green elec?

Response 7: We need to understand more about hydrogen production and the impacts on the network, and we are exploring this area. There are opportunities, for example, to look at curtailment of wind to produce greener hydrogen.

Question 8: How will you position existing electric heat homes in the strategy?

Response 8: We believe that 'no one size fits all' and SSEN is not committed to one technology. We have included the need for smarter controlled storage heating as an option if that's what is most suitable for the customer. Smartly controlled storage heating will continue to be considered as part of our projects.

Question 9: Stewart showed projects with existing storage heating - when will we see 4D move from desktop to Learning by Doing? using curtailed wind and lowering bills NOW!

Response 9: We are investigating options to expand on the learning from 4D heat which considers all technologies and builds in safeguards for our most vulnerable customers.

Question 10: Is there a SSEN heat strategy document in existence and publicly available at the moment?

Response 10: Yes, it's available here <https://www.ssen.co.uk/heat/>