



Scottish & Southern  
Electricity Networks

Incentive on Connections Engagement

Our plans and commitments  
for connections customers

Half Year Update



# Welcome

In our Looking Forward Report 2016/17 I said that this year would be all about us going further and faster for our customers in areas we were told required improvement.

I'm delighted to say that 6 months on we are well on our way with delivering our ambitious programme of 44 commitments, designed to make things easier for our customers to connect to our network.

Since the publication of our last report in May we have already delivered 21 of our commitments for the year and are on target to meet all of the pledges detailed in our work plan by the end of the financial year.

Throughout this period our focus has remained on the four key areas our customers told us were important to them:

- Our application processes
- Information provision
- Innovation including flexible connections
- Customer Service

As the leader of our Networks business I am passionate about delivering outstanding service to our customers. This passion translates within the business to every member of staff feeling empowered to identify improvements in the way we deliver connections.

An example of this is how we have improved the options available to our customers when exploring which flexible arrangements may be available for their connections, particularly where an existing network constraint might have otherwise delayed or made their connection too expensive. Our Active Solutions team is employing the latest technical and contractual innovations to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of our network and help facilitate connections to it.

We know, from speaking to our customers, that another thorny issue has been the lack of clarity and guidance with regards to wayleaves. We heard that you wanted more face to face meetings to discuss what can sometimes be a lengthy and complex process. In response we arranged a series of regional Wayleaves workshops giving customers direct access to Wayleaves specialists in our business. I was pleased to hear that 90% of customers said the workshops were beneficial to them.

This is an example of one of the initiatives which wasn't included in our initial Workplan but as a customer-focused business they were 'no-brainers' for us to deliver.

Looking ahead, we are already thinking about what we can do to deliver more for our customers both next year and beyond. We always welcome suggestions on how we can improve the service we provide, so if there is more we could be doing please drop us an email at [connectionsfeedback@sse.com](mailto:connectionsfeedback@sse.com)

Finally I would like to thank all of our customers who took the time to give us feedback this year or responded to Ofgem during their recent consultation. As I say to staff regularly, if we are to continue to improve it is essential that we keep our ears open and listen to what our customers are telling us.

Colin Nicol

Managing Director of Networks

## Recognising our new company under our new brand

Since our full Looking Forward Report 16/17 was published in May, our trading name has changed to Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks. This new name unifies what was Scottish and Southern Energy Power Distribution (SSEPD) and its businesses Scottish Hydro Electric Power Distribution (SHEPD), Southern Electric Power Distribution (SEPD) and Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission (SHE Transmission).

# Engagement update

The best way of finding out how we can do better is by speaking to you directly, and throughout the year we have been holding regular connections surgeries, engagement days and steering panel meetings to give you the opportunity to share feedback and influence our future strategies.

Since the publication of our Looking Forward Report 2016/17 in May we have been particularly pleased to see that our engagement strategy has been endorsed by a wide range of customers in direct response to the feedback we have received. We took steps last year to review and expand our approach to stakeholder engagement to ensure that it was broad enough to meet all our customer needs and deep enough to ensure all engagement with us was meaningful and led to service improvement.

We have adopted a three-pronged approach to engagement:-

**Strategic** – enabling our customers to influence high-level decision-makers and strategies through our Connections Customer Steering Panel

**Targeted** – dedicated forums and focused discussions on particular topics or policy developments aimed at particular customer groups – our popular Engagement Days and workshops

**Business as usual** – regular opportunities for customers to meet with us and discuss their projects – Connections Surgeries across our distribution licence areas, events, webinars and one off project meetings

We set out an ambitious programme of engagement in our Looking Forward for 2016/17 report, and since that report was published we have actively engaged with almost 300 stakeholders through a series of events across our distribution licence areas.

On Page 3 you can find a table of what we have delivered of which some highlights are:

## Leading the way – engaging customers on emerging issues and common ‘bugbears’

Since the start of the year we have received a significant volume of enquiries and applications related to battery storage so we decided to hold battery storage workshops in our SEPD licence area. We heard that Use of System charges are opaque therefore we have held Use of System charges workshops, making us the first Distribution Network Operator (DNO) to do so. These were very well received with 83% of attendees saying it was beneficial.

## Increased awareness of our plans and commitments

We have worked hard over the past year to improve communication with customers so they are aware of our events and new initiatives. We have done this through a mix of old and new techniques including email and social media. We were pleased to see that 90% of customers attending our engagement days were aware of our plans and commitments.



# Engagement update continued

## Engaging smarter – taking a more strategic approach

As well as asking stakeholders for their views when they attend our events we conduct regular strategic reviews of our engagement activity to gauge its overall effectiveness. This is an essential component of our engagement approach which is about continually challenging ourselves and responding proactively to customers changing needs.

Our internal Steering Group which is attended by Directors and key staff within our Networks business meets on a monthly basis to monitor performance and share best practice. We recently refreshed the terms of reference of the group to ensure it:

- Is informed by regular engagement with senior leaders and matches their vision
- Fits within other activities, policy changes and developments which are ongoing within our business
- Responds effectively to changes that are taking place outside our business

## Developing our Connections Customer Steering Panel

Our Connections Customer Steering Panel plays a central role in the development of our plans and commitments for connections customers. Ideas and suggestions from customers at our February 2016 panel meeting formed the bedrock of our workplan which we are now delivering.

At one of our regular reviews we concluded that we needed to increase stakeholder participation in these sessions. This summer at our June panel meetings we went a step further and invited stakeholders to share a platform to present their thoughts and ideas to us. We heard from GTC, an Independent Distribution Network Operator, the Federation of Small Businesses and Local Energy Scotland.

Following these meetings we reviewed our approach again looking closely at the feedback we had received.

- Customers who attended the sessions in Edinburgh and Reading highlighted that one of the things they value most highly is the presence of our Managing Director and senior team at these events, something we are pleased to confirm will continue
- Attendees also said they would like more time set aside in these meetings to 'have their say' at breakout sessions

To make the best use of these sessions from the point of view of our stakeholders we will also be re-focusing agendas to reduce the number of presentations and increasing the overall time available for breakout sessions.

The next meetings of the Panel will be held in February 2017. Any customer or stakeholder wishing to join our Panel should email [connectionsfeedback@sse.com](mailto:connectionsfeedback@sse.com)

The table below shows how we engage with each customer type.

Engagement delivered	Customer Type Engaged						
	Communities	ICP's / IDNO's	Large Generation	Micro-generation	Large Demand	Small Demand	Unmetered
CCSP	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Industry/National Events	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Demand Customer Engagement Day	✓	✓			✓	✓	
Microgeneration Customer Engagement Day	✓		✓	✓			✓
Large Generation Customer Engagement Day	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Communities Engagement Events	✓		✓	✓		✓	
ICP / IDNO Engagement Day		✓	✓		✓		✓
Unmetered Engagement Events		✓	✓		✓		✓
Social Media Inc. LinkedIn	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Connections Newsletter	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

# Acting on Ofgem open letter responses

In August 2016 Ofgem published an open letter aimed at gauging the views of connection customers on our Looking Forward and Looking back submissions for the Incentive on Connections Engagement.

We contacted all customers currently on our database to bring the consultation to their attention and invited them to share their feedback with us to help improve our connections service by identifying areas that need attention.

Below are a few examples of the feedback we received as part of the consultation and details of the actions we have taken in response. We are actively engaging with each respondent of the Ofgem open letter to discuss feedback and next steps.

## ofgem's question

In response to Ofgem's question 'Are you satisfied that the licensee has a comprehensive and robust strategy for engaging with connection stakeholders and facilitating joint discussions where appropriate?'

### You said:

'Yes, we are happy with the engagement strategy. Some independent validation of the implementation of the strategy would be welcome in the future' Power on Connections (POC) ICP'

### We did:

Challenging ourselves to offer a better service and being open to external challenge is at the heart of our approach. We welcomed this feedback as an opportunity to receive an independent evaluation of our engagement activities from a third party.

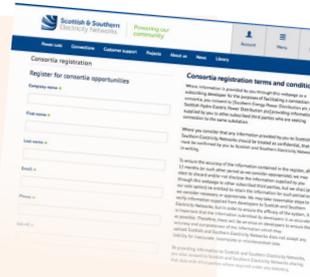
- We are in regular dialogue with other DNOs as this helps us to stay at the forefront of customer engagement and to deliver more for our customers. We contacted other DNOs to learn from those who had previously carried out an audit of their engagement strategies with a view to identifying best practice for an independent audit of our strategy and engagement approach.
- We have contacted a number of suppliers suggested to us to identify the most effective and value for money option available and plan to appoint an independent expert to conduct an initial audit of our stakeholder engagement strategy in early 2017.

### You said:

'There appears to be very limited information on consortia connections' TUSC Ltd ICP

### We did:

- We established an online consortia register in December 2015 to enable developers to share the cost of reinforcement with other customers who wish to connect to the same part of the network. At the start this information was only accessible via our online heatmap facility.
- We listened to our customers and became aware that not all customers regularly access our heatmaps, therefore we have updated our website to allow customers to register for consortia opportunities outwith our heatmap function. This can be found at [www.ssen.co.uk/ConsortiaRegistration/Register/](http://www.ssen.co.uk/ConsortiaRegistration/Register/)



## ofgem's question

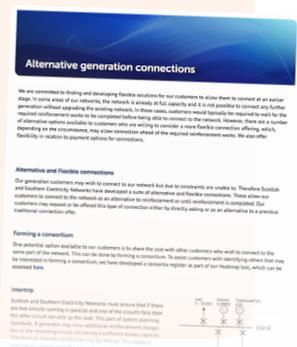
In response to Ofgem's questions 'To what extent has the DNO offered you more flexible and alternative connection arrangements alongside conventional firm connections?'

### You said:

'We are aware that some projects have applied for ANM connections, but are not aware to what extent this, and the other flexible options, will be acceptable to developers' Isle of Wight Council Distributed Generation, Demand, Unmetered

### We did:

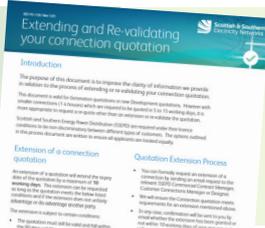
- We arranged for our Active Solutions team to update the information available on our alternative generation connections web page. This can be found at [www.ssen.co.uk/AlternativeGenerationConnections/](http://www.ssen.co.uk/AlternativeGenerationConnections/). We now include this link within all new generation quotations in order customers can see the options available to them.
- We have committed to publish a process guide for flexible connections and host workshops with our customers in early 2017. The workshops will focus on flexible connections with experts from our asset management and innovation teams on hand.



If you would like to be added to our customer database please email [connectionsfeedback@sse.com](mailto:connectionsfeedback@sse.com) with your name, address and company details.

# Delivered commitments (April - September)

Below is an update of the commitments delivered from our Looking Forward report for 2016/17 published May 2016. The full report can be found at [www.ssen.co.uk/ICE](http://www.ssen.co.uk/ICE)

Commitment	KPI	Half year update
Distribution Use of System (DUoS) charges workshops	Number of workshops held 	2 workshops have been held, one in each of our license areas engaging a total of 37 customers. All slides are available on <a href="http://www.ssen.co.uk/stakeholderevent/basicsearch/">www.ssen.co.uk/stakeholderevent/basicsearch/</a>
Provide mapping symbols for your GIS mapping tool	Symbol index published, communicated and available online	Symbol index can be found in the online document library found at <a href="http://www.ssen.co.uk/connections/usefuldocuments/">www.ssen.co.uk/connections/usefuldocuments/</a> under the title 'Network Maps'. 
Expand guidance on revalidation process	Quotes updated with revalidation process and guide published, communicated and available online	The revalidation process guide has been published and can be found at <a href="http://www.ssen.co.uk/connections/usefuldocuments/">www.ssen.co.uk/connections/usefuldocuments/</a> under the 'Help with application forms' filter 
Provide indicative Distribution Use of System (DUoS) charges in advance upon request	New process implemented as business as usual	A new process has been put in place and communicated to customers that <a href="mailto:angus.rae@sse.com">angus.rae@sse.com</a> is the contact to provide the DUoS charges in advance upon request.
Clarify what contestable and non-contestable works are	Document updated and endorsed by ICP	We have updated the 'You have a Choice' leaflet to include a table that summarise's elements of work as contestable or non-contestable. The document can be downloaded on our 'You Have a Choice' webpage <a href="http://www.ssen.co.uk/ConnectionsYouHaveaChoice/">www.ssen.co.uk/ConnectionsYouHaveaChoice/</a> 
Display flexible connections and active solutions management teams online	Staff contact map published, communicated and available online	A staff contact map has been produced and can be found at <a href="http://www.ssen.co.uk/GenerationConnectionsHome/">www.ssen.co.uk/GenerationConnectionsHome/</a> 

## Commitment

## KPI

## Half year update

Contact all demand and generation customers regarding planned outages as part of the switching schedule

The introduction of an efficient, transparent and consistent communication plan for switching schedules and planned outages, endorsed by customers

From the 1 September 2016 we introduced a new robust process for our staff to follow when planning supply interruptions. Domestic customers are to receive 7 calendar days notice and non domestic customers (including demand and generation customers) are to receive 30 calendar days notice, where possible. Customers will also get a letter 7 days before and a text/ phone call the day before to remind them of the upcoming outage.

Project evaluation card

Summary of results published at the end of the year



We have created a questionnaire for customers to evaluate our performance at quotation stage as well as at the end of the connection. We shall summarise the results from these at the end of the year.

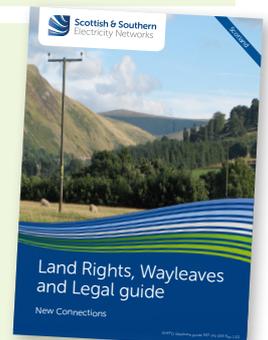
Guidance on recharging additional legal costs

Update the wayleaves guide, publish and communicate through our newsletter and subscription list

Agree an available Service Level Agreement with Wayleaves department for contacting customers to advise project status

The Land Rights, Wayleaves and Legal guide has been updated and can be found at [www.ssen.co.uk/landrights/](http://www.ssen.co.uk/landrights/)

More information on the Service Level Agreement to be published by the end of year.



Make GIS mapping 'shape' files available to all customers

Process to request GIS shape files published, communicated and available online



A new process has been put in place to supply GIS shape files via file transfer. The process guide can be found at [www.ssen.co.uk/connections/usefuldocuments/](http://www.ssen.co.uk/connections/usefuldocuments/) under 'Network Maps' filter

Commissioning documents and guidebook attached to website

Guides published, communicated and available online

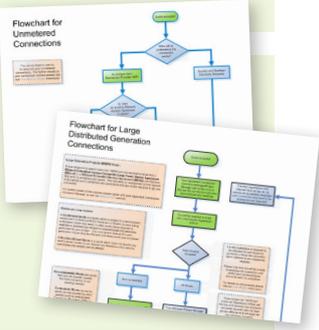


This guide is for Certified Commissioning officers or customers wishing to provide their installers with as much information as possible. It explains which documents are required to be completed for a successful commissioning of a Electrical Generation Site.

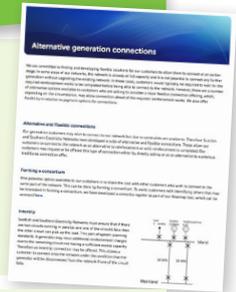
[www.ssen.co.uk/GenerationConnectionsHome/](http://www.ssen.co.uk/GenerationConnectionsHome/) or

[www.ssen.co.uk/connections/usefuldocuments/](http://www.ssen.co.uk/connections/usefuldocuments/)

# Delivered commitments continued

Commitment	KPI	Half year update
<p>Help unmetered customers prepare standard inventories</p>	<p>Number of customers helped in this way</p> 	<p>Our unmetered team have attended 14 customer meetings to date and held an unmetered engagement day in Dundee. Our Connections team also played an active role in an engagement day held by the Scottish Future Trust.</p> <p>At the meetings and engagement day we explained the process for registering standard inventory. We will continuously engage with our unmetered customers to ensure all customers have these standard inventories.</p>
<p>Provide visibility of quoted jobs on the heatmap</p>	<p>Information available on the heatmap tool</p> 	<p>We have updated our heatmaps to show all of our quoted jobs along with the current connected/contracted jobs. This includes quotes that have been issued but have not yet been accepted or lapsed.</p>
<p>Enable intermediate payment to progress wayleaves/legals/harmonic studies in advance</p>	<p>Intermediate payment option offered to progress legal/harmonics studies as a standard option</p>	<p>Intermediate payment options are now offered to progress legal/harmonics studies as a standard option. This allows customers to progress these stages in advance of their second payment in our staged payment process.</p>
<p>Review all projects over £1 million within 6 months of completion</p>	<p>Number of projects reviewed and supported through the connections process</p>	<p>Current large scale projects have been identified and a process has been put in place to offer this service to all customers with large projects costing over £1 million.</p>
<p>Provide an updated guide to advise who you should contact to arrange a witness test</p>	<p>Process guides published, communicated and available online</p>	<p>Process guides have been published, communicated and are available online at <a href="http://www.ssen.co.uk/GenerationConnectionsHome/">www.ssen.co.uk/GenerationConnectionsHome/</a></p>
<p>Create process flow chart for tasks to be undertaken to deliver your connection after project acceptance</p>	<p>Flowchart published, communicated and available online</p>	<p>Flowcharts for each type of connection have been published, communicated and are available online at <a href="http://www.ssen.co.uk/connections/usefuldocuments/">www.ssen.co.uk/connections/usefuldocuments/</a></p> 

Commitment	KPI	Half year update
State available options for transmission-constrained projects	Optional connections offered as standard where transmission constraints exist.	Customers can view options available to them when a transmission constraint exists. These can be seen at <a href="http://www.ssen.co.uk/AlternativeGenerationConnections/">www.ssen.co.uk/AlternativeGenerationConnections/</a>
Display contract novation process online	Guide published, communicated and available online	Following a consultation with our stakeholders we have published our Novation guide along with a template online at <a href="http://www.ssen.co.uk/GenerationConnectionsHome/">www.ssen.co.uk/GenerationConnectionsHome/</a>
Improve the Alternative Provider Register	Increase in number of page views on our alternative provider search page	We updated our register 4 months earlier than expected. Alternative providers can now register as active in our area if they have only NERS accreditation for electrical design work. Page views shall be monitored for reporting at the end of the year.
Expand the secure area on web portal for ICPs and IDNOs	Number of ICP/IDNOs using the new tool	A new file transfer system is being trailed for allowing ICP/IDNO to submit design approval files which are greater in size. This will allow the documents for design approval to be transferred much easier. The trial has been successfully completed a guide will be published explaining the process of registering.



## NEW Additional Commitments Delivered

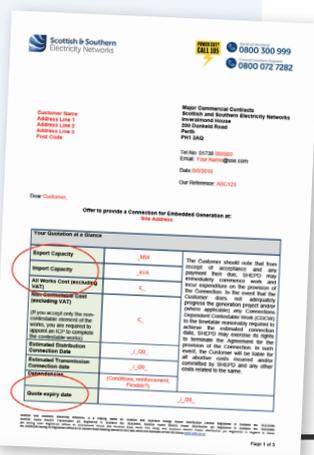
These commitments were not in our original Looking Forward 2016/17 submission, however customers feedback to us that these were important to them. We identified these early in quarter 2 and were able to turn them around quickly for our customers. We will include these in our Looking Back report for 2016/17 as additional commitments.

### You said

Improve the generation connection offer

### We did

We have further improved our generation connection offers to provide you with the import capacity and the quotation expiry date upfront.



### You said

Improve the Webportal for ICPs and IDNOs

### We did

We have extended the period of time it takes for the automatic security setting to remove signed in customers from 20 minutes to 1 hour. This now allows customers more time to browse the tools and documents available to them on our website.

# Looking forward plan

	Your idea	Q3	Q4
Customer Service	Provide guidance for updating site contacts for operational sites	✓	
	Quote reminder for all connection quotations		✓
	Improvement to online project tracking facility		✓
	Provide the main point of contact for a connection on the project tracking facility	✓	
Information Provision	Produce guidance document for laying cables	✓	
	Provide details of planned distribution reinforcements on our website	✓	
	Highlight community groups case studies online	✓	
	Include Frequently Asked Question sheet in all quote packs	✓	
	Create a Distribution Use of System (DUoS) charges webpage	✓	
	Provide a technical guide for installing unmetered services	✓	
	Review and improve the quality of information provided to prospective connection customers about the cost of getting connected	✓	
	Clearly identify non electrical tasks such as excavating track that can be undertaken by customers themselves	✓	
The Application process	Provide an explanation for reinforcement costs in quotations	✓	
	Improve the online application process		✓
	Provide breakdown of costs for disconnections	✓	
Getting Connected	Review all accepted quotations over £1 million on site	✓	
	Contact upon acceptance to discuss and clarify the approach to be taken for achieving a successful connection		✓
	Send post-acceptance email to confirm Project Manager, Customer Connections Manager and Commercial Contract Manager for the connection		✓
	Send email reminder of tasks to be delivered prior to connection		✓
Choice in Connections	Proactively engage with connected generators to ensure customers are utilising existing capacity in full	30%	100%
	Provide guidance on process for flexible connections	✓	
	Host flexible connections and active solutions management workshops	✓	
	Collaborate with other DNOs to provide a street furniture toolkit	✓	

## Key Performance Indicators

	LV Demand	HV Demand	EHV Demand	LVD Generation	HVEHVDG Generation	LA	PFI	Other
Guide published, communicated and available online	●	●	●	●	●			
Quote reminder function improved as detailed and offered to all market segments	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Improvements delivered and communicated via connections newsletter	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Improved contact information available on online project tracker	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Customer friendly documents published, communicated and available online	●	●	●	●	●			
Details of planned reinforcement works included on heatmap tool	●	●	●	●	●			
Case studies published, communicated and available online	●	●	●	●	●			
FAQ Sheet distributed with all quote packs	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Webpage created as detailed and live on our website	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Guide published, communicated and available online						●	●	●
Change to Common Charging Methodology Statement	●	●	●					
Published on website and communicated	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Quotation offer to include further detail of reinforcement works required within both covering letter and breakdown of costs	●	●	●	●	●			
Improvements to online application process delivered	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Cost breakdown supplied with disconnection quote letter as standard	●	●	●			●	●	●
100% of projects >£1 million offered the opportunity for review and supported through the connection process	●	●	●	●	●			
The number of customers contacted	●	●	●	●	●			
New process implemented as business as usual	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Number of quote reminders sent	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
% of connected generation customers contacted which are under utilising their capacity by 75% or less				●	●			
Guide published, communicated and available online	●	●	●	●	●			
Number of workshops held on flexible connections and stakeholders reached	●	●	●	●	●			
Guide published, communicated and available online						●	●	●



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[www.ssen.co.uk](http://www.ssen.co.uk)

If you have any questions, would like to be kept updated with our progress or are simply interested in finding out more please

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