

Guidance

Heat networks: authorisation application and registration

Publication date:	23 January 2026[TBC]
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Version:	1.02.0
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This guidance is for applicants that are seeking authorisation to carry out a regulated activity of operating or supplying on a relevant heat network. It describes how to apply for authorisation, the type of information required and the process we will follow.

This guidance is intended for authorised persons that are operating or supplying a relevant heat network during the first part of the initial period and therefore required to The initial period is set out in [regulation 26](#) of the [Heat Networks \(Market Framework\) Regulations 2025](#) (the regulations) and runs from 1 April 2025 to 27 January 2027.

This guidance explains roles and responsibilities under the heat networks regulatory framework and outlines the obligations set out in authorisation condition A04: Registration. It also details the information that must be submitted as part of registration and describes what happens after a registration has been completed.

It also explains obligations under authorisation condition A05: Nominated Operator that apply where more than one entity is undertaking the regulated activity of operation on different physical parts of a relevant heat network.

~~Sections of this guidance covering registration and multiple operator scenarios are not relevant to authorised persons who commence regulated activity after the first part of the initial period.~~

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1. Introduction

Ofgem is the designated regulator for heat networks in England, Scotland, and Wales (Great Britain). Under the [Heat Networks \(Market Framework\) Regulations 2025](#) (the 2025 regulations), any person undertaking a regulated activity on a relevant heat network from 1 April 2025 is required to be authorised. The [general authorisation conditions](#) for heat networks cover a range of consumer protection requirements and supporting regulatory provisions. These conditions ~~come~~ came into effect ~~on~~ from 27 January 2026, and authorised persons are required to comply with them.

Any person wishing to commence a regulated activity of operating or supplying on a relevant heat network on or after 27 January 2027 is required to apply to Ofgem for authorisation.

Scope

The guidance:

- explains the scope of heat networks regulation including key definitions, clarification on what activities the regulations apply to, and how responsibilities map to the physical boundaries of heat networks
- details exemptions and network types with reduced obligations under the regulatory framework
- describes how an applicant can apply for authorisation
- describes the information an applicant will be required to provide as part of their application and describes our authorisation application process
- covers the requirement to register set out in authorisation condition A04: Registration, which ~~applies to persons who are deemed authorised under regulation 27 of the regulations.~~
- provides an overview of how authorised persons must register their heat network activities with us and sets out the information that must be provided through this process
- details what authorised persons should do following registration and points to information on further obligations under the regulatory framework
- ~~includes information specific to the registration of Shared Ground Loop (SGL) heat networks~~
- explains obligations under authorisation condition A05: Nominated Operator which applies to heat networks ~~operators of networks~~ where more than one entity is undertaking the regulated activity of operation on different physical parts of a relevant heat network.

Purpose

The purpose of this guidance is to ~~help heat network operators and suppliers with deemed authorisation to understand their obligation to register with us~~ provide information on:

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- [applying to Ofgem for authorisation](#)
- [registering regulated activities with Ofgem](#)
- [the nominated operator authorisation condition](#)

This guidance should be read in conjunction with the Heat Networks (Applications for Authorisation) Regulations 2026 (the Application Regulations). It is the responsibility of all applicants to understand the requirements of these regulations and the relevant provisions of the 2025 regulations that define these processes. This guidance is not a definitive guide and does not constitute legal advice.

All applicants are responsible for ensuring they comply with all legislative and regulatory requirements and should obtain their own legal advice as required. Where there is ambiguity between this guidance and the Energy Act 2023 (the Act), the Application Regulations and the 2025 regulations, the Application Regulations, the 2025 regulations and the Act take precedence.

Where more than one entity is undertaking the regulated activity of operation ~~there are multiple operators on different physical parts of for a relevant~~ heat network, the guidance is also intended to assist in understanding obligations that apply under authorisation condition A05: Nominated Operator.

~~This guidance does not apply to regulated activity that commences after the end of the first part of the initial period, and which must be authorised by application to Ofgem. We will consult on the requirements for authorisation by application and will publish supporting guidance before this comes into effect.~~

Context and related publications

This guidance should be read together with related publications:

- [the Heat Networks \(Applications for Authorisation\) Regulations 2026, which set out the procedure and requirements for authorisation application](#)
- the [Heat Networks \(Market Framework\) Regulations 2025](#), which set out the regulations that govern the framework for heat networks regulation
- the [general authorisation conditions for heat networks](#), which set out obligations for authorised persons undertaking regulated activity on a heat network
- the [heat networks consumer protection guidance](#), which explains the rules and requirements set out in authorisation conditions relating to consumer protection such as standards of conduct, quality of service, billing and transparency, back-billing, heat supply contracts, protections for vulnerable consumers, and the security of supply
- the [heat networks financial resilience guidance](#), which explains the rules and requirements set out in the financial resilience authorisation conditions [A12: Operational Arrangements and Material Assets](#), [A13: Availability of Resources](#) and [Financial Responsibility Principle](#), and [A14: Continuity Arrangements](#)

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- the [heat networks fair pricing and cost allocation guidance](#), which aims to support heat networks to comply with fair pricing rules that ~~come~~ came into effect from January 2026
- the [heat networks regular data reporting guidance](#), which is intended to help operators and suppliers meet requirements outlined in [authorisation condition A09: Provision of information to the Authority](#). ~~At the time of publication, consultation on this guidance is closed, awaiting decision. A final version of this guidance will be published before the requirements come into effect.~~

Updates to this guidance

This guidance may be updated from time to time following consultation with stakeholders on proposed changes.

2. Scope of heat networks regulation

The regulated activities

- 2.1 Under the 2025 regulations, authorisation is required to undertake regulated activity on a relevant heat network. The regulated activities are:
- operating a relevant heat network (operation)
 - supplying heating, cooling or hot water to heat network consumers by means of a relevant heat network (supply)
- 2.2 In this guidance, we refer to the authorised person undertaking operation as the ‘operator’ and the authorised person undertaking supply as the ‘supplier’.
- 2.3 While these roles are distinct in regulatory terms, it is common in practice for a single entity to act as both the operator and the supplier for a heat network. Where this is the case, the authorised person entity will be subject to the obligations associated with both roles under the regulatory framework.
- 2.4 It is important that all parties involved with a heat network assess their activities carefully against the regulatory definitions to determine whether they are acting as a supplier, an operator, or both. This will influence the information and evidence they are required to provide during the registration process and the ongoing compliance obligations they must meet. Further information about when a regulated activity commences for registration purposes is provided in the ‘Who needs to register’ section on page 22.
- 2.5 An authorised person is an entity that is authorised to undertake one or both regulated activities in relation to a relevant heat network under [regulation 16](#) or [regulation 27](#) of the 2025 regulations.

Operation

- 2.6 Operating a relevant heat network means controlling the transfer of thermal energy on that heat network for the purposes of supplying heating, cooling or hot water.
- 2.7 A heat network operator is generally expected to have substantial control over key decisions relating to ensuring the long-term reliability, efficiency, and compliance of the heat network.
- 2.8 This generally includes having authority or influence over significant investment decisions, such as those concerning major upgrades, expansions, or fundamental changes to the infrastructure.
- 2.9 Ownership of network assets may indicate a level of substantial control but may not necessarily determine the role of operator. The operator will be the entity that has sufficient control over the material assets used or needed to comply with the regulatory framework.

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- 2.10 In the leasehold sector, the party expected to fulfil the role of heat network operator is typically the freeholder, as they generally retain overall responsibility for the management and operation of the building's communal heating system. Where arrangements such as the Right to Manage (RTM) or Residents Management Company (RMC) models are in place, the entity acting as operator may differ and potentially may shift to the RTM or RMC. It is important to consider the specific management structure in place to determine who is acting as the operator in each scenario.

Supply

- 2.11 An entity is undertaking the regulated activity of supply where they are responsible for the commercial arrangements with customers associated with the supply of heating, cooling, or hot water via a relevant heat network.
- 2.12 Commercial arrangements include setting charges, issuing bills, providing customer service and handling complaints.
- 2.13 A supplier is expected to have a contractual relationship with their heat network customers, through a heat supply agreement or other agreement.
- 2.14 All parties should ensure they assess their activities against the regulatory definitions to determine whether supplier obligations apply.

Definition of a relevant heat network

- 2.15 The terms 'heat network', 'relevant heat network', 'communal heat network', and 'district heat network', used in this section are defined in [section 216 of the Energy Act 2023](#).

Relevant heat network

- 2.16 A heat network is a network that, by distributing a liquid or a gas, enables the transfer of thermal energy for the purpose of supplying heating, cooling or hot water to a building or persons in that building, and includes any appliance where the main purpose of which is to heat or cool the liquid or gas.
- 2.17 While the term 'heat network' is used broadly to describe systems that distribute thermal energy, only those classified as 'relevant' are subject to regulatory requirements.
- 2.18 A relevant heat network means a district heat network or a communal heat network.
- 2.19 The heat network definition may include networks that are designed to rely wholly or in part on heat pumps specific to the buildings or premises served by the network.

District heat network

- 2.20 A district heat network is a heat network that supplies heating, cooling or hot water to two or more buildings.
- 2.21 A district heat network may be located within a single site or development or may be a larger-scale system distributing heat to multiple sites or separately owned properties and involving multiple authorised entities.
- 2.22 A district heat network may be connected to one or more other relevant heat networks such as an embedded communal heat network or a separately owned or managed district heat network.
- 2.23 An example of a district heat network is illustrated in Figure 1 below.

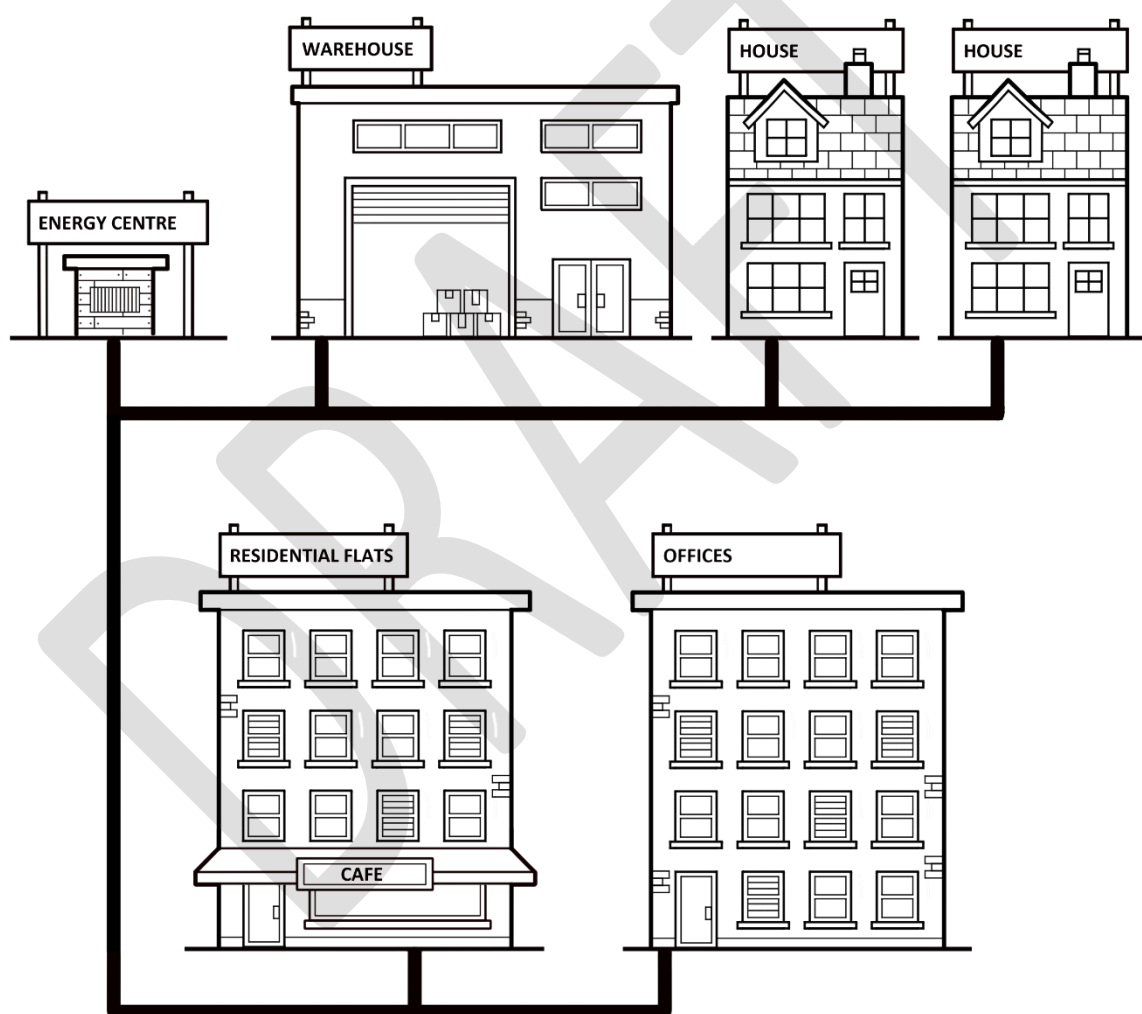


Figure 1: example of a district heat network

Communal heat network

- 2.24 A communal heat network is a heat network that supplies heating, cooling or hot water to a single building divided into separate premises.

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- 2.25 A communal heat network may be a standalone building containing an energy centre or may be embedded in a district scheme from which it is supplied heat.
- 2.26 A residential block of flats with a communal heating system is a typical example of a communal heat network, however, the definition also includes buildings with a communal heating system that supplies non-domestic customers in separate premises within that building.
- 2.27 It is not intended that the regulatory framework applies solely because thermal energy is supplied to common parts of a building, such as corridors, stairwells, reception areas, plant rooms or other shared spaces. Where thermal energy is transferred only for the purpose of serving common areas, and not for the purpose of supplying heating, cooling or hot water to consumers, the activities of operation and supply are not being undertaken in relation to those common areas.
- 2.28 ~~An example~~ Examples of a communal heat networks ~~are~~ is illustrated in Figure 2 and Figure 3 below.

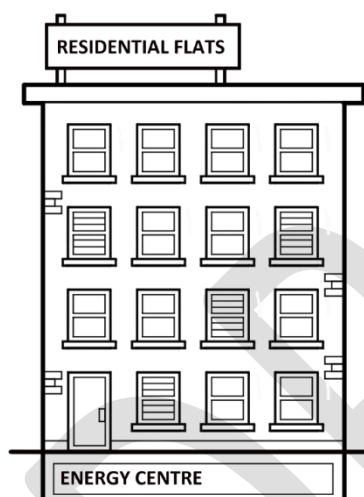


Figure 2: an example of a standalone communal heat network with its own energy centre

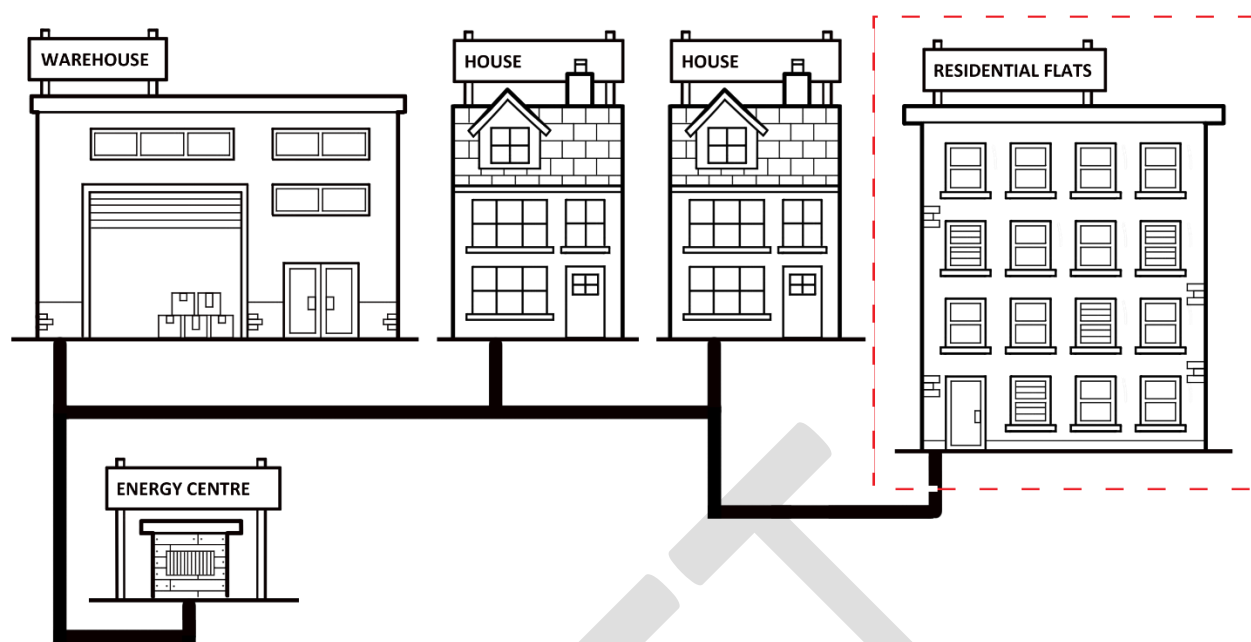


Figure 3: a communal heat network (outlined in dashed line) that receives heat from a district heat network

Exemptions from regulation

2.29 Under certain circumstances, activities may be explicitly exempt from regulation or fall outside the scope of regulation.

2.30 There is no requirement ~~It is not required to apply for an exemption to invoke this provision.~~

2.31 The following ~~three~~ sections describe activities that are exempt from regulation.

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

2.32 HMOs that consist of a single house or building with shared facilities of a kitchen or bathroom, and where heating is provided through a shared system, are not considered to have separate premises and are therefore exempted from heat networks regulation.

2.33 [Regulation 13\(2\)\(a\)](#) of the [2025](#) regulations exempts HMOs that are within the meaning of paragraphs (a) to (d) of subsection 1 of [section 254](#) of the [Housing Act 2004](#), or similar circumstances in Scotland.

2.34 HMOs that are converted blocks of flats as defined under [section 257](#) of the [Housing Act 2004](#), and consist of self-contained flats, are not included under this exemption. If supplied through a shared heating system, this may be a relevant heat network and within the scope of regulation.

Converted buildings with domestic heating systems

- 2.35 Under [regulation 13\(2\)\(b\)](#) of the 2025 regulations, if a building has been converted by being divided into separate living accommodation and includes a shared heating system of a domestic capacity, this is exempt from regulation.
- 2.36 This exemption applies to single converted buildings, as defined in [section 254\(8\)](#) of the [Housing Act 2004](#), that are supplied by no more than one source appliance with a thermal capacity of 45 kilowatt or less.

Communal heat networks with air-conditioning only

- 2.37 Certain centralised air-conditioning systems in buildings divided into separate premises and where heating or cooling is provided to those premises, may fall within the definition of a communal heat network.
- 2.38 These systems are not intended to be regulated as relevant heat networks and, where hot water is not supplied by means of the network, such communal networks are not included under the ‘relevant’ heat network definition and are exempt from regulation.
- 2.39 This exemption is set out in [regulation 2A](#) of the 2025 regulations.

Third-party waste heat producers

- 2.40 Entities that produce waste heat such as data centres and wastewater treatment sites are generally not considered to be engaged in regulated activity and may enable the harvesting of waste heat without requiring authorisation.
- 2.41 For heat networks that utilise waste heat sources, the authorised person will generally be the entity that distributes heat, is responsible for the operation of the energy centre and ensures reliability through backup infrastructure and upgrading of heat where required.

Reduced obligations for certain heat networks

- 2.42 Certain heat network types that are within the scope of regulation and must be authorised but have reduced obligations under the regulatory framework. This includes self-supply, industrial, and Shared Ground Loop (SGL) heat networks.
- 2.43 Authorised persons for these heat network types are required to register but will not need to provide as much information when registering their heat network or as part of regular data reporting after registration.

Self-supply heat networks

- 2.44 A self-supply heat network is defined in authorisation condition [A03: Definitions](#) as a district heat network where all the heating, cooling or hot water supplied by means of that district heat network is taken by the authorised person for that district heat network.

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- 2.45 Examples of self-supply heat networks may include education campuses, hospitals and medical sites, prisons, and short-term accommodation where heating, cooling or hot water is provided to multiple buildings from a central source.
- 2.46 Authorisation conditions under section B and section C of the [general authorisation conditions](#) do not apply to authorised persons in relation to self-supply heat networks where they undertake regulated activity.

Industrial heat networks

- 2.47 An industrial heat network is defined in authorisation condition [A03: Definitions](#) as a relevant heat network where all of the heating, cooling or hot water which is supplied by means of that relevant heat network is wholly or mainly supplied for an industrial process.
- 2.48 Industrial process is defined in authorisation condition [A03: Definitions](#).
- 2.49 Authorisation conditions under section B and section C of the [general authorisation conditions](#) do not apply to authorised persons in relation to industrial heat networks where they undertake regulated activity.
- 2.50 Customers on industrial heat networks are expected to use the heat supplied for an industrial process. This does not exclude the heating of ancillary spaces, such as on-site offices or lunchrooms, provided these areas form part of the same industrial premises and the primary purpose of the heat use remains industrial.

Shared Ground Loop (SGL) heat networks

- 2.51 SGL heat networks are heat networks that rely solely on closed ground or water loops for heat generation, in combination with individual consumer heat pumps.
- 2.52 The ‘utility model’, ‘non-utility model’ and ‘small, private SGL’ are recognised as different charging and ownership structures for SGL heat networks.

Connected and embedded heat networks

- 2.53 Where a relevant heat network is connected to another relevant heat network, each network must be ~~individually~~ authorised under the [2025](#) regulations including where a single entity undertakes operation and supply for both networks.
- 2.54 This may occur where a district heat network supplies heat to an embedded communal heat network or a separately managed district heat network potentially consisting of multiple buildings within a single site. These scenarios are illustrated below in ~~Figure 3~~ [Figure 4](#) and ~~Figure 4~~ [Figure 5](#) respectively.

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- 2.55 The physical boundary between connected heat networks, potentially indicated by a building or site meter, will generally also delineate regulatory responsibility between separate entities undertaking operation and supply for each network.
- 2.56 In applying the consumer protection requirements such as those relating to pricing and reliability, we will consider how a heat network that is supplied heat from another network may be affected by upstream factors.

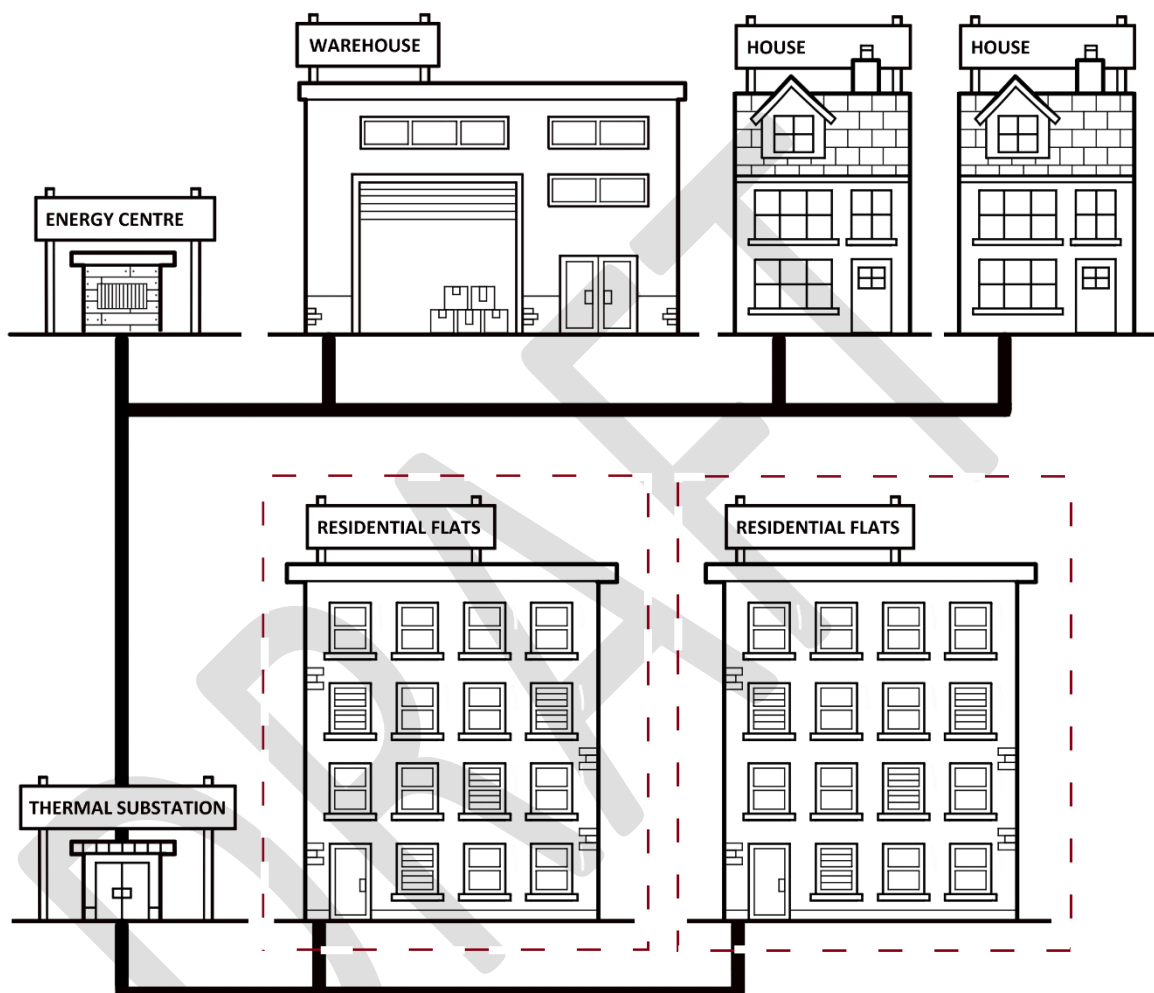


Figure 4: an example of district heat network including two embedded and separately authorised communal networks (outlined in red dashed line)

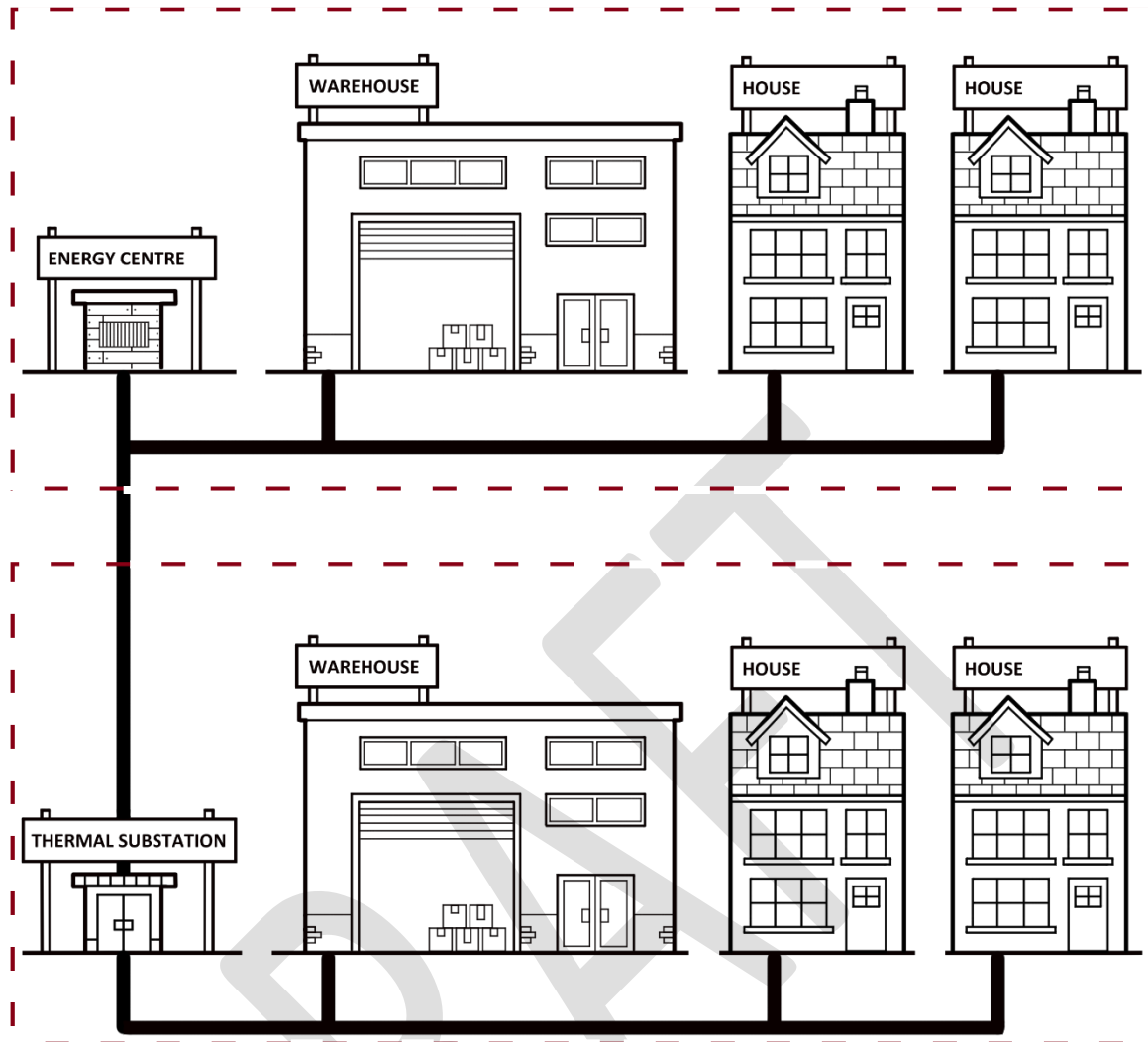


Figure 5: an example of two connected and separately authorised district heat networks (outlined in red dashed line)

3. Authorisation application

Preparing to submit an application

- 3.1 Any person wishing to commence a regulated activity of operating or supplying on a heat network on or after 27 January 2027 is required to apply to Ofgem for authorisation before commencing the activity.
- 3.2 It is for a potential applicant to consider whether it is going to be undertaking a heat network regulated activity and if they need to apply for authorisation. Exemptions to the requirement to hold an authorisation are set out in the Heat Network (Market Framework) (Great Britain) Regulations 2025 (the 2025 regulations) and explained in Exemptions from regulation section on page 11 of this document.
- 3.3 Further information is available on our website to assist in understanding what activities the regulatory framework applies to. Please note that Ofgem is unable to make determinations on whether someone should hold authorisation or if an exemption applies and we encourage you to seek your own legal advice on these matters.
- 3.4 We encourage applicants to apply for authorisation when they have a credible timescale to commence a regulated activity. In considering this, they must be aware of our indicative timescales and processes for handling applications.
- 3.5 Applicants should also consider our discretion to revoke an authorisation where the regulated activity has not commenced within 1 year after the date the activity is authorised.

Submitting an application

- 3.6 Applications for authorisation must be submitted using the webform available on our website, or by alternative means if we have agreed to this.
- 3.7 We will acknowledge receipt of applications by email, within 1 working day of receipt. If you do not receive an acknowledgment, an email address is available on our website to contact us.
- 3.8 Incomplete or incorrect information in an application will delay the processing of the application. Any undisclosed information relevant to the application that is discovered after a decision is made can result in the authorisation being revoked.
- 3.9 Applicants must be honest in their engagement with us. Knowingly or recklessly providing misleading or false information or statements during the authorisation application process is an offence and may result in criminal proceedings.
- 3.10 If any of the details provided in an application change once the application has been submitted, the applicant must inform us at the earliest opportunity.

- 3.11 If you need to contact us, please email at the email address listed on our website.
- 3.12 If an applicant would like to withdraw an application, they can do so at any time by contacting us via email.

Application process

- 3.13 When we receive an application, we will check that it is complete.
- 3.14 An application is complete when all relevant sections of the form are completed and, where appropriate, supporting documentation is provided.
- 3.15 The application must be signed by the applicant, who should be the most senior person at the applicant with responsibility for the heat network's operations and regulatory compliance.
- 3.16 We will confirm whether an application is complete within 10 working days of acknowledging receipt.
- 3.17 Working days means any other day than Saturday, Sunday, Christmas Day, Good Friday or a day which is a bank holiday within the meaning of the Banking and Financial Dealings Act 1971.
- 3.18 An application is incomplete when information is missing or appears to include errors. The application will remain as incomplete until the information or clarification requested has been provided.
- 3.19 If the applicant does not provide the requested information or clarification within the specified timeframe the application may be cancelled.
- 3.20 Our intention is to notify an applicant that we have conferred authorisation once we have processed the application having determined it is complete.
- 3.21 Where we determine that an application is complete but do not notify the applicant that authorisation has been conferred, the three-working-day period for processing the application begins on the date we notify the applicant that the application is complete. It does not begin on the date we acknowledge receipt of the application.
- 3.22 The time period may be extended by Ofgem once, for a period of time specified by us. We will only consider extending the time period where it is justified. We will contact the applicant as soon as reasonably practicable if we decide to do this, setting out the reasons for the extension and the period of the extension.
- 3.23 At any time during the processing of the application, we may contact an applicant to request additional information or clarification relating to the application. Where we do so, we will explain what information is required and the timeframe for providing it.

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- 3.24 If the applicant does not provide the requested information or clarification within the specified timeframe, we may determine that we are unable to continue processing the application and may cancel the application.
- 3.25 Once the outstanding information is provided, we will confirm that the application is complete. The processing time period of 3 working days will then reset and restart from zero days.
- 3.26 We can cancel any application and will do so when we consider we do not have required information, we do not receive a response from the applicant within our timeframe, or we are unable to get in contact with the applicant. In these instances, we will notify an applicant that the application is considered cancelled and provide instructions on how to re-apply if they wish to do so
- 3.27 If we do not make a decision within the relevant time period of 3 working days after we have confirmed an application for authorisation is complete, authorisation will be granted automatically. This is known as tacit authorisation. This does not apply to transfer applications, please see 3.48 ‘Application for transfer of authorisation’.
- 3.28 Holding an authorisation does not mean Ofgem has assured a business model. It is the responsibility of an applicant’s directors to properly assess that they have adequate resources and have completed due diligence for their business. Under no circumstances should the conferral of authorisation be considered by third parties as a form of assurance in respect of the future prospects or conduct of the authorised person.
- 3.29 At any time before we confer authorisation, the applicant may withdraw their application.

Granting and refusing an authorisation application

- 3.30 An authorisation may be conferred if the applicant successfully provides the information required in our form and provides relevant declarations.
- 3.31 Authorised persons are required to comply with the [authorisation conditions](#) from the date authorisation is conferred. Authorisation conditions may be modified from time to time. Authorised persons are responsible for keeping up to date with any changes to authorisation conditions by reviewing all authorisation condition modifications published by Ofgem.
- 3.32 We have powers under regulation 28 of the 2025 regulations to take compliance and enforcement action for breach of an authorisation condition.
- 3.33 As required by regulation 12(4) of the 2025 regulations, we will publish the names and location of authorised operators and suppliers on our electronic public register. This list will be updated from time to time.

Reasons to refuse an authorisation

3.34 There are occasions when we may decide to refuse an authorisation application.

3.35 Common reasons for refusal include but are not limited to:

- granting an authorisation may conflict with our statutory duties
- we consider the information supplied to be false or misleading

3.36 When we intend to refuse an authorisation, the applicant will receive a notice stating that we propose to refuse the application, providing the reasons why we propose to refuse the application and specifying the time within which, any representations can be made.

3.37 Applicants are still able to withdraw their application during this time if they decide to do so.

3.38 If no representations are made within the time stated in the notice, or if after considering any representations made, we are still of the view that the application should be refused, the applicant will be notified in writing of our decision to refuse the authorisation.

3.39 The refusal notification will restate the reasons for the refusal of the application, referring to any representations made, as appropriate.

3.40 When an authorisation is refused, we may publish information relating to that decision where we consider publication would promote the interests of heat network consumers. Before deciding whether to publish such information, we will consult the applicant and consider the public interest in publishing the information balanced against the potential impact on the applicant when deciding whether to publish a notice.

3.41 If an applicant is not happy with their experience or the communication they have had with us, they are entitled to make a complaint. Making a complaint will not change the decision or the outcome of the decision. Details of our [complaints process](#) are on our website.

Information requirements

3.42 The person applying for authorisation must complete the webform available on our website, or by alternative means if we have agreed to this.

3.43 The webform requires applicants to provide information about the applicant and their organisation and the heat network on which they intend to undertake a regulated activity. Below we have summarised the questions the person applying for authorisation will be asked to provide:

3.44 Organisation information

- organisation or company name

- their role in the organisation
- contact details
- the regulated activity that they are applying to carry out
- the expected date for the regulated activity to commence
- details of any existing heat network(s) registered with Ofgem
- if they are responsible for making decisions about modifications to all parts of the relevant heat network infrastructure

3.45 Heat network specific information

- the name of the heat network
- the geographical location of the network
- if the heat network is a communal or a district heat network
- details of connections to other relevant heat networks

3.46 As part of an application, we require applicants to provide declarations:

- they are authorised to complete the application
- they have read and understood the current Ofgem Application Guidance
- to the best of their knowledge and belief, all details and information (and document(s) where relevant) provided in the application are true and complete
- they understand that it is a criminal offence to knowingly or recklessly make a false or misleading statement as part of their application
- they have read, understood and can comply with the relevant authorisation conditions that will apply if authorisation is conferred.

Application for transfer of an authorisation

3.47 The authorisation transfer process applies if an existing authorised person (the transferring entity) wishes to transfer its authorisation to a different entity (the applicant). An authorisation can only be transferred if the Authority determines that the holder of the authorisation that is to be transferred has consented to the transfer of the existing authorisation.

3.48 The new entity should complete the application webform on our website. We have included additional questions for applicants when applying for a transfer. These include:

- a reason for the transfer

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- the date the transfer is intended to happen (when the applicant intends to take over the regulated activity)
- the regulated activity that is the subject of the transfer application
- evidence, in writing, the transferring entity has consent to the transfer, or information or evidence that will assist Ofgem in determining if they have consented.

3.49 In addition to this we will also require evidence that the applicant has taken reasonable steps to ensure continuity of supply for applicable customers on terms that are the same as or as similar as possible to the terms in place prior to the transfer.

3.50 Given the potential impact on consumers when an authorisation is transferred, there is no processing time period for transfers. However, we will aim to process these types of applications as quickly as possible within a reasonable time period.

4. Registering a heat network

Overview

- 4.1 Registration is the process by which ~~heat network operators and suppliers with deemed authorisation under [regulation 27](#) of the regulations, must formally notify us about their heat networks and the activities they undertake.~~ heat network operators and suppliers provide information to us about their heat networks and the activities they undertake.
- 4.2 We ~~will~~ use registration to identify authorised persons and their heat networks, gather essential details and establish a compliance baseline. ~~Declaring non-compliance will not prevent an authorised person from completing registration.~~
- 4.3 Authorisation condition A04: Registration sets out the obligation to register, types of information that must be provided, the registration procedure if operation and supply are undertaken by different entities, and registration requirements for heat networks with multiple operators.
- 4.4 Authorised persons must complete registration by the ~~end of the first part of the initial period as defined in [regulation 26](#) of the regulations.~~ applicable deadline set out in authorisation condition A04: Registration:
- Operators and suppliers that commence a regulated activity on or before 26 January 2027 and are therefore deemed authorised under [regulation 27](#) of the 2025 regulations must register with us by the end of 26 January 2027
 - Operators and suppliers that, after completing the application process, are authorised by Ofgem under [regulation 16](#) of the regulations, must register with us within 3 months of commencing that activity
- 4.5 ~~Entities that are required to register are deemed authorised under [regulation 27](#) of the regulations and so the registration process will not affect their authorisation status.~~

Who needs to register

- 4.6 Authorised persons that began operating or supplying a heat network before 1 April 2025 are automatically authorised under the 2025 regulations, referred to as ‘deemed authorisation’, and may continue these activities. ~~and may continue these activities.~~ Deemed authorisation also applies to regulated activity that has been commenced during the first part of the initial period.
- 4.7 All operators and suppliers with deemed authorisation are required to register their heat networks with us by the end of the first part of the initial period, 27-26 January 2027.

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- 4.8 Operators and suppliers authorised by Ofgem after completing the application process, must register with us within 3 months of commencing regulated activity.
- 4.9 A regulated activity has been commenced when an authorised person first undertakes the regulated activity of operation or supply on a relevant heat network. For supply, this is when the authorised person first supplies heating, cooling or hot water to heat network consumers by means of the relevant heat network. For operation, this is when the authorised person first controls the transfer of thermal energy on the relevant heat network for the purposes of supplying heating, cooling or hot water. If a heat network is operational only for purposes such as testing and commissioning, prior to supply to consumers, the regulated activity has not commenced.
- 4.10 For heat networks where operation and supply are undertaken by separate entities, both parties will be required to submit information relevant to their role to complete registration. Registrations are initiated by the operator, ~~who~~ which must complete ~~their~~ its submission before the supplier proceeds.
- 4.11 Where there are multiple operators for different parts of a relevant heat network, For heat networks with multiple operators, if a nominated operator has been agreed by parties, this entity will complete registration, submitting information on behalf of the other operators.

How to register**Digital service for heat networks regulation**

- 4.12 The digital service for heat networks regulation is a centralised platform to support regulatory compliance across Great Britain.
- 4.13 Authorised persons can register their heat networks and activities via the digital service ~~from spring 2026~~ by submitting required information about their operations, infrastructure, and consumer arrangements.
- 4.14 Registration via the digital service is designed to be user-friendly and to capture the minimum level information required for the commencement of regulatory oversight. It includes built-in help-text to assist users.

Regulatory contact

- 4.15 When creating an account on the digital service, a ‘regulatory contact’ must be provided as the designated contact for regulatory purposes. This individual should ideally be the most senior person with responsibility for the heat network’s operations and regulatory compliance.
- 4.16 To create an account, the regulatory contact will be required to submit information about the authorised person such as name, type of organisation and contact details.

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- 4.17 The regulatory contact can control user permissions for the account and can invite additional users to access the service and submit information.
- 4.18 The regulatory contact remains ultimately responsible for ensuring that all submitted information is accurate and complete.

Registration as a single entity

- 4.19 If a single entity is undertaking both regulated activities of operation and supply on a heat network, that entity will be responsible for completing the full registration process.
- 4.20 The authorised person will be required to provide detailed information related to their roles as both operator and supplier.
- 4.21 Information submitted as part of the registration process includes:
- details of the entity or organisation that is the authorised person
 - the regulated activities being undertaken
 - the type and configuration of the heat network
 - technical information about the energy centre
 - details about heat network customers
 - declarations about compliance and practices

Registration of heat networks with split regulatory responsibility separate operator and supplier

- 4.22 For heat networks where operation and supply are undertaken by separate entities, both parties must register via the digital service and provide information about themselves or their organisation and information relevant to their role.
- 4.23 During the registration process, the operator must confirm whether they also undertake supply on the heat network, or they must identify another entity that does.
- 4.24 Once the operator has completed their submission, any entities they have identified as the supplier(s) for the heat network will be invited to complete their section of the registration.
- 4.25 Under the authorisation condition A04: Registration, the supplier must co-operate with the operator of the heat network, including by providing relevant information to them, to facilitate the timely discharge of the obligation to register.
- 4.26 Suppliers cannot complete registration until they are invited to do so. The obligation for the supplier to register is not triggered until the operator has completed their submission.

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- 4.27 If a supplier is unable to register by their applicable registration deadline ~~the end of the first part of the initial period~~ due to a separate entity not having completed the operation component of registration, the supplier should contact us.

Registration of heat networks with multiple operators

- 4.28 In the 2025 regulations, it is recognised there may be cases where different parts (i.e. different physical parts) of a relevant heat network may be operated by different authorised persons. In these situations, ~~For heat networks where multiple parties fulfil the role of operator,~~ all operators that are deemed authorised under the 2025 regulations are individually responsible for complying with the requirement to register.
- 4.29 These parties may agree for one operator to complete registration and submit information on behalf of the other operators.
- 4.30 Where such an agreement is reached and registration is completed by the agreed party on behalf of other operators, all operators will have fulfilled the registration requirement.
- 4.31 It is not intended that multiple operators are in place on a single relevant heat network except where they have distinct regulatory responsibility for different physical parts of the network.

Registration submission

- 4.32 Following the creation of an account on the digital service, authorised persons are required to provide accurate information about their heat networks and activities through the registration process. Prior to submission, the authorised person must declare that the information they have provided is correct, to the best of their knowledge.
- 4.33 The digital service will automatically check that all required fields have been completed. When all required information has been provided, the authorised person may proceed to submit the registration.
- 4.34 ~~Registration does not involve an assessment or approval process.~~ Once submitted via the digital service, registration of the heat network is complete, and no further action is required by the authorised person unless advised by us.
- 4.35 Authorised persons will receive an email acknowledgement following submission, confirming registration has been completed and including a unique ID which should be retained for reference and correspondence. Registration of each heat network will generate a separate confirmation.

Detailed information requirements for registration

- 4.36 The regulatory contact is responsible for submitting all information requested via the digital service.

Organisation-level information

- 4.37 As part of account creation on the digital service, authorised persons will be required to submit information about themselves or their organisation. This organisation-level information is submitted once during the registration process and does not need to be repeated for each individual heat network that the authorised person registers.
- 4.38 Where they are separate entities, the operator and supplier will both provide organisation-level information.

Details of organisation

- 4.39 The authorised person will be asked to provide the following details about their organisation before they provide information about specific heat networks:
- type of organisation
 - organisation or company details
 - organisational structure, for example, details of any parent companies
 - financial resilience indicators

Significant managerial responsibility or influence (SMRI)

- 4.40 Authorised persons must not appoint, or retain in post, any individual in a position of Significant managerial responsibility or influence (SMRI) unless that person is deemed fit and proper to hold such a role.
- 4.41 Authorisation condition [A08: Ongoing Fit and Proper Requirement](#) details this obligation and the circumstances an authorised person should have regard to when considering whether an individual is fit and proper.
- 4.42 People with SMRI may include directly employed staff or certain advisors or consultants who have effective decision-making authority.
- 4.43 As part of the registration process, the authorised person will need to complete and submit an SMRI declaration, unless the organisation already has a current SMRI declaration on ~~their~~ its digital service account. SMRI declarations expire after 3 years.
- 4.44 The SMRI declaration asks the authorised person questions to confirm compliance with the fit and proper obligation, such as ~~having~~ whether all persons with SMRI are fit and proper and whether policies and procedures are in place to ensure that all persons with SMRI are fit and proper.
- 4.45 It is the responsibility of the authorised person to declare whether all persons with SMRI are fit and proper, not the SMRI themselves.

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4.46 We may contact the authorised person for further information if they declare they do not have robust procedures in place to assess the suitability of individuals in SMRI roles, or they do not conduct regular assessments to ensure those individuals continue to remain fit and proper. We may also contact the authorised person if they declare that not all people with SMRI at the organisation are fit and proper.

Network specific information

Technical specifications of the heat network

4.47 The operator is responsible for providing information about the physical and technical characteristics of the heat network.

4.48 The authorised person will be required to provide key technical details about the heat network being registered, including:

- the geographical location of the network
- the number of buildings being supplied heating, cooling or hot water
- if the network is a district heat network, the number of embedded communal networks and responsibility for those networks
- the type of energy source and technology used to generate and distribute heat
- heating capacity of the network

Customer information

4.49 The supplier is responsible for providing information about the customers served by the heat network, including:

- customer type (domestic or non-domestic consumer)
- number of customers of each type
- if any non-domestic customers are ‘small business consumers’ or ‘microbusiness consumers’

4.50 The terms ‘domestic consumer’, ‘non-domestic consumer’, ‘small business consumer’ and ‘microbusiness consumer’ are defined in authorisation condition [A03: Definitions](#).

4.51 The terms ‘small business’ and ‘microbusiness’ are defined in [regulation 56 of the 2025 regulations](#).

4.52 A microbusiness is a business that either

- consumes less than 247,000 kilowatt hours of heat per year; or,
- has fewer than 10 full-time equivalent employees; and,
 - an annual turnover of £2 million or less; or

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- a balance sheet total of £2 million or less

4.53 A small business is a business other than a micro-business that—

- consumes less than 420,000 kilowatt hours of heat per year; or,
- has fewer than 50 full-time equivalent employees; and,
 - an annual turnover of £6.5 million or less; or,
 - a balance sheet total of £5 million or less.

4.54 For the microbusiness definition, the number of full-time equivalent employees must be calculated by taking the number of full-time employees and adding, for each employee who is not a full-time employee, such fraction as is reasonable.

Continuity plan

4.55 A continuity plan ensures authorised persons have a strategy, supported by documentation, to transfer critical data and assets to a successor if they are no longer able to continue the role of supplier or operator of a heat network.

4.56 Both the operator and the supplier will be required to confirm whether a continuity plan is in place and fit for purpose. For deemed authorised operators and suppliers this ~~It~~ is required to be in place by the end of the first part of the initial period.

4.57 Chapter 5 of the [heat networks financial resilience guidance](#) provides further details.

Complaints management procedure

4.58 Authorised persons must maintain a suitable complaints management policy and demonstrate the ability to cooperate with other authorised persons, where necessary, to resolve consumer complaints effectively.

4.59 During registration, the operator and supplier are jointly responsible for confirming that the following appropriate complaints procedures are in place:

- a clear and accessible process for consumers to raise complaints
- a defined procedure for investigating and resolving complaints in a timely and fair manner

Consumer vulnerability

4.60 The supplier is responsible for providing information during registration about consumer vulnerability and compliance with associated regulatory requirements.

4.61 Under authorisation condition [B08: Priority Services Register](#), the supplier must establish and maintain a Priority Services Register (PSR), or an accepted equivalent, to ensure appropriate treatment and support for consumers in a

vulnerable situation. The PSR requirement only applies for heat networks that supply domestic customers.

- 4.62 Suppliers are expected to collect information about the vulnerability of their domestic customers to ensure these customers are identified and given appropriate support.
- 4.63 ‘Vulnerable situation’ is defined in authorisation condition [A03: Definitions](#).
- 4.64 Chapter 6 of the [heat networks consumer protection guidance](#) contains further details of consumer vulnerability requirements.
- 4.65 During the registration process, the supplier is required to confirm whether a PSR or an equivalent mechanism is in place and operational.
- 4.66 To establish baseline data for monitoring this requirement, the supplier will be required to confirm as part of registration:
- whether the heat network is supplying to any customers in a vulnerable situation
 - the number of customers in a vulnerable situation supplied by the network

Registering a Shared Ground Loop (SGL) heat network

- 4.67 When registering a Shared Ground Loop (SGL) heat network, the authorised person will be asked for information relevant to the specific characteristics of this heat network type and typical charging structures.
- 4.68 Certain questions, such as those relating to the heat network energy centre, will not be asked in the registration process where they are not applicable to the regulation of SGL heat networks.
- 4.69 The registration process includes questions to confirm the charging and ownership structure for the SGL heat network being registered as one of following:
- the ‘utility model’, whereby centralised infrastructure is owned by, and the responsibility of, a third-party that charges an access fee
 - the ‘non-utility model’, whereby centralised infrastructure is owned by, and the responsibility of, a third-party that does not charge any fees
 - a ‘small, private SGL’, whereby network consumers have joint ownership and responsibility for centralised infrastructure, and no charges are levied

Registration of co-located SGLs

- 4.70 Under the regulations, authorisation is required for each individual relevant heat network.

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- 4.71 Due to the design characteristics of SGL heat networks, multiple systems may be installed in proximity to each other without being physically connected by pipework.
- 4.72 Authorised persons may include a group of co-located SGLs in a single registration, where these are managed as a single entity.

Next steps following registration**Publication of list of authorised persons**

- 4.73 Under [regulation 12](#) of the 2025 regulations, Ofgem is required to publish a list of authorised persons including:
- the regulated activities that they undertake
 - the geographical location of the heat network
- 4.74 The published list will be updated regularly with details of completed registrations.

Authorisation conditions

- 4.75 Operators and suppliers must comply with the authorisation conditions relevant to the regulated heat network activities they are authorised to undertake. If there are changes to the nature or scope of the regulated activity, the applicable authorisation conditions may also change.
- 4.76 Each authorised person is responsible for ensuring they are familiar and comply with the authorisation conditions that apply to them. The heat network [general authorisation conditions](#) are published on our website with associated guidance.
- 4.77 Authorised persons are required to comply with all relevant consumer protection obligations both before and after the registration of a heat network. This includes ensuring fair treatment, clear communication, and appropriate support for heat network consumers.

Regular data reporting

- 4.78 Following registration, authorised persons will be required to submit monitoring data on a regular basis. The specific data to be submitted, along with the frequency of reporting, is set out in authorisation condition [A09: Provision of Information to the Authority](#) and associated regular data reporting guidance.
- 4.79 ~~Our At time of publication, draft~~ [guidance for regular data reporting](#) ~~details the data points suppliers and operators are responsible to provide to Ofgem and the exceptions that apply. It includes information that will be required to in each the submission period and deadlines for submitting quarterly and annual data, is being consulted on. This guidance will be finalised and published prior to requirements coming into effect~~

Heat network technical assurance scheme (HNTAS) engagement

- 4.80 It is expected that in future, authorised persons ~~regulated parties~~ will be required to engage and comply with the requirements of the heat network technical assurance scheme (HNTAS) ~~as part of their ongoing compliance obligations following registration.~~
- 4.81 At the time of publication of this guidance, the requirements of HNTAS have not been finalised.

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5. Heat networks with multiple operators

Nominating an operator

- 5.1 This guidance is intended to support understanding and compliance with the obligations outlined in authorisation condition A05: Nominated Operator. It applies specifically to heat networks where multiple authorised persons control different parts of the physical heat network infrastructure and clarifies the responsibilities for nominating an operator to act as the main regulatory contact and share information and notifications.
- 5.2 [Regulation 13](#) of the [2025](#) regulations sets out the circumstances under which multiple parties may be identified as the operator for different physical parts of a relevant heat network. Where this occurs, these parties must use reasonable endeavours to agree which of them is to act as the contact point with Ofgem, on behalf of the other operators for the network.
- 5.3 It is expected that all parties identified as operators of the heat network will take practical and proportionate steps to reach an agreement such as actively communicating and cooperating with other parties and making genuine efforts to resolve any differences.

Responsibilities

- 5.4 The nominated operator must promptly relay any information and notifications received from us to the other operators of the relevant heat network, and likewise communicate information and notifications received from those operators to us.
- 5.5 Other operators that are not the nominated operator must promptly provide information and notifications to the nominated operator as may be reasonably required.
- 5.6 The transfer of information and notifications between operators, and between operators and Ofgem, should occur without undue delay and within a timeframe that is both practical and reasonable in the circumstances.
- 5.7 The nominated operator must provide reasonable co-operation and coordination in ~~their~~ its role as the single point of contact. This means they must work with the other operators and us to facilitate the communication of information and notifications that is required to follow regulatory rules and for us to exercise our duties in relation to regulation of activity on the heat network.
- 5.8 The responsibilities of the nominated operator are limited to ~~their~~ its role as the primary point of regulatory engagement. In fulfilling this role, the nominated operator does not adopt any regulatory liability for the actions or inactions of other operators for the heat network.

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- 5.9 If the nominated operator has completed registration and provided information on behalf of the other operators, we expect that these other operators will need to engage with the heat networks digital service to provide certain ongoing information such as for financial resilience and the ongoing fit and proper requirement.

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Send us your feedback

We are keen to receive your feedback about this guidance. We would also like to get your answers to these questions:

- Do you have any comments about the quality of this guidance?
- Do you have any comments about its tone and content?
- Was it easy to read and understand? Or could it have been better written?
- Do you have any further comments?

Please send your feedback to stakeholders@ofgem.gov.uk.