

The Questionnaire – For customers

Hello. Thank you for taking the time to complete our questionnaire.

We hope all the questions are clear, but if you have any difficulties please email connections@ofgem.gov.uk.

Once you have completed the questionnaire please send it back to us to the email address above. You need to return the completed questionnaire to us by 31 July 2014.

After we have read your answers we might want to have a chat with you to understand a bit more. We'll try and do this in August.

Part 1 - About you

Question	Your response
What is your name?	
What is your position?	
What are your contact details?	

Part 2 - About your business

Question	Your response
What is your company's name?	Glesson Homes
What is the nature of your company's business?	Housebuilder
Why do you need to make new connections to the electricity distribution network?	Mainly connections for new networks through housing developments to serve properties, we do have the odd commercial connection for site compound/sales office pumping stations and or shop developments.

What past experience does your business have in getting new connections to the electricity distribution network?	We find it is much hit and miss regards levels of service some jobs run quite well where others take an absolute age to get connected. The main delays we have are generally HV connections to substations and sites with lots of offsite HV works. We always use INDO companies for this work but the HV is owned and supervised by NPG. We find NPG site inspectors to be far too finicky and requesting exacting standards that are just not justified i.e. requesting cables to be lowered or made higher because they are 50mm out!!!
What areas of the country does your business have facilities in that have required new connections to the electricity distribution network?	We operate in the north East North West and Yorkshire and the North midlands so generally western power, NPG, Scottish Power and Electricity North West.
What type of connections do you make to the distribution network?	INDO networks

Part 3 - About how you get a new electricity connections to the local grid.

Question	Your response
Does your business manage the process of getting a connection using your own staff, or do you use a consultant to guide you through the process?	Yes we do manage the process in house.
What issues are important for you when getting a connection? Please rank in order of importance, with 1 being the most important and 7 the least important.	<div>1 The cost of connection</div> <div>3 Customer service</div> <div>2 The time it takes to issue a connection quote</div>

	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 The time in which a connection can be made <input type="checkbox"/> 2 The certainty around the cost of connection and the timetable for delivery <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Ability to offer innovative connection solutions <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____(please specify)
In the past have you had quotes for connection(s) from a range of companies, or solely from the local DNO? Please tick one box.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x A range of quotes – <u>please go to part 4</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Just a quote from the local DNO – <u>please go to part 5</u>

Part 4 – About how you choose between a range of quotes.	
Question	Your response
You've indicated that you normally receive a range of quotes for connection, both from your local DNO and other independent connection providers. When deciding which quote to accept, what factors do you consider?	Cost, always!!!
Please rank these factors that you	1.

described in the previous question in order of importance to you, with 1 being the most important.	2. 3. 4. 5. Etc.
Please give an indication of who you have tended to award work to.	<p>Please tick one box only.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Always the DNO</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Mainly the DNO</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> About half and half between the DNO and others</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Mainly an ICP or IDNO</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Always an ICP or IDNO</p>
What do you think are the risks/problems with using an independent connections provider?	We don't really see any particular risk or have experienced any, none of the contractors are particularly excellent at providing a service but neither are any of the DNO's. We suppose the risks that are possible are the company going out of business however we understand there are regulations in place that would prevent any loss of service.
How has your view on who to award work to changed with experience?	It has definitely moved us towards the IDNO route we find all quotes when awarded as an MU project they come in much more cost effective when compared to appointing separate DNO companies. We feel this is because IDNO companies are more flexible at offering asset values for their electric network than the DNO's are. We feel the DNO's still think they have a monopoly so charge what they like with little or no competition.
When would you only seek a quote from the local DNO?	We wouldn't, any quote from a DNO would always be requested in addition to IDNO and MU quotes.

Part 5 – About why you chose to use the local DNO

Before engaging with this process, were you aware that you could use a company other than the local DNO to complete your connection?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
What do you think are the benefits in using a company other than the local DNO to provide a connection?	More competition so costs are lower, also if they mess up on a job we have option of using another one. If a DNO messes up and there are no IDNO's then we have no choice but to use them again.
What do you think are the risks/problems with using an independent connections provider?	We don't see many risks it is all beneficial.
What would need to change in order for you to use a different connections provider?	N/A we already do

Part 6 - About how the cost of connections informs the location of new business development

How much opportunity is there for you to freely choose the location of new business developments?	We choose to build in any of the areas we like and when there is a business case utilities are generally not a deciding factor unless the cost of the connections is vast.
How big a factor is the cost of connection in your decision on where to locate your business?	It can be a big deciding factor however costs for utility connections (when excessive) are generally deducted from land values.

Part 7- Other comments

The questions we've asked are designed for you to give us important information for our review. We'd also welcome any other comments about the market for new electricity connections, or problems you've experienced.

We feel the market must be much more open such as IDNO's able to carry out their own connections onto DNO mains, the POC application should be quicker and much more transparent (we find that DNO use closer/cheaper POC's for their quotes but give a POC much further away for IDNO companies). We also feel that IDNO's should be able to own and operate their own HV networks to new development substations from an existing POC, that would relax the exacting standards of the Host DNO's inspectors who think they are a monopoly and the law in these matters.

INDO's should be able to work on the existing DNO network also for things such as Street lighting connections and plot connections, minor repairs, connections for new developments etc. in all instances as the timeframes and costs for these things are generally extortionate and lengthy.