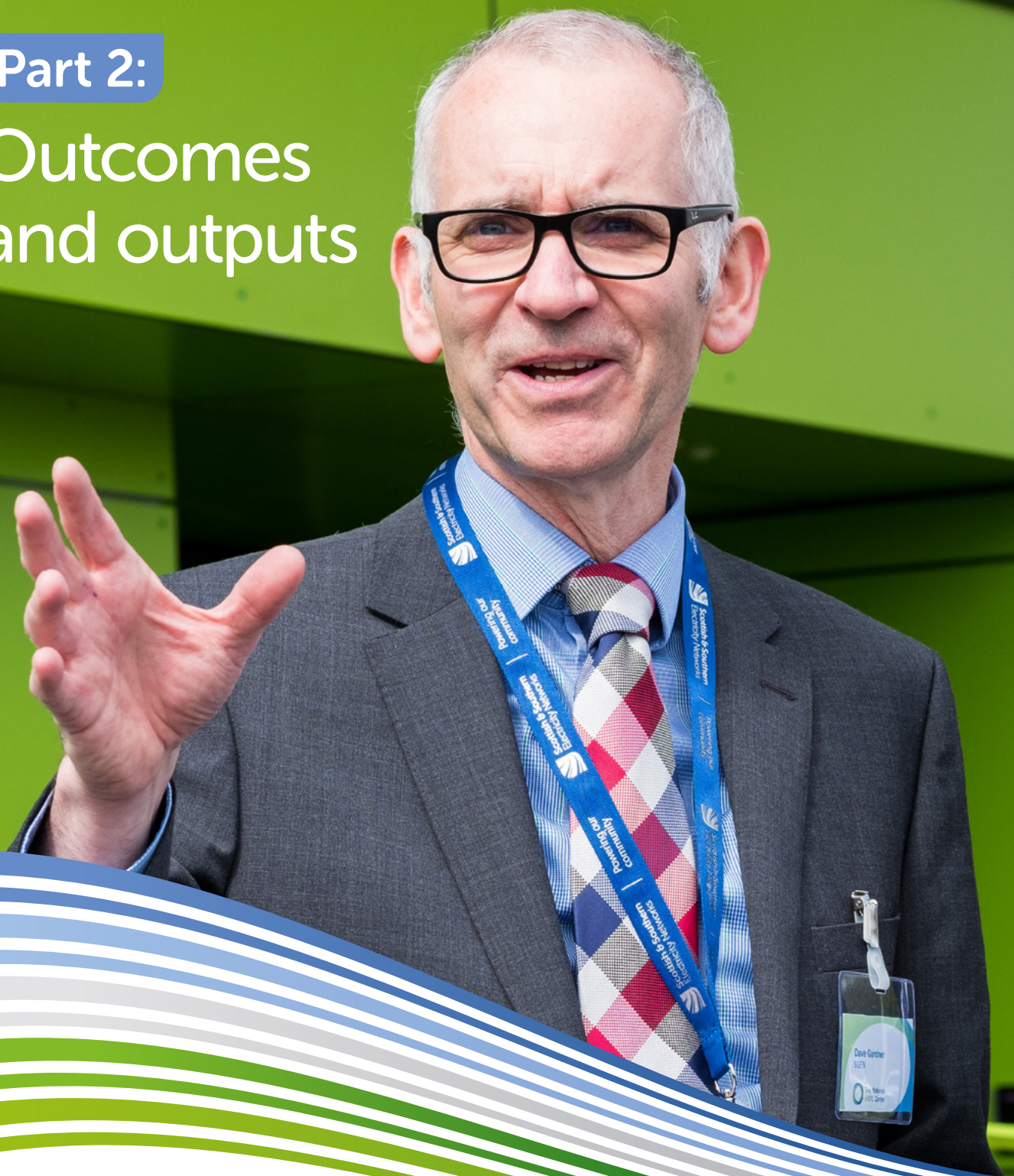


Part 2:

Outcomes and outputs



Stakeholder engagement
submission 2016/17



Scottish & Southern
Electricity Networks

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Scottish & Southern
Electricity Networks

Welcome

Welcome to Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission plc's (SHE Transmission) 2016/17 stakeholder engagement report.

This document is part of our submission to Ofgem's Stakeholder Engagement Reward, a financial incentive that rewards electricity Transmission Owners (TOs) in Great Britain (GB) for achieving positive stakeholder outcomes.

Our submission demonstrates the breadth and effectiveness of the engagement activity we undertook in 2016/17. Although not an exhaustive list of all our good work throughout the year, it gives a snapshot of some of our highlights, and the positive outcomes and outputs we have achieved for our stakeholders as a result.

An achievement I'm particularly proud of is the fact that overall stakeholder satisfaction with SHE Transmission is at its highest level of the price-control period so far, indeed the highest of any TO in GB. Stakeholders scored our general performance at a very encouraging 8.7 out of 10 in winter 2016, which is testament to the hard work of our people and their ability to deliver excellent customer service.

With the launch of our new brand, Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN), in September 2016, our electricity networks businesses are changing, with customer service very much at the core of this transformation. An example of this is the introduction of our new Stakeholder Advisory Panel, a commitment we made in last year's report and have subsequently delivered.

The Panel, consisting of six industry experts from a range of backgrounds, has already met twice this year, getting to know our business, our people and our operating environment in the process. My first experience of meeting the Panel in April was a very positive one and I'm personally looking forward to a long-lasting, constructive working relationship over the coming years as they help scrutinise our business performance, hold our Board to account for the decisions it is making, and ensure we meet our current commitments to stakeholders.

As you'll see from the rest of this report, our engagement activities are structured under the five main output areas of the current price control, around which our own Business Plan is based. This helps us to shape our activities in a way that delivers positive outcomes for our stakeholders and in turn allows us to successfully meet the objectives and commitments we make.

We have continued to take forward our six-point stakeholder engagement strategy, implemented through the different levels of engagement our business is involved in, from the strategic decisions at board level to our operations teams working in our communities. This successful model has allowed stakeholder input to influence and shape our efforts to keeping people safe around our equipment; reducing our impact on the environment; improving stakeholder service; connecting renewable energy to our network; and ensuring an available and reliable supply of electricity.

Dave Gardner
Director of Transmission
Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks



Key outputs in 2016/17



Strategic input

New Stakeholder Advisory Panel
to inform business decisions

+75

Consultations and stakeholder
engagement events

8.7/10

Overall stakeholder satisfaction
with SHE Transmission

Stakeholder Engagement Strategy

Building enduring relationships

Stakeholder Advisory Panel

Our new Stakeholder Advisory Panel will fundamentally change the strategic decisions taken at the most senior levels of our company. Consisting of six external experts, the Panel advises our Board and is chaired by our new Non-Executive Director, Rachel McEwen. Its remit is to ensure that the decisions we take are in the best interests of our stakeholders, to influence the strategic direction of SSEN and to account for delivery of the commitments we made in our RIIO-T1 Business Plan.

The Panel has met twice so far, in February and April 2017, getting to know our business and how our engagement activity is helping to deliver real benefits for our stakeholders.

Please click [here](#) for a video of our Stakeholder Advisory Panel.

Name	Background
Norrie Kerr	Director of Energy Action Scotland
Verity Murrice	Founder and a Trustee of Eight Bells for Mental Health
Sarah Boyack	Former Scottish Government Minister now visiting lecturer with Heriot-Watt University's school of Energy, Geoscience, Infrastructure and Society
Ian Hoult	Head of Emergency Planning and Resilience for Hampshire County Council
Mike Petter	Board member of The Guinness Partnership Ltd, a national housing association
Tamar Bourne	Senior project manager in Regen SW, a not-for-profit organisation which champions new ways of generating, supplying and using energy

Review

the delivery of strategic plans

Inform

our annual stakeholder engagement plans

Assess

performance against our RIIO-T1 business plan commitments

Represent

the views of stakeholders and offer advice and challenge to our Board. Outcomes of this engagement are typically delivered via new working practices, policies or procedures



What our stakeholders think about us

Our annual survey of around 150 stakeholders provides valuable insights into different aspects of our performance.

100%

Connections customers satisfied with our connections service

99%

Customers and stakeholders satisfied with our staff

99%

Customers and stakeholders rated our reputation as either excellent or good

98%

Customers and stakeholders were satisfied with how we handle communication

"I am really excited to be involved in this initiative, which shows real commitment by SSEN to accepting challenge from stakeholders and working to ensure that they deliver a high-quality service to all its customers."

Verity Murrice
Stakeholder Advisory Panel member

Our strategy



1. Identifying our stakeholders

Our new stakeholder engagement system Vuelio is now operational and is helping colleagues across SSEN to track the interests of stakeholders and keep detailed records of their views on our business.

2. Understanding our relationship with our stakeholders

Our stakeholder engagement system categorises stakeholders based on existing relationships; level of influence; and interest in shaping our planning and processes.

3. Actively engaging our stakeholders

We use a wide range of engagement methods – surveys; written consultation documents; focus groups; events – and regularly evaluate their effectiveness.

4. Informing our stakeholders

Stakeholders are given regular and accurate information, and in a format they want, to enable them to participate in key debates.

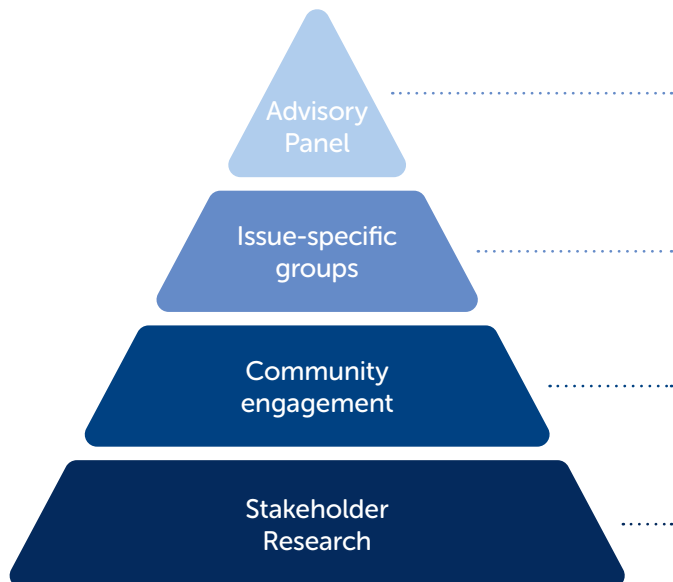
5. Listening and responding to stakeholders

The involvement of senior management ensures that stakeholder feedback is quickly developed into actions and initiatives that realise benefits for our customers and communities.

6. Being accessible to our stakeholders

Our communities team held 75 consultation events in 2016/17 covering 26 separate projects. In total the team were consulting with stakeholders for over 61 days of the year.

Our levels of engagement



Strategic engagement: Up to eight external Panel members and SSEPD Board representation meeting three times annually to review delivery of business plan commitments and provide strategic advice on relevant business decisions.

Organisational engagement: We are involved in over 12 UK and Scotland-wide issue-specific groups, including safety, energy infrastructure, economic development and environmental issues.

Operational engagement: Community engagement on the development and construction of new and upgraded transmission infrastructure.

A programme of stakeholder research which provides detailed insight from a large number of stakeholders to help us understand issues including the quality of service we provide and the perception stakeholders have of us as we move towards the end of the RIIO-T1 price-control period and consider how we approach the next price control.

Funding community resilience

Our Resilient Communities Fund has been helping non-profit-making organisations and community groups to protect the welfare of vulnerable community members across central southern England and the north of Scotland since 2015.

We are always seeking feedback on how to improve our resilience funding. In 2016, we issued consultation documents to over 600 stakeholders and we received 33 detailed responses.

We are developing our fund on the back of this feedback, and are already extending our application period up to 10 weeks. We have pledged to extend the fund beyond 2021 and from 2017/18 it will be financed using a third of the income we receive from the Stakeholder Engagement Reward over the RIIO-T1 price control (2013–2021).

In 2016/17 the Fund granted over £750,000 to 115 local projects, helping communities to purchase equipment such as defibrillators, generators and private radio systems.

Keeping people safe around our equipment

2.1 Working at height – safe practice guidelines

What we did:

Developed guidance for working on transmission overhead lines (OHL) on the back of a positive piece of work which involved Scottish Power and our transmission OHL contracting partners.

Why we did it:

- Our primary business objective is to deliver safe outcomes for our people (employees and contract partners), our customers and the environment. There is no compromise on this.
- We embrace our rules, procedures and guidance because we appreciate that we need a framework to operate within. More importantly we need our workforce to be populated by competent professionals who work within the framework and apply their skills and knowledge to deliver safe outcomes without compromise.

Outcomes

This easy to read and understand guidance has been developed as part of our framework for all persons who work for/on behalf of Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks. After producing the guidance with Transmission towers in mind it became apparent that it applies equally to working at height on all OHLs and therefore a Distribution version was also created following engagement with our Distribution colleagues.

2.2 Keeping contractors safe

What we did:

Our Safety, Health and Environment (SHE) Leadership Team, chaired by the Director of Transmission, is responsible for leading and encouraging improved performance for our workforce.

One objective within our annual SHE Development Plan was to improve engagement levels with our contracting partners. In doing this we established three regular contractor forums, one for each of our principal asset groups:

- High-voltage transmission lines
- High-voltage transmission cables
- Transmission substations

Meeting on a quarterly basis, the forums comprise all of our framework contract partners and provide an opportunity for Managers, Directors and SHE professionals to:

- Work together to share best practice, safety innovations and lessons learned
- Review and share approaches in managing common risks
- Improve communication – better intelligence from incidents and near misses.

These forums continue to develop and more contract partner companies are being included as we continue to discuss and address risks and opportunities together with our stakeholders.

Why we did it:

- To achieve our objective of delivering a sustained improvement in SHE performance.
- We were conscious that we needed to set standard arrangements for our workforce (employees and contract partners) and encourage compliance in a consistent manner. We firmly believe with regard to operating performance that we'll get the standards we are willing to accept if we communicate these and our expectations to stakeholders clearly.
- It was recognised that the differences in rules, procedures and guidance between different TOs can cause the GB contractor community issues and we wanted to introduce a consistent approach where feasible.

Outcomes

Our safety groups, together with many other developments in the SHE arena, are helping to make our business a safer place to work; on average 99.86% of our workforce (contracting partners and employees) went home safely every month in 2016/17.



Reducing our impact on the environment

Biodiversity

3.1 Species Protection Plans

Species Protection Plans (SPPs) provide a way of ensuring that, if protected species are present, they are taken into account within a development proposal.

What we did:

- Over the course of 2016/17, we sought to improve and standardise species protection during works which may impact on fresh water pearl mussels (FWPM) and beavers.
- We have developed other species protection plans together with Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) which have proven to be useful not only to us but also to SNH as they allow licences to be granted more efficiently and also provide SNH with the confidence that our approach is effectively protecting certain species encountered at project sites.

- We proactively engaged with SNH for these two additional species, drafting documents for consultation with SNH before the final plans were accepted by both parties.

Why we did it:

- They provide consistency across our projects, ensuring contractors and our own staff on site know what to do when protected species are encountered.
- They allow us to share best practice with stakeholders across our project portfolio.

Outcomes

For us it provides greater clarity and speeds up the licensing process and for SNH it provides them with the confidence that our works are being carried out in line with best practice. It makes it easier and quicker for SNH to determine licence applications.

The development of the SPPs has been highlighted by SNH at good practice events as an example of more efficient working.

These plans will now be used across projects where there is a risk of those species being present.

3.2 Protecting woodland in Scotland

What we did:

- Engaging with Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) to construct a new working arrangement which sets out how staff of FCS will interact with us on projects to develop and build new infrastructure.
- The new arrangement will define expectations on consultation and the level of information required by FCS and SHE Transmission during the various stages of project development.

Why we did it:

- We received feedback from FCS that it would be beneficial to engage with them at an earlier stage in the development process, allowing their views to be heard and acted upon earlier in the decision making process.

Outcomes

We have developed a draft working agreement with the FCS. This is still subject to refinement and finalisation. The agreement formalises how we fully consider where impacts on existing woodlands are likely to be significant and how we deal with them during the optioneering and development processes (including where we provide woodland impact assessments). These identify the areas requiring to be felled and how this will impact on the woodland management of the area in question.

Case study: Supporting endangered species

A pair of ospreys have made the return trip from Africa to Alyth to start breeding on a nesting platform erected for them by SSEN.

Ospreys are believed to have nested at the Angus site for close to 30 years, and until recently, were nesting on the top of one of SSEN's electricity towers.

In March 2014, SSEN erected a 25-metre-tall platform along with two 8.5-metre-tall perching posts under the guidance of osprey expert Roy Dennis MBE from the Highland Foundation for Wildlife and in consultation with Scottish Natural Heritage and Perth & Kinross Council.



Visual amenity

3.3 Protecting visual amenity

What we did:

- We are running the Visual Impact of Scottish Transmission Assets (VISTA) initiative to help reduce the visual impact our infrastructure has on some of Scotland's nationally designated landscapes. We have developed proposals to mitigate the visual impact of existing infrastructure. This can be achieved through a range of means, including technical measures, such as undergrounding or rerouting, and landscape measures, such as screen planting.
- To date, we've engaged with over 100 stakeholders over the past 18 months to contribute to the identification and selection of proposed projects. Stakeholder engagement has been facilitated through the VISTA website, social media, stakeholder forums and written consultation.
- In addition to consulting with stakeholders, we have also worked closely with the other GB TOs – Scottish Power Energy Networks (SPEN) and National Grid – sharing best practice from the consultation process, and providing an opportunity for engagement with the different stakeholder partnership groups established under each TO's initiative.

Why we did it:

- The towers, OHLs, substations and other infrastructure that we own and maintain are at the heart of a safe and reliable electricity network in the north of Scotland. Due to the geographical make-up of our licence area, some of our infrastructure runs through the country's most valued landscapes, including National Parks and National Scenic Areas (NSAs).
- With most of our network dating back to the 1950s, when power was first delivered to the Highlands and Islands, consideration of the impact of this infrastructure was less pronounced, in part due to the planning rules of the time. VISTA offers a unique opportunity for us to look again at our assets and mitigate their impact in some of Scotland's most precious landscapes.
- As part of price controls and incentives to cover the period up to March 2021, Ofgem is administering a £500m fund for UK electricity TOs to mitigate the impact of existing electricity infrastructure on the visual amenity of nationally designated landscapes.

Outcomes

We will be undertaking further development of a shortlist of proposal projects throughout 2017 and hope to submit our first applications to the fund in early 2018. By this time, we hope to have assessed the impacts of existing infrastructure, developed potential mitigation solutions where appropriate, and appraised different options to select the most beneficial proposals. All this will be carried out in close collaboration with our stakeholders.

We will be working hard to secure regulatory funding to deliver shortlisted proposals and to continue to build on the positive stakeholder collaboration established through VISTA, with the ultimate aim of leaving a lasting legacy that improves our impact on Scotland's landscapes.

Case study: Toppling towers in the Cairngorms

The final phase of transmission tower removal from the Cairngorms National Park started in April 2017.

The initial phase removed 53km of overhead lines from the Cairngorms National Park, east of Boat of Garten and across the Lecht to Cairnmore in Aberdeenshire, during 2011 and 2012. On completion of this final section, over 300 transmission towers will have been removed from the Cairngorms National Park as part of the Beaully-Denny project, covering a distance of over 90km, resulting in over 1,500 tonnes of steel for recycling.

3.4 Developing sustainable tower structures

What we did:

- We are designing new transmission structures for OHLs based on new technologies and techniques. The new suite of structures will then be deployed on the transmission network subject to passing technical, environmental and economic assessments.
- Stakeholder input has driven the design refinement process with contributions from consultees, main contractors and the supply chain, transmission operations teams and TOs.

Why we did it:

- The increase in renewable generation is driving the need for new OHLs, often in remote areas with limited infrastructure and challenging construction and operational conditions.
- Transmission structure design in GB has not changed significantly over the past 85 years, despite a number of innovations which could reduce the visual and construction impacts of OHLs on the environment.
- The project is funded by the Network Innovation Competition, which awarded it £7.5m in 2015.
- OHLs built using transmission structures are the most visible element of the transmission network. The new structures will be less perceptible, use less material, need less construction and require less maintenance than our current steel lattice designs.

Outcomes

81% of over 2,000 customers surveyed preferred a new monopole design to our steel lattice benchmark we currently use, which we'll be taking forward as a direct result of engagement.

We anticipate the following benefits once we are in a position to test the new structures on our network:

Improve OHL environmental performance by reducing visual and construction impacts.

Lower OHL costs over assets' lifetime through reduced land, construction, maintenance and outage requirements.

Improving stakeholder service

4.1 Working more efficiently with Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH)

SNH is a Scottish Government funded public body responsible for promoting, caring for and improving Scotland's natural heritage. They also have responsibilities for certain planning applications and as such are a key statutory consultee with whom developers, including SHE Transmission, frequently engage.

What we did:

- We started this process by following the new OHL routing guidelines developed in house. We then developed and agreed what information we would provide SNH at any particular stage, what questions we were likely to ask, and what we would expect from SNH by way of a response.

Why we did it:

- Discussions with SNH identified that some of their staff did not understand our development process and how they should respond. There were similar inconsistencies in our project teams on how and when to consult SNH.
- To ensure a more comprehensive and earlier understanding of the potential consenting risks of projects as a result of receiving informative consultation responses.

Outcomes

This agreement sets out how staff of SNH will engage with us on projects to develop new overhead transmission lines (132 Kilovolts or above).

We have agreed to review this working arrangement annually to ensure it remains effective and appropriate, and continues to meet both organisations' needs.

4.2 Landscape and visual impact assessment of overhead lines

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments (LVIA) play an important part in planning decisions by identifying the effects of new developments on views and on the landscape itself.

What we did:

- We set up a working group of external consultants to produce guidance on reporting and methodology for landscape and visual impact assessments (LVIA) for environmental impact assessments (EIAs).
- Once we reached agreement between the landscape architects in our working group, we shared our draft guidance with Argyll and Bute Council, The Highland Council, and SNH, to whom we would submit planning applications. We sent the draft guidance by email and invited comments. The working group of EIA consultants discussed the comments

received from the consultees and the responses from the working group, and incorporated these into the redrafted guidance.

Why we did it:

- To reduce the number of post-submission queries related to LVIA in our planning applications and so result in faster processing of planning applications. In part, the inconsistencies stem from confusion between the requirements of different statutory consultees for LVIA and different landscape architects' interpretation of the requirements.

Outcomes

We have guidance for LVIA that ensures that we follow the same methodology for assessment and reporting purposes, regardless of which external consultant we use from our framework and which local planning authority the work is submitted to. The guidance is clear, is agreed with all consultants and is acceptable to statutory consultees.

This means that our planning applications should be processed more quickly and that we can spend less time agreeing consultants' methodology and reporting of LVIA when undertaken to support our planning applications.

The statutory consultees and planning authority will now spend less time reviewing the LVIA methodology when considering planning applications submitted with EIA.

Case study: Considerate Constructors Scheme (CCS) Awards

Gold and silver awards were presented to two projects at this year's Considerate Constructors Scheme (CCS) Awards.

The annual event recognises the highest levels of consideration and care demonstrated by construction sites towards their local neighbourhoods, the general public, their workforce and the environment.

Fyrish, a new substation near Alness received the highest accolade of a gold award whilst Loch Buidhe substation, near Bonar Bridge was awarded silver.

The Fyrish and Loch Buidhe teams introduced several initiatives to go the extra mile and achieve sites recognised as "exceptional" by the CCS Assessors, including installing electrical-vehicle charging points, gritting local public roads, providing a staff library and hosting nature walks with the local communities.



100%

**of respondents to
our annual stakeholder
satisfaction survey
think we are a safe
company**

Connecting renewable energy

5.1 Beauly-Blackhillock and Blackhillock-Kintore parliamentary reception

What we did:

- Held a parliamentary briefing in Holyrood hosted by Aberdeenshire West MSP, Alexander Burnett.
- Senior members were on hand to explain the background and need for the project, to outline progress to date and next steps, and to answer any questions or concerns about the project.

Why we did it:

- Following a series of extensive public consultation events, we learned our preferred route corridor was at odds with the views of some local stakeholders and politicians.
- To provide MSPs whose constituency or region will be impacted upon by the projects the opportunity to find out more about the proposals from the project teams and our Director of Transmission, Dave Gardner.

Outcomes

Engagement with MSPs, parliamentary staff and stakeholder organisations.

Following the publication of National Grid's Networks Options Assessment report, which included a change to the recommendation for the proposed Beauly-Blackhillock-Kintore reinforcement from last year's 'delay' to 'do not proceed', SSEN has now concluded a period of engagement with stakeholders to agree how it takes forward the recommendations.

All work associated with the project is now drawing to a close and we have taken the decision that should we return to the project in the future, we will review the options for reinforcement, providing a degree of closure to those opposed to the project as previously proposed.

Case study:

Beauly-Denny wins Scottish green energy award

The Beauly-Denny project has been recognised for its contribution to decarbonising electricity generation in Scotland with a special Judges Award at the Scottish Green Energy Awards 2016.

Hosted by Scottish Renewables, the awards night recognised the 220km, 400kV overhead line for its critical contribution to the success of renewable energy in the north of Scotland.

The electricity transmission network in the north of Scotland is now supporting more than 4.5GW of renewable electricity, over 500MW of which was connected in 2016/17 alone, the highest combined capacity to connect to the north of Scotland transmission network in a single year since electricity privatisation.



Case study:

National Grid Customer Seminars

National Grid's customer seminars are designed to give delegates, composed mostly of renewable energy developers and industry consultants, a chance to discuss topical issues affecting the industry and engage with the SO and three TOs in GB.

This year's seminars, held in January 2017 in Glasgow and London, explored some of the key themes contained in the SO's strategic annual reports, namely the Electricity Ten Year Statement, System Operability Framework and Network Options Assessment (NOA).

As well as presenting on our project portfolio, Director of Transmission, David Gardner, attended and took part in a panel Q&A session on the future of the transmission system in GB, answering questions from delegates and setting out SHE Transmission's vision for the future.

Panel Debate

nationalgrid



Barbara Vest, Energy UK
Charlotte Ramsay, National Grid
David Gardner, Scottish & Southern Electricity Networks
Duncan Burt, National Grid
Robert Groves, Smartest Energy
Scott Mathieson, SP Energy Networks

Chair: Ivo Spreeuwenberg

Case study:

Accelerating connections

In February 2017 we successfully connected Beinneun wind farm to the electricity transmission network, almost two months ahead of its contracted connection date.

Blue Energy, the developer of the 109MW wind farm, was offered an accelerated grid connection date of 31 March 2017 to ensure the wind farm qualified for the Renewable Obligations (RO) scheme before it closed at the end of the last financial year. The early connection means the developer can start exporting to the grid two months before schedule, providing an earlier expected return on investment.

The accelerated connection to the grid was helped by SSEN utilising an innovative ACCC (Aluminium Conductor Composite Core) Monte Carlo conductor to provide the connection. The use of this technology, the first of its kind on SSEN's overhead transmission infrastructure, allowed SSEN to reduce costs, timescales, and the visual and environmental impact as the connection has been provided by reconductoring and strengthening the existing 132kV steel towers instead of erecting new additional trident wood poles.



Ensuring an available and reliable supply

Case study: State-of-the-art high-voltage testing centre opens

High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) is the most efficient way to transport electricity over very long distances; however, it's a complex technology requiring in-depth study to test its compatibility with GB's electricity grid.

In response to growing numbers of submarine electricity cables using this technology, as well as an increase in interconnectors and offshore wind farms, we've built a world-leading state-of-the-art National HVDC Centre in Cumbernauld.



The facility enables industry-wide collaboration for electricity TOs and Operators, suppliers, developers and academic institutions to simulate the use of HVDC technology.

Using powerful computer simulators which replicate the electricity network in real time, engineers will be able to study the complex HVDC systems to identify and mitigate any risks in a safe test environment before the technology goes live on the network.



Case study: Assessing the future capability of the transmission network

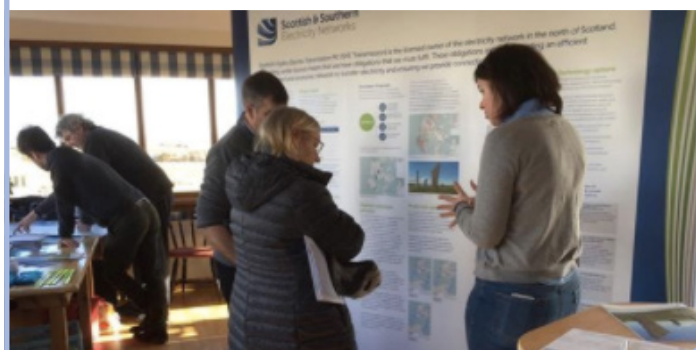
As the owner of the electricity transmission network in the north of Scotland, we have a duty to develop and maintain an efficient, coordinated and economical electricity transmission system.



An important part of our job is to plan ahead to ensure our network meets the needs of its users and our investment decisions are taken in a timely and economic manner. Working with the System Operator (SO), National Grid, and the other GB TOs, we continually review the potential transmission network requirements arising from different scenarios for future demand and generation looking ten years ahead and beyond.

For the past two years, this outlook has taken the form of the NOA. The NOA report takes information from each of the three TOs about their transmission network plans. It combines this with future generation and demand scenarios and carries out a GB-wide cost-benefit study to allow the SO to make independent recommendations about what it considers the optimal sequence and timing of transmission investments. Through this process the SO considers the interactions and timing of multiple reinforcement options across a wide geographical area.

These changes in how we collectively approach the development of the GB electricity transmission system are intended to result in the best value transmission network for energy consumers across GB, a principle we strongly support.



Stakeholder benefits

Impacts of some of our key activities

The table below summarises some of the benefits to customers arising from our activities:

Activity	Actions	Benefits
Working at height – safe practice guidelines	Produced guidance in conjunction with SP Energy Networks to deliver safe outcomes for our people, our customers and the environment	This easy to read and understand guidance has been developed as part of our framework for all persons who work for/on behalf of SSEN
Keeping contractors safe	Established three contractor safety groups, one for each of our principal asset groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-voltage transmission lines • High-voltage transmission cables • Transmission substations 	Our safety groups, together with many other developments in the SHE arena, are helping to make our business a safer place to work; on average 99.86% of our workforce (contracting partners and employees) went home safely every month in 2016/17
Species Protection Plans	Over the course of 2016/17, we sought to improve and standardise species protection during works which may impact on freshwater pearl mussels and beavers We proactively engaged with Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) for these two additional species, drafting documents for consultation with SNH before the final plans were accepted by both parties	The development of the SPPs has been highlighted by SNH at good practice events as an example of more efficient working. These plans will now be used across projects where there is a risk of those species being present
Protecting woodland in Scotland	Engaging with Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) to construct a new working arrangement which sets out how staff of FCS will interact with us on projects to develop and build new infrastructure	We have developed a draft working agreement with the FCS. This is still subject to refinement and finalisation. The agreement formalises how we fully consider where impacts on existing woodlands are likely to be significant and how we deal with them during the optioneering and development processes (including where we provide woodland impact assessments)
Protecting visual amenity	We are engaging with stakeholders to help reduce the visual impact our infrastructure has on some of Scotland's nationally designated landscapes	In close collaboration with our stakeholders, we will be undertaking further development of a shortlist of proposal projects throughout 2017 and hope to submit our first applications to the fund in early 2018
Developing sustainable tower structures	Stakeholder input has driven the design refinement process with contributions from consultees, main contractors and the supply chain, transmission operations teams, and TOs 81% of over 2,000 customers surveyed preferred a new monopole design, which we'll be taking forward as a direct result of engagement	We anticipate the following benefits once we are in a position to test the new structures on our network: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve OHL environmental performance by reducing visual and construction impacts • Lower OHL costs over assets' lifetime through reduced land, construction, maintenance and outage requirements
Working more efficiently with SNH	Discussions with SNH identified that some of their staff did not understand our development process and how they should respond. To ensure a more comprehensive and earlier understanding of the potential consenting risks of projects, we developed a mutual working arrangement with SNH	This agreement sets out how staff of SNH will engage with us on projects to develop new overhead transmission lines (132 Kilovolts or above). We have agreed to review this working arrangement annually to ensure it remains effective and appropriate, and continues to meet both organisations' needs
Landscape and visual impact assessment of overhead lines	We engaged external consultants to produce guidance on reporting and methodology for landscape and visual impact assessments (LVIA) for environmental impact assessments (EIAs)	We have guidance for LVIA that ensures that we follow the same methodology for assessment and reporting purposes, regardless of which external consultant we use from our framework and which local planning authority the work is submitted to This means that our planning applications should be processed more quickly
Beaully-Blackhillock-Kintore Parliamentary reception	Hosted a parliamentary briefing in Holyrood with Aberdeenshire West MSP, Alexander Burnett to explain the background and need for the project and to answer any questions	Following the publication of National Grid's Networks Options Assessment report, which included a change to the recommendation for the proposed Beaully-Blackhillock-Kintore reinforcement from last year's 'delay' to 'do not proceed', SHE Transmission has now concluded a period of engagement with stakeholders to agree how it takes forward the recommendations