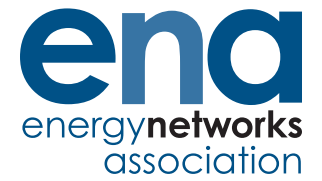


The Voice of the Networks



Working together for better results



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Working together for better results



We work day to day as individual organisations. But we come together as the ENA's Distribution Network Operators Stakeholder Best Practice Working Group.

The group was formalised as an ENA group in 2015. Already we have made significant progress across a number of important areas.

Our work in the past year has ranged from the successful launch of a new national emergency number, to championing our industry so we can attract the next generation of highly skilled employees.

We've combined our efforts to reach new community energy groups and produced guides to help pave the way for future engagement.

And we've collaborated on the production of a new infographic which enables stakeholders to compare at a glance just how well each DNO is doing.

We share our resources and experience to collaboratively deliver initiatives to tackle a range of common issues faced by customers across GB. By working together, we can explore each of these issues in depth, act upon feedback in a coordinated and efficient way, and apply learnings to our own demographics and locations, delivering high quality outcomes and better value for money for customers.

The work that the group has done to deliver outcomes in 2016-17 lays a strong foundation for future collaboration – this is an ongoing process.

Distribution Network Operators (DNOs) can identify common goals, spot gaps in how we share or utilise information and target areas which could be improved.

All of which leads to a better service for our customers.

Collaborative initiatives featured in this document

Initiative	Description	Led By	Outcome
Strength in numbers: Working together to bring change	When the lights go out and power suddenly stops, worry can set in. Families and businesses need to know what to do in an emergency. So we joined forces to come up with one easy to remember solution.	SP Energy Networks	<p>The 105 power cut number was launched across England, Scotland and Wales in September 2016.</p> <p>National awareness of the 105 number and <i>www.powercut105.com</i> website has increased from 9% just after the launch in September 2016, to 15% in February 2017.</p>
Working together for a bright future: Engaging with community energy schemes	Our industry is in the grip of change. Large power stations are giving way to networks of smaller renewable energy generators, new technologies are arriving. To keep power running smoothly, it's vital to engage effectively with the community energy suppliers of today and tomorrow.	Western Power Distribution	<p>Two 'Engaging Communities in Network Innovation' events, in Manchester and Oxford.</p> <p>Two guides produced - <i>Rough Guide to Engaging Communities in Energy Network Innovation</i> and <i>Electricity Storage Guide for Communities and Independent Developers</i>.</p>
Delivering our message: Reaching those most in need	We work hard to meet our social obligations and care for our most vulnerable customers. But the full scale of what we do might not always filter through to the people who matter. We wanted to change that.	UK Power Networks	<p>DNOs held a joint social obligations conference. Feedback from attendees was very positive. 84% of attendees rated the event positively and 83% thought the content of the presentations was good.</p> <p>Attendee feedback showed that their knowledge of the work of the DNOs on vulnerability had more than doubled.</p>
Telling our story: Our united approach	DNOs are open about how they perform - it's all contained in our annual Stakeholder Reports (SLC50). But when each DNO produces an individual report in its own unique style, it can be tricky for readers to compare one against the other.	Northern Powergrid	<p>The <i>Electricity Distribution Networks Performance Snapshot 2015-16</i> was produced in February 2017. Easy to follow graphs mean readers can compare DNO performance instantly.</p>

Initiative	Description	Led By	Outcome
We can work it out: Raising the profile of our apprenticeship programmes	Each DNO is individual. It operates in its own way, but the end results are the same: we all want to deliver exceptional service and keep the power on. It's in all our interests to attract the best young people to join our industry.	Electricity North West	<p>A plan was devised for all DNOs to follow in order to create a <i>'thunderclap'</i> style flood of social media activity at key points during National Apprenticeship Week.</p> <p>By joining together as one voice, we were able to make ourselves heard, draw attention to the opportunities available for young trainees and lay the foundations for the next generation of workers.</p>
A combined approach to getting smarter	Smart meters are revolutionising the way consumers keep track of their energy use. For DNOs, they mean reduced costs, increased efficiency and better customer service. For the best results, DNOs require access to householders' smart meter data every half hour.	Scottish & Southern Electricity Networks	DNOs commissioned joint research into customer comfort levels for us accessing their data. Our research has given DNOs a vital insight into consumers' thoughts and has informed each of the DNO's Data Privacy Frameworks.

Strength in numbers: Working together to bring change

Initiative lead: SP Energy Networks

WHEN the lights go out and power suddenly stops, worry can set in. Families and businesses need to know what to do in an emergency. So we joined forces to come up with one easy to remember solution.

The free 105 service was launched across England, Scotland and Wales in September 2016

Call to action: making life easier

Flick a switch, the power comes on. It's what householders and businesses across the UK expect. Normally, it's what they get.

While it's great that a power cut is rare for most users, it also means that when trouble strikes, some may be unsure of who to call, what to do, and what might happen next.

A review of the winter storms of 2013/14 revealed that while the response of the network companies was very strong - with power restored to more than 95% of disrupted customers within 24 hours - a number of customers had been unsure of just **who** they should contact.

Different DNOs, different phone numbers and confusion over exactly how power is distributed, had left customers confused.

A Censuswide survey revealed 72% of users asked didn't know who to turn to in a power cut. Many believed they should contact the supplier they pay their bill to. Just 21% knew to contact their electricity network operator, however, only 11% knew who that was.

In April 2014 – just a few weeks after those winter storms – the six GB Distribution Network Operators committed to delivering a solution: a simple national three digit phone number to connect customers with their local network operator.

Making change happen

The police and the NHS needed five years to establish their 101 and 111 numbers. We were looking to unite several businesses under a single number – the first time it had been done in the private sector. Could we make it happen any quicker?

In 2016-17, the ENA worked with Vodafone to develop a sophisticated telecommunications platform which would suit all DNOs. Multiple layers of stakeholder engagement overcame regulatory and statutory issues to create a system which instantly identifies where 105 callers are located. It then automatically routes their call to the right contact centre for the appropriate network operator.

The 105 service was launched across England, Scotland and Wales in September 2016.

It took just two and a half years to implement.

Sharing our news

- A major consumer awareness campaign spread the message about 105 in print and on television. Social media related to the launch alone reached 6.3m people.
- Millions of breakfast television viewers watched an interview about 105 with ENA Director of Policy Tony Glover.
- There were almost 300 individual pieces of media coverage, reaching a combined circulation of 13.5m and over 10m on social media.
- A new website, www.powercut105.com was launched. It received nearly 36,000 hits in the first 2 weeks.
- And a video, *People Behind the Power*, will soon be released to inform customers of the behind-the-scenes work of electricity suppliers.



Outputs

Our target audience for the new 105 service is every adult in the UK – that's 50m people.

Within days of the number's launch, lightning storms led to a series of outages. ENW reported 20% of customer calls arrived via the 105 service. UKPN has seen 40% of telephone contact being made through 105.

Research in January and February 2017 by YouGov for ENA showed net awareness of the 105 number and www.powercut105.com website has increased from 9% just after the launch in September 2016, to 15%.

During the survey, 2% of respondents mentioned the 105 service without being prompted.

Net 105 contact was shown to have trebled among those questioned who had called for support after a power cut at home, compared to the first post-launch survey.

More than half – 56% – of respondents to our most recent survey understand that the 105 service is free of charge.

So far we have carried out four surveys aimed at establishing customers' responses to a power cut.

Next steps

The 105 contact number is being gradually embedded in the minds of UK adults as a faster and more convenient way to make contact during emergency situations.



Our series of surveys has shown that awareness of the 105 service is consistently growing.

Working together for a bright future: Engaging with community energy schemes

Initiative lead: Western Power Distribution

Our industry is in the grip of change. Large power stations are giving way to networks of smaller renewable energy generators, new technologies are arriving. To keep power running smoothly, it's vital to engage effectively with the community energy suppliers of today and tomorrow.

Engagement matters

Last year all six DNOs agreed we could engage best with community energy groups by working under the Energy Networks Association banner.

That would enable us to produce single, nationwide guides to issues such as how to connect storage to the network, rather than creating individual versions. That would save time and money and produce more consistent guidance.

Besides, we know that ENA events are popular with community stakeholders and provide a useful platform for sharing information.

Forging new links

Our decision to come together resulted in two 'Engaging Communities in Network Innovation' events, in Manchester and Oxford.

These involved DNO senior staff, representatives from the ENA and Ofgem, renewables trade association Regen SW and Community Energy Scotland, England and Wales.

Over the two events, almost 180 participants looked into previous innovative projects and heard from industry experts.

Understanding each other

Discussion ranged from how best to engage local communities in innovative projects, to opportunities for future collaboration. Case studies – both successes and failures – were also discussed.

Local energy groups feedback revealed they want more 'face to face' opportunities in groups and one to one. They want 'surgeries', videos, webinars, podcasts, social media and briefing sessions on particular issues such as storage and a guide to initiating projects.

It became clear that making information available in places where communities are likely to look for it, providing the opportunity to upload content and using 'plain English' language, was vital.

Effective engagement

Feedback from both events was impressive: 100% of those who attended were either 'happy' or 'very happy' (52%) with the event. Round table discussions proved most engaging for attendees (29%). Panel sessions which debated innovation opportunities and case studies were also popular (19%).

Outputs

As a result of our community engagement events, new guides have been produced for DNOs and community stakeholders. Each cuts through technical language and provides vital tips on how to work together.

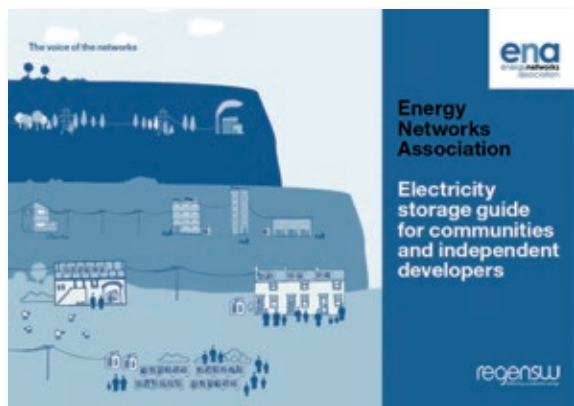
Rough Guide to Engaging Communities in Energy Network Innovation highlights how innovative projects have worked and suggests how to engage effectively.

<https://www.regen.co.uk/rough-guide-to-engaging-communities-in-energy-network-innovation>

It acts as starting point for innovative discussions which could help transform energy distribution in the future, and has been distributed to communities and stakeholders through Regen's network and by Community Energy England, Scotland and Wales. It has also been circulated internally by DNOs and through their social media feeds.



Feedback from communities also led to the *Electricity Storage Guide for Communities and Independent Developers*, which has been circulated to community stakeholders and is available from the ENA's Community Energy Hub.



<https://www.regensw.co.uk/guide-to-connecting-electricity-storage-guide-for-communities-and-independent-developers>

Next steps

DNO will host a second round of events in 2017, in two new locations.

At a more local level, DNOs are considering looking into further contact with their own communities, sourcing inspiring case studies and sharing them through podcasts, site visits and videos. Appointing key figures to act as a point of contact will encourage community energy groups to interact and share their ideas and projects.

“We came home very buoyed up by the inspiring talks, particularly the round table groups. It was so helpful to have the opportunity to discuss the successes and problems with people from other projects and to have the effective leadership of our facilitators.”

Robin and Lesley-Jane Powell, Southern Staffordshire Community Energy

As a result of this feedback, DNOs have identified the best practice methods of engaging with community energy groups, while communities now understand the potential for engaging in network innovation.

Delivering our message: Reaching those most in need

Initiative lead: UK Power Networks

We work hard to meet our social obligations and care for our most vulnerable customers. But the full scale of what we do might not always filter through to the people who matter. We wanted to change that.

“I’ve learnt stuff I didn’t know – shout louder”

Making our voices heard

All six Distributing Network Operators (DNOs) recognise the critically important role we fulfil not just in terms of their core purpose but also the social obligations we assume as providers of a vital service. Each DNO invests significantly to meet their social obligations, however feedback from the Citizens Advice Bureau suggested stakeholders who work closely with vulnerable groups might not be fully aware of the breadth and depth of what we do.

What we did

The six DNOs commissioned the charity National Energy Action to organise a workshop. Under the banner ‘Energy Networks: Working together to tackle vulnerability’, it brought together over 80 stakeholders who work with and support vulnerable people to highlight the DNOs initiatives to tackle vulnerability, to hear first-hand what the DNOs are doing and explore what more could be done to assist vulnerable customers.



Speakers from all six DNOs, and a representative from the Gas Distribution Networks highlighted our many initiatives, our work to access hard-to-reach groups, our vulnerability mapping, data cleansing and the partnerships we have forged with local organisations.

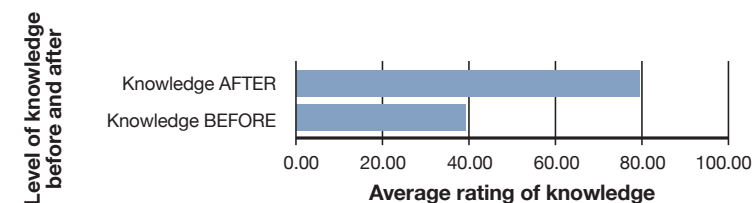


Effective Engagement

Feedback from attendees was very positive. 84% of attendees rated the event positively and 83% thought the content of the presentations was good.

The objective of the event had been to improve stakeholder knowledge and understanding and attendees feedback showed that their knowledge of the work of the DNOs on vulnerability had more than doubled.

Level of knowledge regarding the Distribution Operators and their initiatives for tackling vulnerability



Outputs

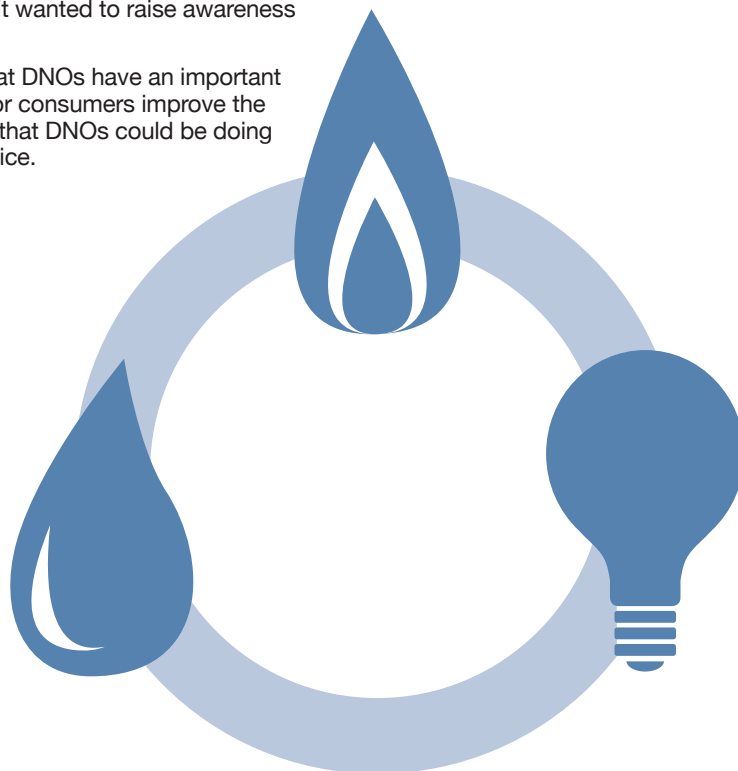
Unsurprisingly with feedback showing a more than doubling of knowledge, the recurrent theme that emerged from the discussions was the relatively low level of awareness amongst stakeholders about the depth and breadth of the work of the DNOs. This echoed the view from the CAB which had prompted DNOs to discuss how we could increase awareness of our work on social obligations and supported the rationale for organising the workshop.

Other key feedback focused on:

- **Common definitions** - Attendees noted that DNOs, and other utilities may be using different definitions for their own work on the Priority Services Register.
- **Working Collaboratively** – Stakeholder felt there was a need for the three utility sectors to collaborate on vulnerable customer work (Water, Gas and Electricity) and use best practice to inform their project working.
- **Importance of Data** - Attendees felt it wanted to raise awareness of the importance of data collection.
- **Fuel Poverty** - Attendees believed that DNOs have an important role in helping vulnerable and fuel poor consumers improve the energy efficiency of their homes, and that DNOs could be doing more to provide energy efficiency advice.

Next steps

The key outcome was for the DNOs to examine how they can continue to work together to increase awareness through via similar events, and do more to share information with stakeholders on the work we do to help vulnerable customers to raise awareness amongst stakeholders and ensure vulnerable customers know about the extra support offered by DNOs.



“Such an eye-opener, like nothing I have come across before”

“You go above and beyond what we need to – how do I find out more?”

Telling our story: Our united approach

Initiative lead: Northern Powergrid

DNOs are open about how they perform - it's all contained in our annual Stakeholder Reports. But when each DNO produces an individual report in its own unique style, it can be tricky for readers to compare one against the other.

Mind the gap

Our best practice sharing group comes together to pinpoint gaps in how we work, and areas which could benefit from a joint approach.

It looked at the way we share information about how well we are doing, and whether it could be improved.

Each DNO's Annual Stakeholders Report must contain a one page Performance Snapshot; a summary for readers designed to provide an overview of how the organisation has performed in key areas. This year we worked together to make it easier for stakeholders and interested parties to quickly find out how well we are doing through a consistent Snapshot.

How six becomes one

We met as part of an Ofgem working group to discuss how to develop consistent approaches to the reporting of performance data in a way that would ensure it was both transparent and easy to compare. A series of meetings and a consultation period was held to gather views and working together.

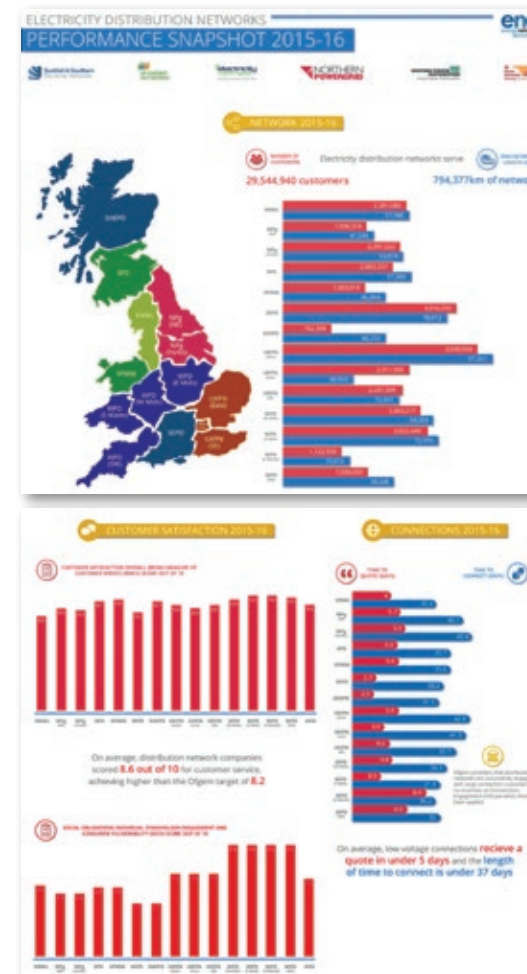
The group identified opportunities where information could be better presented across all DNO reports as well as developing a consistent Performance Snapshot to enable readers to see 'at a glance' just how DNOs compare in key areas.

Delivering our message

The Electricity Distribution Networks Performance Snapshot 2015-16 was produced in February 2017. It shows readers the scale of our combined operations - 29.5m customers and 794,377km of network - and provides a breakdown of figures for each DNO.

Easy to follow graphs mean readers can compare DNO performance instantly, whether they want to find out how many service interruptions there have been for each DNO, how satisfied customers have been or how much money DNOs are spending.

The Performance Snapshot report pulls out key information and provides averages for DNO performances - such as the 8.6 out of 10 average score for customer service, higher than the Ofgem target of 8.2, and the average customer bill, £85.03.



An ENA-led Energy Networks infographic representing the performance of all DNOs was developed, reviewed and agreed across DNOs.

Next steps

This successful collaboration between businesses helps stakeholders easily access, understand and compare important information.

Customer feedback will be used to review the effectiveness of the report and direct its shape, look and style in the coming year.

We can work it out: Raising the profile of our apprenticeship programmes

Initiative lead: Electricity North West

Each DNO is individual. It operates in its own way, but the end results are the same: We all want to deliver exceptional service and keep the power on. It's in all our interests to attract the best young people to join our industry.

Meeting the challenge

The energy industry is undergoing change, moving into a new era of smart technology combined with a need to reduce carbon emissions. Renewable energy supplies are becoming more mainstream, traditional facilities are falling by the wayside.

A rapidly evolving industry needs a skilled workforce to maintain it and develop with it.

And, as our own highly skilled workforce reaches retirement age – it's estimated that 70 per cent of network company employees will have retired within the next 15 years – there's a need to ensure there is a strong pool of talent coming up behind.

The demands of the future mean our workforce will require skills that we may not have considered as vital before – experts in digital technology, renewable energy and data analysis, among others.

Team challenge: Working together

It's vital for every DNO to attract, train and retain a quality, skilled workforce in order to meet demand now and in the future.

Apprenticeships give young people the opportunity to realise their potential, learning while they earn, and acquiring skills and knowledge that isn't always available in a classroom-only setting.

National Apprenticeship Week runs every March. It's coordinated by the National Apprenticeship Service and celebrates apprenticeships and trainee opportunities, stressing the benefits of pursuing an apprenticeship and raising awareness of workplace training schemes as a real career prospect for young people.

We wanted to create as much 'noise' as possible to attract new recruits and celebrate the successes of our brightest stars.

There has been a national rise in the number of apprenticeships – in 2015/16, there were 899,400, an increase of 3.2 per cent over the previous year.

Say it loud: joining the conversation

Of course each DNO wants to highlight its own opportunities and successes during National Apprenticeship Week.

But we realised that by joining forces, we could draw much more attention to the energy industry as an attractive source of potential careers.

Social media can be a 'noisy' place. By working together and sharing tactics, we could be better heard, encouraging more people to find out about what the energy industry might offer.

A plan was devised for all DNOs to follow in order to create a 'thunderclap' style flood of social media activity at key points during National Apprenticeship Week.

Sharing our news

All DNOs joined in, sharing news and creating activity on social media.

By using the same 'hashtags' – [#DNOApprenticeships](#), [#NAW2017](#) and [#gettingofar](#) – information could be easily found by Twitter users and act as a gateway to other tweets and links to information.

Each DNO was encouraged to highlight its own success stories using the hashtags, creating a 'buzz' around the entire industry.

The Energy Networks Association joined in, with specially timed tweets that highlighted support for apprenticeship training schemes.

The plan involved following key twitter users involved in delivering and supporting apprenticeship schemes and retweeting relevant information.

Outputs

By joining together as one voice, we were able to make ourselves heard, draw attention to the opportunities available for young trainees and lay the foundations for the next generation of workers. Our successful joint social media campaign trial led to a combined reach of over 80k.

Next Steps

Building on this trial, we plan to standardise our approach, formalise measurement of key performance indicators and run two joint social media campaigns in 2017-18.

A combined approach to getting smarter

Initiative lead: Scottish & Southern Electricity Networks

Smart meters are revolutionising the way customers keep track of their energy use, meaning more accurate energy usage data and the potential to save money. There are also opportunities for DNOs to use this data to reduce costs for customers, increase the efficiency of their networks and provide more personalised customer service. For the best results, DNOs require access to householders' smart meter data every half hour.

Understanding what consumers want

Because of data privacy legislation, customers needed to know how data linked to their energy use might be used. We wanted to point out that half hourly readings would be most effective for them, helping them keep track of their consumption so they always know where they stand.

Plus, we wanted them to know how sharing information regularly with DNOs meant we could keep on top of energy use and tailor our future plans accordingly. That would mean less wastage and better use of resources.

We need customers' permission to access data every half hour. So we wanted to work together to get all our messages across in a 'joined up' manner.

Pulling together brings results

DNOs worked together to develop a consistent set of messages to emphasise the clear benefits of half hourly access and prevent confusion among customers.

At the same time, each DNO was required to create its own Data Privacy Framework for approval by Ofgem. Although individually tailored, each needed to show it had taken into account the opinions of customers from other DNO areas as well as its own.

Ipsos Mori was commissioned by the ENA Smart Metering Steering Group (SMSG) to help DNOs understand consumer attitudes to half hourly smart meter data access. The findings would help us pinpoint how best to get our key messages over and provide detail for individual Data Privacy Frameworks.

An initial pilot session held in conjunction with Ofgem, BEIS and Citizen's Advice (CA) provided valuable feedback. Further discussion groups were held with ENA SMSG, Ipsos Mori with Ofgem, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and CA.

Our research led to a detailed report which has gone on to form the basis of the DNOs' individual Data Privacy Frameworks.

Making an impact

Our research showed there is often uncertainty among consumers of how DNOs operate, and how they differ from energy suppliers.

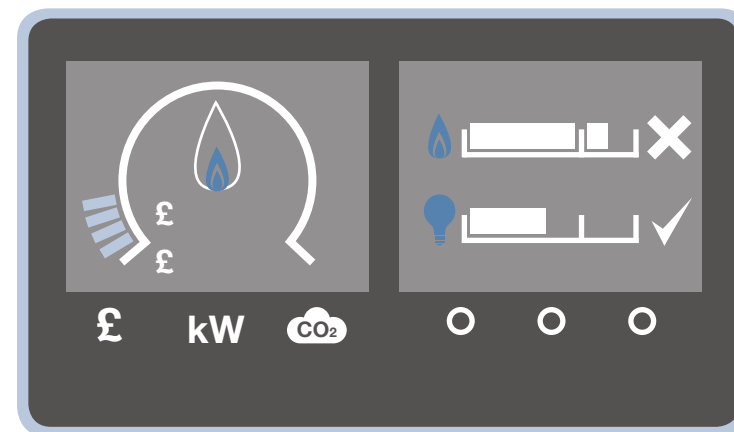
Customers can be sceptical about the transparency of the sector: there was wariness over allowing private companies to access individual data. Customers were particularly concerned data sharing might lead to increased bills and unwanted marketing calls.

However it also concluded that there was a high level of support for half hourly smart meter access.

Participants in our research developed a stronger understanding of the role of DNOs. We found the use of data as a planning tool, as a means of reducing waste and preserving resources, resonated with users.

Moving on

Our research has given DNOs a vital insight into consumers' thoughts and has informed each of the DNOs' Data Privacy Frameworks



Working together for the future

We are improving our services for all customers by working together, but there's still a lot to do. Our industry is evolving at an unprecedented rate and our continued collaboration between all six DNOs will help customers to get the best service possible as new technologies and ways of working are developed. Grouping together in this way also makes us more visible, enhancing public awareness and understanding of the electricity distribution sector.

Enduring collaboration benefits customers now and into the future.

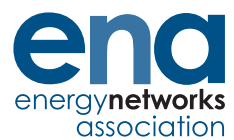
Next Steps

We will next meet in June to discuss our 2017-18 work programme, which will include hosting more community energy events and plans to refresh and repeat our Apprenticeship Week coordinated messaging. We'll also identify emerging customer needs based on collective feedback from stakeholders across all DNO areas, and develop initiatives that further improve our service to GB customers

For further information on any of the topics in this document, please contact info@energynetworks.org

The DNO Stakeholder Best Practice Group





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