



Our Looking Back, Looking Forward Report

Incentive on Connections Engagement (ICE)



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Contact Details

Connections Strategy
 Western Power Distribution
 Feeder Road
 Bristol
 BS2 0TB



Email: wpdconnpolicysupport@westernpower.co.uk

www.westernpower.co.uk/ice

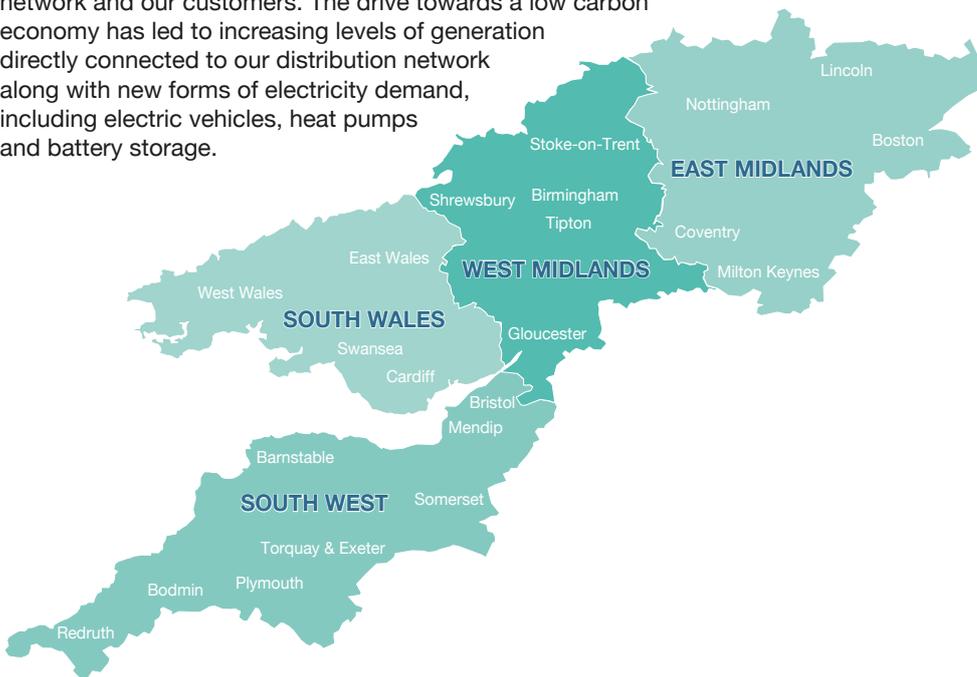
@wpduk



Who we are and what we do

Western Power Distribution (WPD) is a Distribution Network Operator (DNO) and a Distribution System Operator (DSO), responsible for distributing electricity to 8 million customers. This electricity is distributed over 220,000km of overhead lines and underground cables, fed from 185,000 substations. The area served by WPD is shown in the map below and covers four licence areas West Midlands, East Midlands, South West and South Wales.

The distribution network sits between National Grid's transmission network and our customers. The drive towards a low carbon economy has led to increasing levels of generation directly connected to our distribution network along with new forms of electricity demand, including electric vehicles, heat pumps and battery storage.



Our key responsibilities

We do not buy or sell electricity, or send any bills to electricity customers. Traditionally, what we do is simple and comprises of four key tasks:



We operate our network assets effectively to 'keep the lights on' for our customers.



We maintain our assets so that they are in a condition to remain reliable.

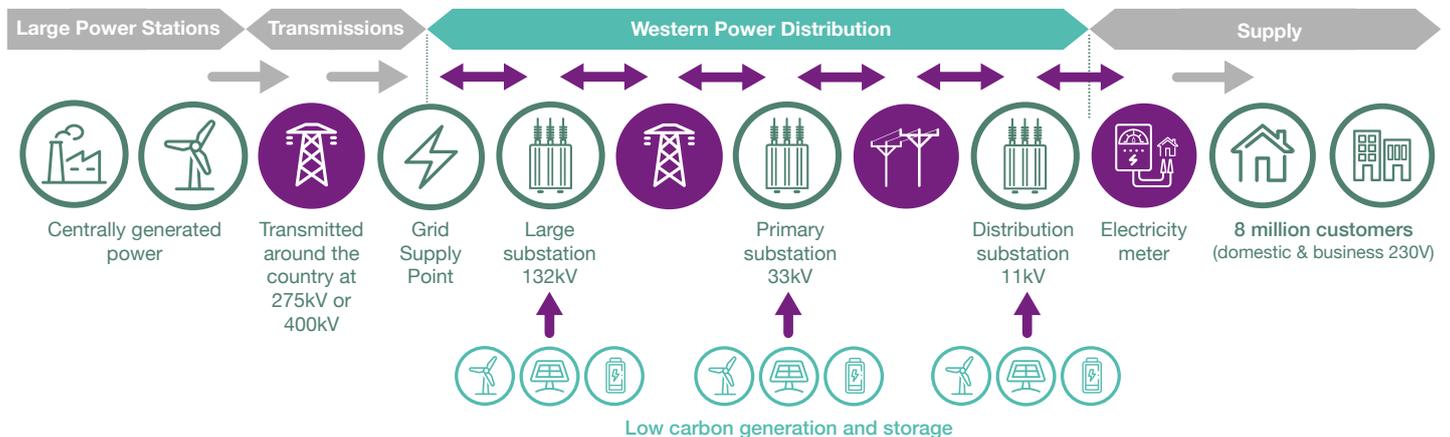


We fix our assets if they get damaged or are faulty.



We upgrade the existing networks or build new ones to provide additional electricity supplies or capacity to our customers.

The energy system is undergoing a huge transition because of the changes to electricity generation and use, including the growth of distributed generation and the increasing popularity of electric vehicles and heat pumps. These changes and the associated increases in demand have required us to develop new processes and systems, including adopting flexible solutions to manage different power flows on the network. To continue to operate a smarter, more efficient energy system, we are carrying out the functions of a Distribution System Operator (DSO).



Western Power Distribution delivers electricity to 8 million customers over an area of 55,000km²



Incentive on Connections Engagement

Section 1:

Introduction



Overview

We are now into the final year of the current price control period that runs from 2015 to 2023 known as RIIO-ED1; a regulatory framework was set by Ofgem to drive clear outcomes for stakeholders and to provide strong incentives for DNOs such as WPD to perform well.

Ofgem's Incentive on Connection Engagement (ICE), introduced under RIIO-ED1, is specifically focused on the area of connections and saw the creation of our eighth annual ICE Plan.

Our ICE Plan for 2022-23 has a range of initiatives developed in line with our Connections Strategy, using the input from our broad range of connection stakeholders, through our ongoing programme of stakeholder engagement activities.

This report comprises both a looking back section for regulatory year 2021/22 and a looking forward section for regulatory year 2022/23, explaining our Customer Engagement Strategy and connection activity plans, in line with the requirements of the ICE incentive. The report covers all four of our distribution networks; South West, South Wales, East Midlands and West Midlands.

Our ICE Plans include a number of initiatives that have been created as a result of stakeholder engagement. Each initiative has a target date for completion and an associated metric indicating the measures we will use to identify success.

Updates will be published quarterly, indicating the status of each initiative so that you can see how we are progressing. Sometimes, we will extend the target date for completion but only where it is caused as a consequence of the need for further stakeholder feedback and industry led guidance.

The plan will and does evolve throughout the year so, where stakeholder engagement identifies further initiatives and enhancement to initial initiatives, we will add them to the ICE Plan. The new initiatives are clearly identifiable when we publish updates so that you can easily track our progress.





Report structure

We have structured the document into three sections.



Introduction

Including an introduction from our Chief Executive, WPD's Connections Stakeholder Engagement Strategy and Connections Strategy.



Looking Back Report

Covering the review of our engagement activities, delivery of our ICE Plan and performance against our outputs and measures in 2021/22.



Looking Forward Report

Covering our planned engagement activities, the development of our ICE Plan and the outputs and measures for 2022/23.





Introduction

I am delighted to share our 'Looking Back, Looking Forward' Report 2022. This document gives an insight in to what we have achieved during the last year and what we will deliver going forward.

WPD has a critical role to play to enable the UK to meet its target for net zero carbon emissions, whilst maintaining and improving the exceptional levels of safety, network reliability and customer service that our customers have come to expect.

Large volumes of low carbon technologies (LCTs) such as domestic electric vehicle (EV) chargers and domestic heat pumps are predicted to connect to our network in the next three to five years. Stakeholders are telling us that this is one of their top priorities so we have been engaging with developers, local authorities and community energy forums to understand their needs both now and in the future and consider how we can best facilitate the anticipated significant increase in take up of EVs and electric heating. We are already focusing on the task to ensure our distribution system is capable of supporting the government initiatives over the coming years. As a DNO and a DSO, we will strive to develop innovative ways to deliver new and augmented connections during a period of significant increase in the number and type of LCTs.

That is why we have been working hard to develop better tools and flexible ways to enable customers to connect renewables, EV chargers or electric heating when they are ready to do so. We are investigating better and more innovative ways to operate and serve our connecting customers – utilising changes in processes, system improvements and on-going data projects to help us become more efficient.

I also recognise some changes in the types and volumes of work we are seeing in the field such as a bigger demand to unloop services for EV or low carbon heating connections. I do appreciate how our staff focus on the delivery to our customers and continue to adapt to different ways of operating in the office and in the field. To continue to be successful we will have to continually adapt to change but our common aim should be to ensure that WPD is known as a company that leads and is an inspirational force for net zero.

We are now well placed to forge ahead and, central to our task, is the requirement to ensure we meet the government's ambition that almost every car and van will be zero emission by 2050 and that 600,000 heat pump installations will be made per year by 2028.

Our RIIO-ED2 Business Plan sets out our commitments to make our business net zero by 2028 and to achieve this we will need to make considerable changes to the way we operate. As part of the Business Plan, we created a Major Connections Strategy that sets out our major connections vision for RIIO-ED2. Our focus is to achieve the best possible positive outcomes for our customers, by utilising innovative solutions and smarter working practices to drive efficiency in all we do. Additionally, the Incentives of Connections Engagement (ICE) remains a key element of our stakeholder engagement programme and ensures we continue to deliver improvements in all aspects of connections based upon your feedback.

Our 2022/23 ICE Plan contains 14 initiatives. Some are new initiatives and others build on previous initiatives, but all are created as a direct consequence of stakeholder feedback and the development towards RIIO-ED2.

The ICE Plan focuses on five key areas; policy guidance, customer support, communication, stakeholder engagement and process improvement.

Within the plan we have actions relating to:

- The use of the latest digital technologies and data innovations to deliver a more efficient, flexible and responsive customer service.
- Automating the process for the connection of low carbon technologies such as electric heating and electric vehicles.
- Community energy, by encouraging and supporting community groups to come forward with projects.

We will continue to work collaboratively with our customers and I give you all my assurance that we will balance what we are able to do operationally with the absolute requirement to maintain the safety of both WPD staff and the customers we serve. Our aim is always to continue to improve our service to you and we cannot do this without your feedback.



Phil Swift
WPD Chief Executive



ICE Headlines



415

ICE actions completed
from 2015 - 2022.



21,644

Stakeholders engaged
in connections
2021 - 2022.



1,766

Major connection customers
surveyed in 2021 - 2022.



750

Connection Surgeries
in 2021 - 2022.



44,000

Stakeholders engaged with
WPD in 2021 - 2022.

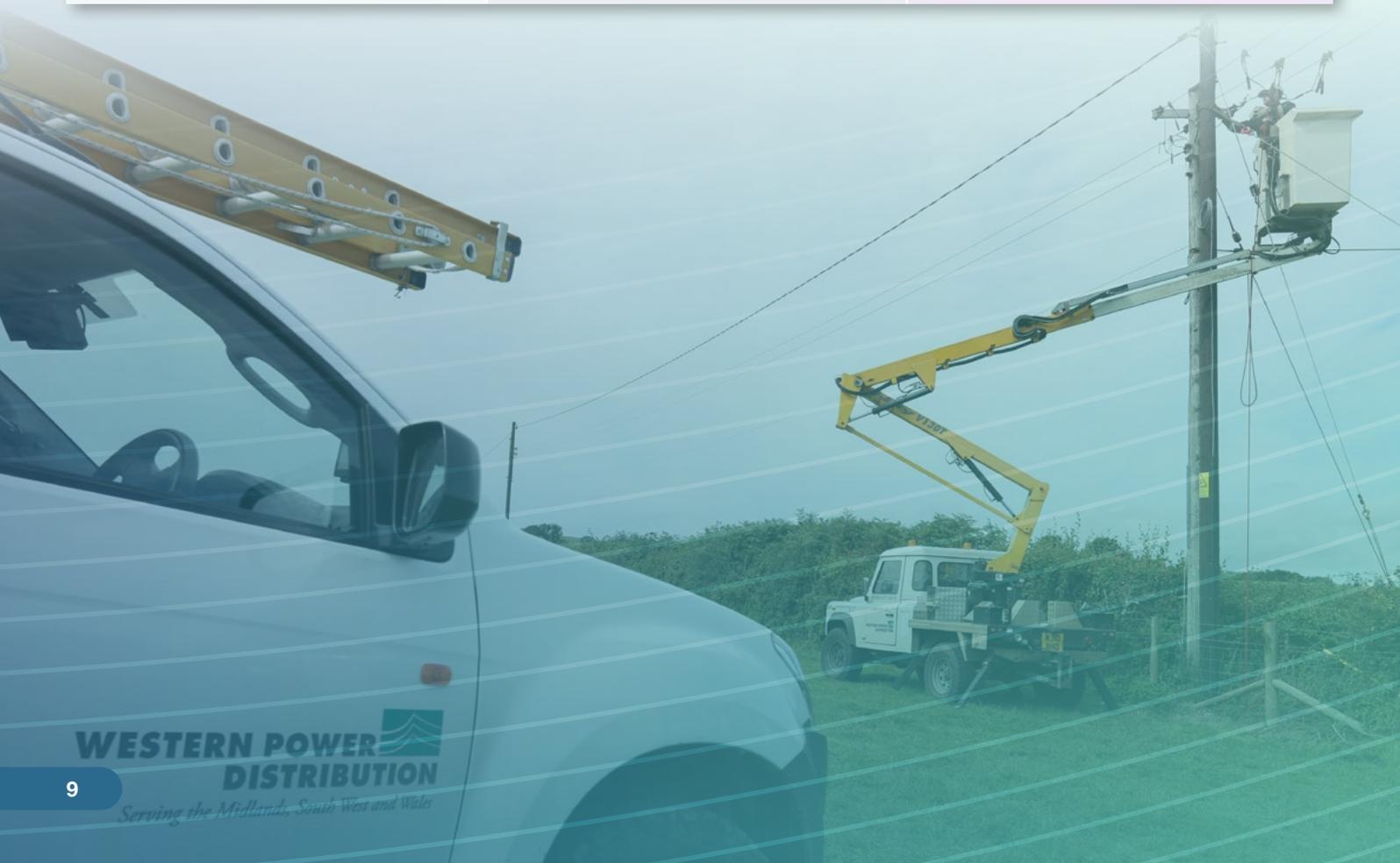


Relevant Market Segments

In accordance with ICE, this report explains our engagement and improvement plans for covering each of the Relevant Market Segments (RMS) that we have not previously passed under Ofgem’s Competition Test.

However, it is important to us that we engage with all connection stakeholders and our continual improvement is aimed at all market segments (see table below). Our engagement strategy and ICE Plan therefore cover the full range of connection stakeholders and connections activities and are not just targeted at those required by ICE. In this report, we have identified which of the RMS we are targeting each of our engagement or service improvement actions against.

CONNECTIONS and RMS								
Demand connections				Distributed generation		Unmetered connections		
LV work	HV work	HV and EHV work	EHV work and above	LV work	HV and EHV work	LA work	PFI work	Other work
Connections to metered premises for demand customers at all connection voltages e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic houses. • Commercial and industrial units. • Electric vehicle charging points. • IDNO networks. 				Connections to metered premises for generation at all voltages e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rooftop solar installations. • Largescale windfarms. • Battery storage. 		Connections to unmetered premises for demand connections for local authorities or private sector e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Street lights. • Bus shelters. • Telecoms kiosks. 		





Our Connections Strategy under RIIO-ED1

Our fundamental objective is to provide excellent service for customers connecting to the network whilst facilitating competition in the connections market. These overarching connections outputs help us to achieve that goal.

Our strategy in respect of connections customer engagement is built upon well-established principles. Our simple ethos is to listen to what our customers tell us in terms of their requirements and translate that into a set of high level connection objectives designed to fulfil those needs. We then take these high level objectives and create more specific initiatives for inclusion in the ICE Plan that focus on key deliverables and how we measure our success.

At the start of this current distribution price control period (RIIO-ED1) we set out five key connections objectives that our strategy is built upon. These objectives are shown below:

To provide a faster and more efficient connections service	The key output is to improve the overall time to connect by 20%, whilst still maintaining excellent customer service such that WPD continues to be the top ranked DNO group by customer satisfaction surveys.
To improve communication with customers	This objective centres on delivering outputs that improve how our stakeholders can communicate with us and the information that we can provide them. There is a focus on developing and enhancing online information and interaction for connection customers.
To enhance engagement with major customers	Outputs for this objective centre on ensuring we communicate effectively to gain feedback to better understand the requirements of major customers. Enhancing our engagement leads to improved focus on these customer requirements and drives the development of our priorities for ICE Plan initiatives.
To achieve guaranteed standards of performance	The target to achieve zero failures of connections GSOPs ensures that we maintain our focus on the core connection activities required at each stage of the connection process.
To enable facilitation of the competitive market	WPD has a key role in the facilitation of competition in connections and it is important that we continue to work with customers and connection providers to ensure that we further develop Competition in Connections to ensure a level playing field in the connections market.

Our aim is to deliver an exceptional connections service for our customers. To help us in our quest, high quality, frequent and challenging engagement with our stakeholders is therefore crucial to achieving this. As part of our approach, we have to take into account the differing needs of our stakeholders and tailor our engagement accordingly.





Our Stakeholder Engagement Strategy

Well-established and effective

Our stakeholder engagement strategy is firmly entrenched in our culture. Established in 2007, the strategy underpins our connections improvement activity, driving how and when we engage. It is fundamental to how we do business and drives a continual cyclical engagement programme allowing us to build long term stakeholder relationships and facilitate meaningful engagement with robust feedback and challenge.



Identify stakeholders

- Recognise emerging stakeholders.
- Maintain stakeholder contacts.



Understand their needs

- Identify the range of interest areas from unmet to DER.



Always engage with a purpose

- Avoid talking shops, demonstrate we have listened via the actions we undertake.



Range of methods

- Use a variety of mechanisms e.g. expert panels, workshops, surveys etc.
- Tailor to suit the audience.



Listen, act and measure benefits

- Engage on priorities ICE Plan identified.
- Publish ICE Plan, KPIs and updates.



Use feedback to improve service

- Short term: policies, procedures, processes.
- Long term: shape our strategic priorities.



Make feedback available

- Publish finding and WPD's response.
- Clear line of sight to ICE Plan.

The foundation of our approach are enduring, and guided by seven principals. However, to maintain effectiveness, the strategy is evaluated and updated each year with sign-off from our CEO and Directors.

This ensures that our engagement approach continues to effectively deliver our initiatives, demonstrating we are adaptable to changes in the connections environment thus ensuring our stakeholders' priorities and expectations are met.



The foundation of our engagement strategy is built on seven strategic principles, which we believe are key to ensuring we engage effectively and with purpose. The principles drive our engagement, building stakeholder relationships and trust that help us to create and deliver an ICE Plan with meaningful outcomes.



Our Stakeholder Engagement Strategy

This well-developed engagement strategy provides a strong foundation but also allows us to be flexible and responsive in identifying and quickly incorporating new stakeholder priorities.

This year, more than ever before, we have endeavoured to employ the use of ‘co-creation’, a method under which we try not to influence the outcome but allow stakeholders to form their own actions. This helps us to understand where their priorities are so that we can focus on areas that are really important to them. We are particularly grateful to our Connection Customer Steering Group panel, a group of expert stakeholders from across the spectrum of connections customers, who provide well-informed input into proposed initiatives and help us to refine them into meaningful actions.

Identifying stakeholders

We continually review and refresh our stakeholder mapping to make sure that we have the right mix being holistic and inclusive for the full range of connections activity. We understand that different stakeholders have differing levels of knowledge, interest and availability so we tailor our methods to be most appropriate and effective.

Embedded

Our well-established core engagement strategy has helped our staff to understand and recognise the importance of the role they each play in its success. Staff directly responsible for the area deliver our stakeholder engagement thus improving communication channels and better informing the decisions we make. Establishing these direct local stakeholder relationships underpins the effectiveness of our engagement and our ability to respond decisively.

Developed and responsive

In ensuring that our engagement leads directly to action and is not just simply confirming predefined proposals, we are able to build trust with stakeholders and their willingness to commit their time to regular engagement activities. This results in long term relationships building knowledge and quality of engagement with an ability to have more scrutiny and challenge. Through this, we are able to have detailed conversations driving improvements through two-way feedback and collaboration.

Feedback

Debriefing on feedback to our external and internal stakeholders following an engagement helps us build on the momentum and helps demonstrate intent to incorporate insights.

	Debrief on feedback	Outline next steps
External stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summarise and quote stakeholder feedback. Highlight both areas of agreement and disagreement among stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set expectations of when and how feedback will be integrated. Set timelines for future engagements and action updates.
Internal stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a summary of insights that captures stakeholder feedback. What perspective were represented? What risks and concerns emerged? What are the outcomes and impacts? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align internally and decide when, who and how to further engage. Review and decide on stakeholder feedback recommendations.



Independent assessment - Stakeholder Engagement Strategy

While our approach to co-creation and seeking continual input from stakeholders in our decision making gives us confidence we are delivering excellent outcomes, external review and accreditation plays a vital role to ensure we deliver the quality and efficacy we are striving for.

Beyond providing important validation, accreditations such as the Customer Service Excellence (CSE) Standard provide comprehensive independent scrutiny and perspective to identify ways to further enhance our positive impact for customers. It gives stakeholders assurance we are credible, responsible and compliant with best practice standards in the UK.

The assessor listens to live customer calls and holds closed interviews with senior managers, front-line staff, fuel poverty partners and Customer Panel members.

CSE Standard

A stringent, annual two-day audit that covers five criteria. Each element is assessed and awarded one of four ratings: **'Compliance Plus'** (UK-wide best practice); **'Compliance'**; **'Partial Compliance'**; or, **'Non- Compliance'**. The assessor reviews more than 100 items of evidence, including:

- WPD's stakeholder and vulnerability strategies, Social Contract, policies and improvement plans.
- Extensive tailored stakeholder engagement, including with hard-to-reach customers, e.g. deliberative research with future customers and bill payers, enabling them to understand and feedback on our plans (see Part Two, 4.2).
- Published information in leaflets, online and on social media.

**CUSTOMER
SERVICE
EXCELLENCE**



**Top UK performer
(out of 600 companies)**



**No non or partial
compliance ratings**



**46/57
'Compliance Plus'
Ratings**

In 2021/22 our CSE assessor said:

"WPD is notable for having been continuously accredited to the CSE Standard since its inception in 1992, which is an outstanding achievement, reflected in the impressive total of 46 Compliance Plus elements. Stakeholder engagement is very strongly embedded. You have improved your service and developed appropriate action plans as a result of the understanding you have gained about your customers' needs."



Our engagement methods

We aim to deliver industry leading stakeholder engagement that is meaningful, leads to substantive improvements for customers and enables them to hold us to account for our performance. To deliver this we must have an engagement programme, which is comprehensive, extensive and tailored to be inclusive of a broad range of stakeholders.

Our preferred approach is firstly to engage face-to-face wherever possible, providing scope for in-depth discussion on complex issues and high priority issues. However, these past two years has proven a challenging time for all in the face of the pandemic and it has required new ways of engagement methods to maintain the high levels of stakeholder engagement that you deserve. Thanks to the resilience and hard work of our staff, we have kept to our engagement plan and continued to deliver connections even through these most testing of times.

Engagement during the last year has changed but with the help of various virtual platforms, and using the hybrid approach – in-person and online, we have managed to keep in touch and obtain the important feedback from you that helps us to ensure we remain on-track.

We are currently preparing for the next Distribution Price Control Period (DPCR) which runs from 2023-2028 (RIIO-ED2). A significant amount of our recent stakeholder engagement has been focused on our plans for the next DPCR and, in December 2021, we submitted our RIIO-ED2 Business Plan to Ofgem.

As part of the plan, we created a Major Connections Strategy that sets out our major connections vision for RIIO-ED2.

ICE, however, continues to be hugely important to us during this current price control period and we will continue to focus on the immediate task in hand, as we hope you can see from the initiatives we have included in this plan.

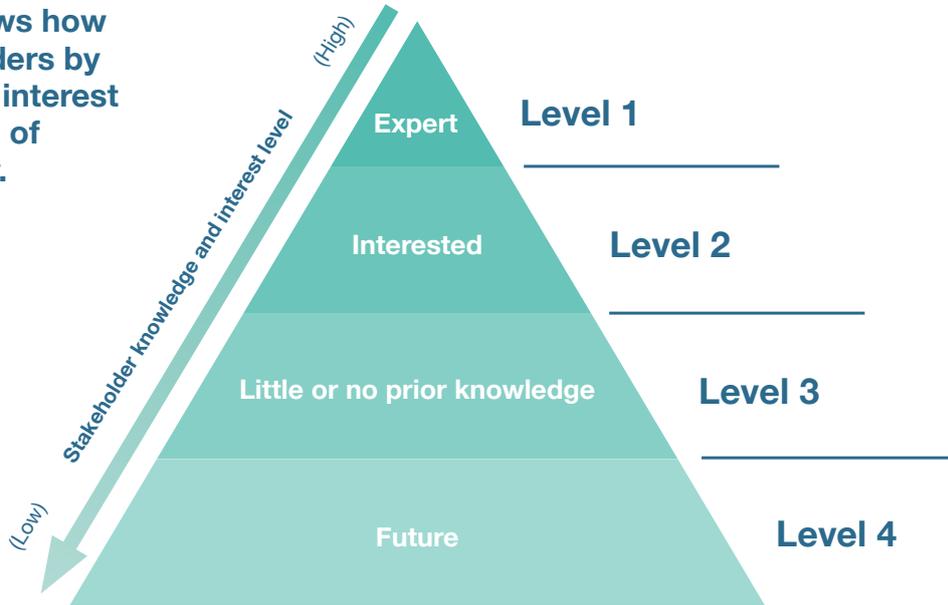
Because our stakeholders have, a broad range of knowledge and interest we understand that a one-size-fits-all approach does not always deliver long term meaningful engagement and so we use a variety of methods to ensure we reach as many stakeholders as possible. We do consult on larger industry issues in order to obtain feedback and inform our decision making process.

Consultation encourages a more in-depth discussion and allows stakeholders to describe in detail their aspirations and concerns. Through feedback, we are able to reach a 'minded to' position that can be discussed further and refined as necessary before becoming part of our strategy, policy or process.



Our engagement methods

The table below shows how we identify stakeholders by their knowledge and interest to tailor the methods of engagement delivery.



Stakeholder Level	Engagement methods:
<p>Level 1: Expert Stakeholders we work closely with to build their knowledge to an 'expert' level, or those who already have an in-depth knowledge of connections activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCSG. • Stakeholder workshops. • Consultations. • Bilateral meetings. • Industry working group. • External industry events.
<p>Level 2: Interested Stakeholders who interact regularly with WPD for connections activities and have a sizable knowledge and interest in this area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder workshops. • Consultations. • Bilateral meetings. • DG survey. • Connection surgeries. • Community energy events.
<p>Level 3: Little or no prior knowledge Stakeholders who may only interact once or occasionally for connections activities and have little knowledge of WPD or this area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DG & customer surveys. • Connection surgeries • Annual stakeholder and ICE reports. • Website. • Media awareness campaign. • Social media.
<p>Level 4: Future Stakeholders who may want connections in the future and may have no knowledge of WPD or this area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connections surgeries. • Annual stakeholder and ICE reports. • Community energy events and guide. • Media awareness campaign. • Social media. • Website.

Details of our ICE Plan and associated updates can be found on our bespoke stakeholder engagement website: www.yourpowerfuture.westernpower.co.uk

The use of social media channels helps us to share news, raise awareness and encourage further customer feedback.



Our stakeholder priorities

New priorities - Identifying and adapting

Stakeholder priorities evolve over time and one thing that is at the forefront of everyone's mind is the UK's decarbonisation target of net zero emissions by 2050. Low carbon technologies have a big part to play in this and whilst we have been harnessing these technologies for some years now the rate of change means that we constantly need to identify and adapt new processes.

Charging at home has been a major consideration so we are looking at how we can help customers to install low carbon technology (LCT) equipment.

Our goal is to make it as easy as possible for customers to notify us of their intentions and reduce times to provide approval to install LCT equipment. We have adopted an automatic acceptance process for most domestic LCTs, but our intention is to evolve the process into a self-serve approach, in this year's ICE Plan.

The increase in demand brought about by the electrification of vehicles and heating (through the use of electric heating) means that we need to be ready to meet that challenge.

Our stakeholders are telling us that we need to act quickly to transition and deliver connection services they can participate in. In conjunction, we have seen an increasing importance placed on strategic investment and forecasting in relation to availability of network capacity for new developments.

Our Data and Digitalisation programme is focused on providing customers access to the latest available data and to help users understand how the data can be utilised to support their own assessment activities.

Our stakeholder engagement and feedback has enabled us to identify and act on these priorities. Our ICE Plan for 2022/23 builds on actions conceived and reflect these new priorities.

As a result of this, we have identified a number of key areas of focus.



- The use of the latest digital technologies and data innovations to deliver a more efficient, flexible and responsive customer service.
- Automating the process for the connection of low carbon technologies such as electric heating and electric vehicles.
- Community energy, publish a guide to Network Innovation Allowance (NIA) projects for communities, to encourage and support community groups to come forward with projects.



Incentive on Connections Engagement

Section 2:

Looking Back Report 2021/22



Introduction

Creating memorable customer experiences by acting proactively, providing best practice and delivering exceptional customer services is our aim.

During this time we completed 21 initiatives which were developed following stakeholder feedback. The ICE Plan is intended to evolve throughout the year as new initiatives are identified. Our over-riding strategic principle of 'engagement leads to action' is typified by the addition of four further initiatives to the ICE Plan under our October 2021 ICE resubmission. These initiatives were developed as a consequence of ongoing discussion with our stakeholders.

Quality, frequent and challenging engagement with our stakeholders is crucial to the success of any organisation. It helps us to establish our priorities and key areas of focus; it influences our future and reveals real opportunities for improvement in the ever-changing electricity sector.

During 2021/22 we focused on a number of key areas for delivery;



**Policy
guidance**



**Customer
support**



Communication



**Process
improvement**

You told us that these were your priority areas and so we focused on them and endeavoured to deliver initiatives that met this key criteria. Stakeholders have told us that we have delivered on many areas but there are some that we need to develop further and these will be carried over to our 2022/23 ICE Plan. It is important to us that we deliver what you want and so we will continue to work on these commitments.

In our Policy Guidance area we agreed to work collaboratively with all DNOs and ENA on a good practice guide to drive some improvements and consistency, to form the best working practice for cancellation charge relating to NGENSO Wider Works. We have created a dedicated page on our website for Cancellation Charge process. We have also included on our web page a Cancellation Charge calculator to allow customers to review their Wider Cancellation Charge liability. Customer support, one area of focus was the availability of pre-application information for customers. This includes the improvement of data quality through our digitalisation programme updates in areas such as heat maps and more accurate historical curtailment information. Also, providing customers access to the latest available data and help them understand, how the data can assist planned developments to support their activities.

Communication, we have introduced a reinforcement trigger level for major connections at 33kV and above. Our Design Engineers and Planners have become more proactive in contacting the customer to give advice on options for a connection. Whenever a customer triggers significant reinforcement where a reduction in their otherwise requested capacity could negate the need for reinforcement, we communicate this to our customer at the Point of Connection (PoC) information that is formally sent to customers prior to the formal offer.

Improving our process is a key area in the domestic LCT acceptance. We have improved our application and delivery process making it as easy as possible for customers to connect LCTs and reduce times to provide approval to install LCT equipment. This means customers can connect their equipment quicker with our streamlined process.

"Some DNOs are leaders and others are followers. Lots will instinctively wait for someone else to come up with the best solution and then rush to put it in place themselves. As a result, lots of heads are buried in the sand in the meantime, which doesn't help support wider efforts to get the right infrastructure in place for heat pumps and electric vehicles at a wider level. However, WPD are definitely one of the DNOs that are instinctively happy to lead."

Storage and renewables provider stakeholder – Connections workshop Nov 2021.

Our looking back report provides more detail on each initiative and an overview of the work completed. We hope that you find it interesting and informative.



Our engagement activity summary 2021/22

We always engage with a purpose and it is vital to us that the expansion of engagement does not diminish the quality and continues to drive our actions. Our customer enduring panels such as CCSG and DGOO continue to inform our processes and can be relied upon to provide ongoing challenge and detailed feedback.

Our connections engagement is comprehensive, wide reaching and effective. It has helped us to identify the activities our stakeholders think are most important and to gain their insight in delivering initiatives with positive benefits for our customers.

We have continued to engage intensively and comprehensively using various methods that include both broad measures and through stakeholder groups focused on specific topics.

This year we have continued to expand the range of engagement methods we utilise to ensure that we can access hard-to-reach stakeholders or those with limited availability. Our use of virtual platforms has proved successful. The use of hybrid workshops has also helped us to convey updates and messages. For example, our annual connections workshop covering the connections strategy, community energy and low

carbon technologies (LCTs) and the anticipated high volume connections. Social media outlets, such as the WPD fortnightly website update newsletter sent by email with 984 customers registered and surveys have also allowed us to reach as many stakeholders as possible.

When developing our 2021/22 ICE Looking Forward Plan, we contacted more than 1,600 connections stakeholders to seek their feedback on our proposals. We commissioned an independent market research provider to obtain views from more than 1,766 major customers on pre and post connections services and 384 distributed generation customers to seek their detailed feedback of their experience of working with us. We also presented on ICE topics to 45 attendees at our Customer Connections Steering Group (CCSG) throughout the year, to endorse our plans.

The table below sets out a summary of the engagement activity undertaken by WPD during 2021/22 with our connections stakeholders. For each activity, the table gives a brief description, the number of stakeholders engaged with this activity through the year and the market sector the stakeholders broadly represented.

Surveys 2021/22

Activity	Description	Reach	Market Sector
Major Customer Survey	A WPD commissioned monthly customer satisfaction survey of connections customers covering the market segments under the ICE scope. The style of the survey remains in line with that conducted under the Ofgem Broad Measures Survey.	1,766	
Distributed Generation (DG) Survey	A WPD commissioned customer satisfaction survey of distributed generation connections customers. The style of the survey remains in line with that conducted under the Ofgem Broad Measures Survey.	384	

Total 2,150





Connections stakeholder engagement 2021/22

Activity	Description	Reach	Market Sector
Customer Connections Steering Group (CCSG)	Attended by a broad representation of connection stakeholders three times a year, the CCSG covers a broad range of connections related topics and feeds into the development of our Incentive Connections Engagement (ICE) Plan.	45	UMS MD DER ICP
Customer Panel	Quarterly Customer Panel meetings - 28 expert members include Energy Systems Catapult and Wessex Water (led to 21 actions).	112	UMS MD DER ICP
WPD Distributed Generation (DG) Owner Operator Forum	Four meetings were held throughout 2021/22. The forum enables WPD to gain an understanding of DG owner/operator needs to develop actions to improve the services we provide. Quarterly meetings.	110	UMS MD DER ICP
WPD Stakeholder Workshops	Four topic specific workshops to seek feedback from 137 stakeholders on our RIIO-ED2 Business Plan - 71% of delegates have attended previously. Topics included innovation and digitalisation; WPD's independent system operator and connecting to a smarter grid to facilitate net zero and community energy.	137	UMS MD DER ICP
WPD Stakeholder Hybrid Workshops	Business Plan Sprint Workshop, webinar, consultation and survey for 166 stakeholders. Workshops covering a wide range of topics, granular feedback generated on a wide range of topics including digitalisation and connections.	166	UMS MD DER ICP
WPD Local Authorities Workshops	Enabling 129 stakeholders to virtually meet our teams, understand our network investment plans, learn about our low carbon strategies, discuss the impacts of specific schemes and deliver co-ordinated local development plans.	129	UMS MD DER ICP
WPD Connections Workshop	WPD Connections Workshop held in November 2021, hosted a 'hybrid' connections stakeholder workshop, with some people attending in person and others joining remotely. The workshop was aimed at seeking feedback from stakeholders on the following topics: WPD's Connections Strategy; community energy; high volume connections of low carbon technologies (LCTs); and WPD's proposed approach to electric vehicles (EVs). Focusing on connections future markets including EV's capacity, capacity allocation and reservation. 93% felt the hybrid format worked well.	68	UMS MD DER ICP
Net Zero Communities forum and Network Changing forum	WPD held two community energy forums. Allowed stakeholders to meet and learn from WPD's Community Energy Engineer and community energy experts. Also helped community energy stakeholders understand the impacts of Ofgem's Network Access Significant Code Review (SCR) on local energy projects and form their response to Ofgem's consultation.	88	UMS MD DER ICP
Hybrid Heat Pump workshop	Allowed delegates to understand WPD's Heat Pump Strategy and sought feedback connecting to the WPD network; retrofitting for net zero; the development of heat pumps; and alternative, low carbon heating technologies.	95	UMS MD DER ICP
Connection Surgery Appointments	727 connections, 13 community energy and 10 net zero surgeries held at local depots.	750	UMS MD DER ICP
DFES online events	WPD hosted dedicated online events with 130 local authorities on topics electric vehicle, local investment and LCT volumes. To deliver co-ordinated local development plans.	130	UMS MD DER ICP



Activity	Description	Reach	Market Sector
Energy Networks Innovation Conference	WPD sponsored industry event to be held in October 2021 to share information and feedback on innovation projects including innovative connection related projects.	1,000	UMS MD DER ICP
Cenex LCV	Promote WPD Electric Vehicle Strategy and Electric Nation results. Online conference in November 2021.	3,329	UMS MD DER ICP
Future Heat Conference	The Future Heat Conference included how the industry is preparing for changes to UK heat policy; discuss the roadmap to the decarbonisation of heat with key stakeholders; Understand how to bring consumers on the net zero journey; held in May 2021.	418	UMS MD DER ICP
WPD Innovation Showcase Event formally known as Balancing Act Conference	WPD held one event over five days in December 2021. Each day had a particular theme which provided shared learning from our portfolio of innovation projects.	310	UMS MD DER ICP
Utility Week Live Online	Held within the Birmingham EIC Innovation Zone, we exhibited in May 2021 at the event- Flexible Power and Innovation.	6,000	UMS MD DER ICP
Members of Parliament (MPs) whose constituencies are in the WPD area	Providing awareness and advice to MPs about issues such as achieving a decentralised, decarbonised energy system and Including 15 constituency meetings to brief MPs on WPD's RIIO-ED2 Business Plan commitments.	34	UMS MD DER ICP
Senior Manager contacts	Major customers have been allocated a senior manager point of connection within WPD. This contact may include discussions on issues relating to specific projects and overarching discussions on policies or processes.	86	UMS MD DER ICP
CIRED 2021 Virtual Online	Disseminate learning for 'Virtual Detective Challenge.' Get ready for highly interactive, fast-paced virtual crime investigation adventure.	980	UMS MD DER ICP
Low Carbon Networks and Innovation Conference	An industry event was held in October 2021 to share information and feedback on innovation projects including innovative connection related projects.	2,500	UMS MD DER ICP
WPD Fortnightly website update newsletters sent by email	Useful information and new initiatives promptly shared with stakeholders including launch of new data hub and flexibility updates. 984 customers registered.	984	UMS MD DER ICP
WPD flexibility services webinar events	Four 'Flexibility Services' webinars and two surgery days attracted over 50 interested flexibility providers.	50	UMS MD DER ICP
WPD real-time network data share	Continue to share real-time network data through our real-time power flow access tool. Enables customers access to understand the network operation more effectively. 3,249 hits.	3,249	UMS MD DER ICP
WPD Safety Conferences	Held five safety conferences for staff, contractors and one specifically for trainees focused on staff behaviour, safety, health and the environment.	720	UMS MD DER ICP
Customer Engagement Group (CEG)	Provides independent scrutiny of, and challenge to, WPD's business planning and decision-making process for RIIO-ED2; reflecting needs and preferences of existing and future consumers. Eleven meetings with 14 members.	154	UMS MD DER ICP

Total **21,644**

Our ICE 2021/22 Plan outcomes

Over the following pages of this section, we highlight key outcomes from the delivery of the plan initiatives together with the engagement, which has driven them. We explain how the initiatives developed, provide examples of how we collaborate with stakeholders to deliver effective improvements and detail some of the key outcomes for our customers.

WPD has delivered 21 ICE initiatives in 2021/22 that seek to enhance the customer experience by providing improvements to existing services, creating new services, making more information available and expanding engagement opportunities.

We have sought to deliver benefits to the complete spectrum of connections customers, from improvements to our smaller low carbon technology (LCT) customers in processing their applications, to improved outage information for generation customers.

Our approach is to develop ICE Plan initiatives which not only tackle relatively 'quick-wins', which still provide important improvements, but also to develop stretching initiatives which may require longer to deliver with target dates set beyond the current ICE period.

As such, we have completed a number of initiatives on target from the previous year and have commenced work on two initiatives, which will continue into next year.



01 Unmetered connection eligibility

Stakeholder feedback	Our action	Measures of success	Connection areas	Target date
Provide clarity on policy relating to eligibility as an unmetered connection.	<p>Further improve transparency and communication on information “when do you need a meter in street furniture”.</p> <p>Provide external and internal guidance in a plain English statement on the website page and internal bulletin.</p>	Guides developed by target date.		Q4 Dec 2021

Outcomes

- ✓ Street furniture guidance document developed by target date.
- ✓ Live on website in December 2021 - www.westernpower.co.uk/connections-landing/connecting-unmetered-equipment
- ✓ Guidance shared externally and internally.
- ✓ 521 downloads from Jan 2022 - March 2022 on our street furniture guide.

Under our ICE 2021/22 Plan, we committed to publish guidance on street furniture connections, most importantly, when is a meter required in an item of street furniture.

This guidance document created is to support customers with arranging your electrical connection. We have included information in the guide for the street furniture process from application to connection.

An unmetered connection is a supply to equipment which does not require a meter, e.g. street lights, traffic signals and some communications cabinets. The Electricity (Unmetered Supply) Regulations 2001 specify strict criteria for determining whether or not a connection can be unmetered.

In short, each piece of equipment;

- Must not exceed 500w;
- Must operate in a predicable manner and;
- Cannot be motion, IR or manually constrained.



The Electricity (Unmetered Supply) Regulations 2001 can be found in full here: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukSI/2001/3263/contents/made

An Unmetered Supply Agreement must be in place before we can install an unmetered connection. If the above does not apply to you, please apply for a metered connection.

Types of unmetered equipment

- Advertising hoardings.
- Bus information system.
- Cable network pillar.
- Cathodic protection.
- Clocks.
- Communication cabinets.
- Flood warning systems.
- Ice detector.
- Illuminated billboards.
- Illuminated map cabinets.
- Information signs.
- Navigation signal.
- Pay and display machines.
- Radio transmitter.
- Red runner camera.
- Security camera.
- Sewage flow recorder.
- Speed camera.
- Street lighting.
- Telephone kiosk.
- TV amplifier.
- TV camera.
- Traffic signs.
- Traffic signal/pelican crossing.
- Warden call equipment.



In our guide, we also gave information on:

- Standard Arrangement for Unmetered Connections.
- Earthing arrangements.
- How to apply?
- How much will it cost?



WPD Website – Street Furniture Guidance Document www.westernpower.co.uk/downloads/480974

02 Cancellation charge relating to NGENSO wider works

Stakeholder feedback	Our action	Measures of success	Connection areas	Target date
Improve information sharing with regard to potential requirement for liabilities and securities relating to larger connections having impact on the transmission system.	To work collaboratively with all DNOs and ENA on a good practice guide to drive some improvements and consistency, to form the best working practice for WPD. To produce and share information on a WPD best practice guide with links to our connections webpage.	To provide a best practice guide by target date.	MD UMS DER ICP	Q1 Mar 2022

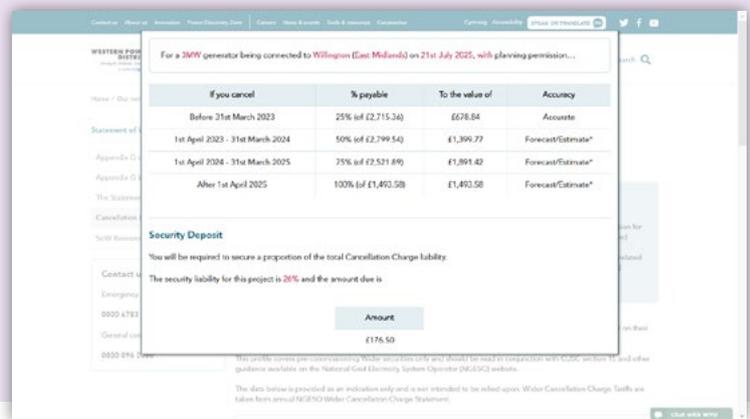
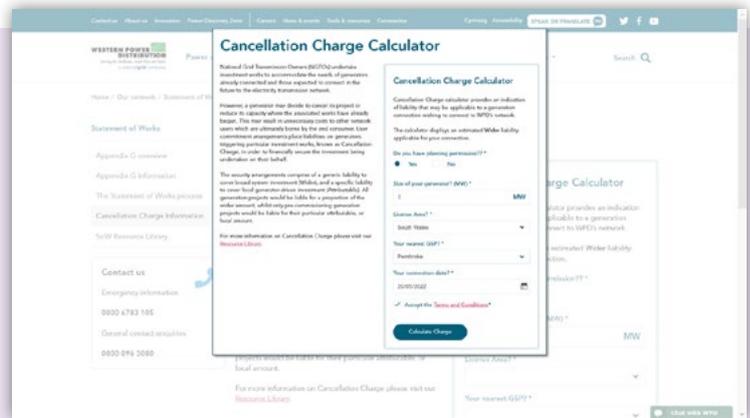
Outcomes

- ✓ Dedicated SOW cancellation charge web page went live 29th March 2022.
- ✓ 926 hits on the new SoW webpage.
- ✓ Cancellation charge calculator 23 hits from March 2022.

As part of the Open Networks, WS2 Product 5 (User Commitment) group that first met March 21. Development of the good practice guide for the cancellation charge relating to National Grid Electric System Operator (NGESO) is ongoing while the group continues to discuss and identify a consistent approach to applying cancellation charges.

In this process we decided to work on creating a dedicated cancellation charge page on our connections website, this will be included within Statement of Works (SoW) information section. We have identified existing ESO guidance documents that will be available on our website.

We have created a dedicated page on our website for cancellation charge process. We have also included on our web page a cancellation charge calculator to allow customers to review their wider cancellation charge liability.



www.westernpower.co.uk/our-network/statement-of-works/cancellation-charge-information

We have also created a resource library that includes guidance documents on this matter.

www.westernpower.co.uk/our-network/statement-of-works/sow-resource-library

03 Connection queue management

Stakeholder feedback	Our action	Measures of success	Connection areas	Target date
Improve transparency with regard to how WPD facilitates its connections queue management process.	<p>Identify and implement any improvements to existing guidance to improve consistency, transparency and fair application of queue management principles.</p> <p>Have regard to concurrent work being undertaken by the ENA following Open Network consultation on the policy mechanisms and implement any changes as necessary.</p> <p>(Continuation from ICE 2020/21 Plan Action 4).</p>	Provide clear and concise information to stakeholders via various means including the website.		Q2 June 2021

Outcomes

- ✓ WPD Guidance – go live June 2021.
- ✓ Our new guidance will provide distributed generator customers with clear detail on WPD’s approach to implementing the new ENA queue management process.
- ✓ 551 downloads on our queue management guide from June 2021.

Following industry consultations throughout 2019 to 2021, regarding connection queue management, the Energy Networks Association (ENA) published the Queue Management User Guide (2021). The purpose of the guide was to create an industry-wide agreed process, based on the existing processes set out in the ENA Fair and Effective Management of DNO Connection Queues: Progression Milestones (2016), that all network companies will use to manage connection queues.

Our new WPD queue management guidance is based on new industry wide guidance. This guidance ensures WPD customers have a clear and constant approach to milestones and queue management that is agreed across the industry. Our new guidance will provide customers with clear detail on WPD’s approach to implementing the new ENA queue management process.

This WPD guidance, combined with our recently released capacity allocation and reservation guidance, will improve consistency, transparency and fair application of queue management for WPD customers across both generation and demand.



WPD Guide
www.westernpower.co.uk/downloads-view-reciteme/232207



ENA Queue Management User Guide July 2021 v5
[https://www.energynetworks.org/assets/images/Resource%20library/ON21-WS2-P2%20Updated%20Queue%20Management%20User%20Guide%20\(30%20Jul%202021\).pdf](https://www.energynetworks.org/assets/images/Resource%20library/ON21-WS2-P2%20Updated%20Queue%20Management%20User%20Guide%20(30%20Jul%202021).pdf)

04 Statement of Works (SoW)

Stakeholder feedback	Our action	Measures of success	Connection areas	Target date
Provide guidance relating to how the Statement of Works process will develop following codification.	To update external guidance document, information on WPD's website and template letters following the outcome of CMP298, which is designed to formally codify the Appendix G process into CUSC and is expected to conclude at the end of 2021. (Continuation from ICE 2020/21 Plan Action 2).	Updated document issued to stakeholders. Positive feedback from stakeholders through a questionnaire in relation to the updated document.		Q4 Dec 2021

Outcomes

- ✓ Extended into the ICE 2022/23 Plan, as we await the outcome of CMP298.
- ✓ Updated our website with clearer, concise information and a csv download option for all Appendix G information www.westernpower.co.uk/our-network/statement-of-works
- ✓ ICE 2022/23 Plan action 2.

We have reviewed and updated Statement of Works (SoW) information on our website. We have provided the latest SoW information in a clearer and easily accessible format. Appendix G information page has been revised to allow customers to easily navigate through each GSP in our licence area. We have also created a csv download option for all Appendix G information.



www.westernpower.co.uk/our-network/statement-of-works

We will investigate further improvements and enhancements to the information pages following the formal codification of the Appendix G process into Connections Usage System Code (CUSC) in Q2.

Following the improvements made, we will identify and implement any further enhancements to the 'Connections Information' pages on the WPD website.



What is 'Statement of Works'

Generators wishing to connect to WPD's distribution system may have an impact on the National Electricity Transmission System (NETS). WPD is required (under the Connection and Use of System Code) to make a request for a Statement of Works (SoW) to National Grid Electricity System Operator (NGESO) in relation to the potential impact of generation connections on the NETS.

Due to the cumulative impact of connecting large volumes of new generation to the distribution system and the lengthy SoW process, a new trial SoW process is currently in place, known as the 'Appendix G trial'. WPD has been instrumental in trialling this new process and is the first DNO to have an Appendix G in place. The introduction of the Appendix G has reduced the time customers have to wait for the outcome of the process from around four months to six weeks.

The codification process of Appendix G trail into the CUSC is ongoing and is planned to be completed by summer 2022.



05 Heat pump trial

Stakeholder feedback	Our action	Measures of success	Connection areas	Target date
Understand the impact of higher levels of heat pumps on the distribution system.	To understand the network impact of heat pumps, and to assess the practicalities of installation, we are working with a partner to develop new houses with LCT heating systems. The learning from this project will inform a revision to our Heat Pump Strategy document in 2021. (Continuation from ICE 2020/21 Plan Action 27).	Completion of trial.	<div style="display: flex; gap: 10px;"> <div style="background-color: #4a4a8a; color: white; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 5px;">MD</div> <div style="background-color: #c0c0c0; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 5px;">UMS</div> <div style="background-color: #c0c0c0; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 5px;">DER</div> <div style="background-color: #c0c0c0; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 5px;">ICP</div> </div>	Q3 Sept 2021

Outcomes

- ✓ Completion of trial September 2021.
- ✓ 7,395 downloads on our Heat Pump strategy from April 2021 to March 2022.

As an electricity Distribution System Operator (DSO), our approach is to ensure that a suitable electrical system exists for all the heating requirements in all situations. The principle is simple, the heat pump infrastructure requires higher volumes of energy and it is our job to provide the conduit for this energy.

We have used smart meter data to understand the use profiles of heat pumps on estates in Lincolnshire and South Wales. As a result, we expect to be able to reduce the demand assumptions that we use for heat pumps which will allow more to connect to our networks. This work will now pass into ‘Business as Usual’ (BAU) as an update to design policy and will be referenced in our next Heat Pump Strategy.



Our latest Heat Pump Strategy is at: www.westernpower.co.uk/downloads-view-reciteme/353149



Peter White, WPD System Development Engineer said:

“Our strategy outlines how we will ensure that the electricity network is ready and available to help us all to make this huge, but vital, societal change.”

06 Interactive costing tool

Stakeholder feedback	Our action	Measures of success	Connection areas	Target date
<p>Set up some kind of outline platform with mapping of cables and assets. That way, customers would be able to self-serve and work out whether their scheme would be suitable.</p> <p>Provide a provision for a “Self Service Budget Estimate”. E.g. detailed enough information for connections customers to carry out their own assessment on a budget basis.</p>	<p>Development of a customer friendly online LV self-serve budget estimate costing tool (LV 210kVA).</p> <p>Users will have access to a new automated tool that will allow them to self-serve and generate their own LV budget estimate.</p>	<p>Number of users from target implementation date.</p> <p>Stakeholder feedback.</p>	<p>MD UMS DER ICP (LV Only)</p>	<p>Q1 Mar 2022</p>

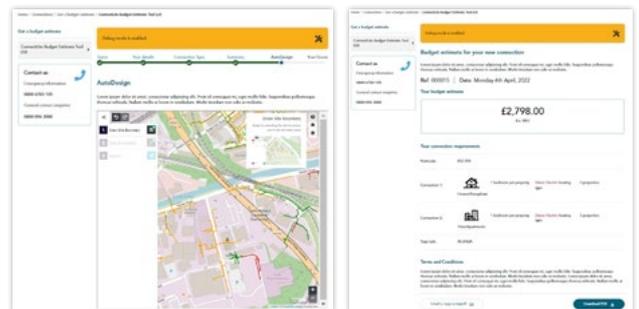
Outcomes

- ✓ Stakeholder feedback positive.
- ✓ Self-serve budget estimate tool implemented in user acceptance testing (UAT).
- ✓ Number of test users in April 2022 – 30.
- ✓ Number of test applications processed – over 300.

Our Connections Design Planners are facing unprecedented pressure as customers seek to connect low carbon technologies, at low voltage. Examples include electric vehicle (EV) charging and renewable generation.

This demand stretches our capacity and means that a large proportion of the available planning/engineering resource is devoted to relatively routine design work. In November 2021 we employed a Technical Consultant, to provide the new tool to provide budget estimate up to 210kVA in a self-serve capacity.

- Phase 1** Assessment of our data quality and identify the key design and feasibility of our approach.
- Phase 2** Identification and assessment of appropriate tool to convert “raw” data.
- Phase 3** Staged pilot introduction and implementation of tool, based on phase 2 outcomes, to internal users. To include rollout testing, user feedback, modification and post development.
- Phase 4** Development customer friendly online budget estimating connections tool in March 2022, we had finalisation of technical data and architectural requirements, we have developed the budget estimate tool and it is currently in UAT (training environment).



The budget estimate tool now provides a user friendly customer journey to understand the kVA requirements of the customer and then lead them to a tool which is now displaying their WPD LV network and allowing users to plot there site boundary and connect to the network and then obtain a budget estimate.

We are now undertaking testing for internal and external stakeholders to resolve any bugs and make sure that the tool is fully functional for our customers in June 2022.



07 'Enquiry tracker' process for non ICP customers

Stakeholder feedback	Our action	Measures of success	Connection areas	Target date
<p>Provide definitive updates including timescales through an online portal.</p> <p>This would allow users to see progress without having to contact WPD and being passed through several departments every time an update is needed.</p>	<p>Expansion of 'enquiry tracker'/online application process to include non-ICP major customers.</p> <p>To trial the online 'enquiry tracker' with repeat major connection customers. Survey and review feedback, before full roll-out.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create & route connection enquiries. • Enable tracking of individual schemes stage by stage. • Manage two-way activities. • Upload and exchange documents. 	<p>Positive survey feedback on enquiry tracker.</p> <p>Number of customers making use of the new process.</p>	<p>MD UMS DER ICP</p>	<p>Q1 Mar 2022</p>

Outcomes

- ✓ Trialling online 'enquiry tracker' with a selection of major customers.
- ✓ Positive feedback.

We sent out an invitation to participate in a trial of the online enquiry tracker to our repeat major connection customers. The trial participants have been provided with logins to the enquiry tracker to allow them to submit and interact with their connection enquiries.

The enquiry tracker has been developed to allow customers and ourselves to easily;

- Access an updated and improved, secure, web-based application allowing users to remotely monitor progress of their enquiries for new connections to the WPD electricity network.
- A system that interfaces directly with our main enquiry management system, CROWN.
- Real-time enquiry updates highlighting the latest enquiry tasks for both WPD and the user.
- Details of regulatory and WPD's own target dates for the completion of the activities.

The trial is due to last six months to allow participants to fully test the full end to end connections process.

Enquiry tracker benefits

- Customers can upload relevant documents where required as minimum information on the application to our database.
- Our staff (Planners/Teams) can request additional information for an application directly from our database to the customers enquiry in the enquiry tracker web portal.
- Customers can view the progress of their enquiry and enquiry timeline (this timeline is bespoke and only includes "customer relevant" prompts).
- Our database can now load documents, linked to prompts, onto the enquiry tracker web portal.
- Customers can upload documents, linked to prompts, directly to database documents for WPD review.

08 Scoping of flexible connections

Stakeholder feedback	Our action	Measures of success	Connection areas	Target date
Provide more clarity on availability of specific flexible connection options and volunteer up the most suitable consideration for a connection.	To provide additional customer facing documentation to recognise the changing energy use of customers and the ability of flexible connections to provide an alternative to conventional reinforcement, providing targeted advice and guidance to customers.	Improved number of hits to the webpage.	<div style="display: flex; gap: 10px;"> <div style="background-color: #4a4a4a; color: white; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 5px;">MD</div> <div style="background-color: #ccc; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 5px;">UMS</div> <div style="background-color: #4a4a4a; color: white; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 5px;">DER</div> <div style="background-color: #4a4a4a; color: white; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 5px;">ICP</div> </div>	Q1 Mar 2022

Outcomes

- ✓ 60 downloads on our flexible connections guide from March 2022.
- ✓ WPD Flexible Connections leaflet – www.westernpower.co.uk/downloads-view-reciteme/540250

We have now published a leaflet outlining the flexible connection solutions currently offered by WPD.

There may be instances where we cannot provide the full required connection characteristics at all times without undertaking significant reinforcement works.

To mitigate the costs or timescales associated with those works, we may offer a flexible connection solution to meet your needs, either on a temporary basis or as a more enduring solution.



Flexible Connection Offers
Flexible Connections are connection arrangements whereby a customer's export or import of electricity is managed (often through real-time control) based upon contracted and agreed principles of available capacity. We will consider flexible connection options wherever a connection request triggers reinforcement at a cost or timescale exceeding the thresholds in the table below.

Voltage Level	Time to Complete Works	Cost of Reinforcement
LV	No threshold	No threshold
11kV	>12 months	>£75,000
33kV	>18 months	Or
66kV		>£100,000
132kV		>£100,000

Flexible Connection Options
A number of flexible connection options are available where reinforcement costs or timescales exceed the thresholds detailed above. Examples include:
Timed Connections: Based on time of day, day of week or seasonal factors. By understanding the conditions which would adversely affect the network and limiting the output during certain time periods, the connection can be permitted without the requirement for extensive reinforcement.
Export Limitation Schemes: These schemes measure the apparent power at the exit point of the installation and use this information to either restrict generation output and/or balance the customer demand in order to prevent the Agreed Export Capacity from being exceeded. The equipment required for export limiting is customer owned and provided, to WPD minimum standards.
Load Managed Connections: These make use of real time SCADA based monitoring and analysis to determine the ability of the network to accommodate the customer's load (generation or demand). When network conditions are such that the full load cannot be accommodated, a constraint signal is sent via a Connection Control Panel, with connections affecting the same network constraints curtailed in the order allocated to them on a Last In First Out (LIFO) basis. Load management may be implemented with an Active Network Management (ANM) system or a Soft Interrip Scheme.
Active Network Management
An ANM is a sophisticated server-based system that interfaces with WPD's SCADA system. It can deal with complex networks involving multiple constraint points. It is capable of determining, in real time, the permissible limits of all the connected controllable loads and transmits this information to each connected load via its CCP.
Soft Interrip Schemes
Where network reinforcement is due to a single constraint point, and the cost of installation of a new ANM zone exceeds the cost of network reinforcement, a Soft Interrip Scheme may be used to manage the connected load. This involves continuously monitoring the constraint point by WPD. When the full capacity of the connected load cannot be accommodated, a digital 'softy' constraint signal is sent via the 'stage 1' contacts of the CCP, indicating that the connected load must be limited to a predetermined level.
Trigger Points
We have introduced trigger point trials relating to three connection scenarios, providing the customer with a window of opportunity in the application process to minimise the cost of connection. When relevant, the capacity which can be accommodated without the reinforcement works being required (the trigger point) is provided to the customer. A window of opportunity allows the customer to decide whether to proceed for a reduced level of capacity based on the trigger point, or proceed with the original requested capacity and receive a Connection Offer for the additional works and associated costs.
33kV and above: trigger point identified for the load that can be accommodated without the need for reinforcement.
Dedicated EV charging hub requiring 1MVA or more: trigger point identified for the load that can be accommodated without the need for reinforcement, provided the trigger point is not less than 500kVA.
Generation at existing premises with supplies up to 100A per phase: trigger point identified for the load that can be accommodated on the existing connection without requiring chargeable connection works.

09 Recording and provision of historical curtailment information relating to Active Network Management (ANM) systems

Stakeholder feedback	Our action	Measures of success	Connection areas	Target date
Improve the level of curtailment information.	To provide a high level measure of network congestion in active ANM zones by recording the number of half-hourly time periods during which an ANM system issued curtailment signals to customers.	Availability of “Periods Constrained” data for each ANM zone, updated on a quarterly basis.	MD UMS DER ICP	Q1 Mar 2022

Outcomes

- ✓ ANM historical curtailment data is now available on WPD’s website. Presently Q4 December 2021 data is available but due to be updated quarterly.
- ✓ 157 hits on our web page for ANM curtailment dataset page in one month.

We have investigated options for how predicted curtailment can be presented, either on the Network Capacity Map or through information on the website. We have now introduced our new ANM curtailment report webpage.



Data link is here: <https://connecteddata.westernpower.co.uk/dataset/active-network-management-anm-curtailment>

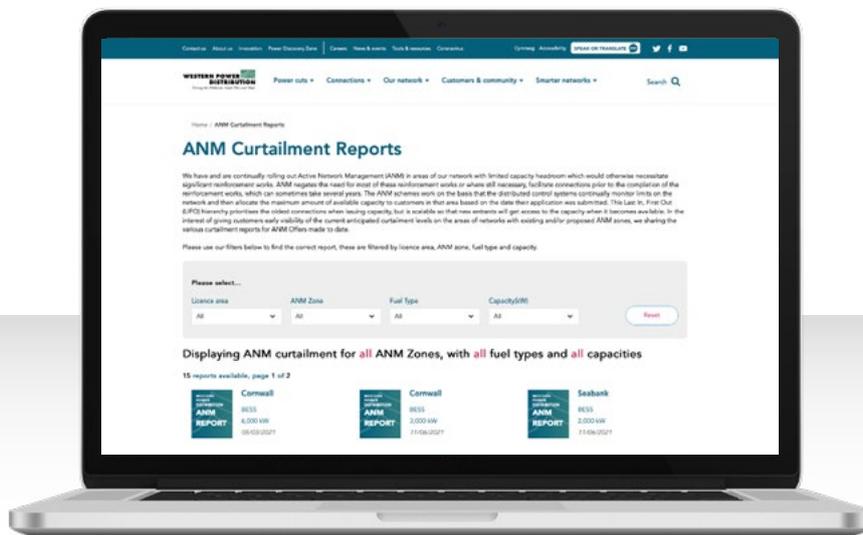
Our webpage will continually be rolling out Active Network Management (ANM) in areas of our network with limited capacity headroom which would otherwise necessitate significant reinforcement works. ANM negates the need for most of these reinforcement works or where still necessary, facilitate connections prior to the completion of the reinforcement works, which can sometimes take several years.

The ANM schemes work on the basis that the distributed control systems continually monitor limits on the network and then allocates the maximum amount of available capacity to customers in that area based on the date their application was submitted.

This last in, first out hierarchy prioritises the oldest connections when issuing capacity, but is scalable so that new entrants will get access to the capacity when it becomes available.

In the interest of giving customers early visibility of the current anticipated curtailment levels on the areas of networks with existing and/or proposed ANM zones, we are now sharing the various curtailment reports on our website for ANM offers made to date.

www.westernpower.co.uk/anm-curtailment-reports





10 Digitalisation programme updates

Stakeholder feedback	Our action	Measures of success	Connection areas	Target date
Provide improvements to data quality, including the heat map information.	<p>To inform customers on the latest data available and digitalisation developments.</p> <p>Provide customers access to the latest available data and help understand, how the data can assist planned developments to support their activities.</p>	Releasing new data sets via social media posts and news articles.		Q2 June 2021

Outcomes

- ✓ Released new data sets – 50 in September 2021.
- ✓ Ongoing social media posts as data and digitalisation evolves.
- ✓ 35,615 hits on our connected data web pages from June 2021.

Digitalisation of the energy system is at the heart of our transition to build a smart and efficient energy system, supporting the UK's clear commitment to net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

We have updated our website to carry information relating to our latest data and digitalisation developments published. We continue to review the effectiveness of the data as it begins to take effect and our stakeholder's feedback on their experiences.



We became the first Distribution Network Operator (DNO) to implement a standardised data catalogue, based on CKAN, the world's leading open source data management system; <https://connecteddata.westernpower.co.uk>.

So far we have released 50 open datasets, which is well over 100 data resources, each of which come with standardised metadata (based on the Dublin Core standard) and associated data dictionary. We have six data groups on our Connected Data Portal webpage;

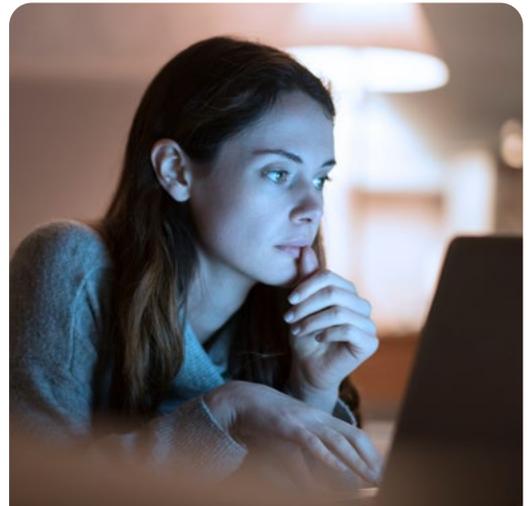
- Demand.
- Flexibility.
- Distribution Future Energy Scenarios (DFES).
- Generation.
- Innovation.
- System and network.

We continue to actively triage our datasets to understand whether they are open, public, shared or closed. As we move forwards we are now expanding Connected Data Portal to include data beyond that triaged as open, included public and shared using registration and access control functionality.

Our volume of accessible data through the Connected Data Portal will increase, using our regular and better internal stakeholder engagement and guided by external engagement to deliver better value to our customers.

“Feedback from our customers and stakeholders makes it clear that access to real-time data is a key area of interest. Understanding what is happening across the network on a real-time basis will become increasingly important to our customers, helping them make better operational decisions.”

Jonathan Berry, WPD Data and Digitalisation Manager



We also welcome any direct engagement and feedback via wpddigitalisation@westernpower.co.uk

Please also see our new webpage www.westernpower.co.uk/smarter-networks/digitalisation-and-data.

To sign up for our WPD website newsletter, please go to www.westernpower.co.uk/innovation/contact-us-and-more/register-for-website-updates



11 EREC G99 operational notification process

Stakeholder feedback	Our action	Measures of success	Connection areas	Target date
Provide clarity on how the G99 process works on the ground and with onsite testing.	To review and improve transparency of the G99 operational notification process including timescales, on when we issue the documentation or commissioning, energisation and witness information to the generator/customer. Develop a guide with clear implementation timescales both internally and externally, provide clear links on our website.	Positive feedback.		Q3 Sept 2021

Outcomes

- ✓ Guide developed September 2021.
- ✓ Link to guide on website: www.westernpower.co.uk/connections-landing/g99-connection-procedures
- ✓ 2,962 hits on our G99 connection procedures guide from September 2021.

Engineering Recommendation G99 ‘Requirements for the connection of generation equipment in parallel with public distribution networks on or after 27 April 2019’ (EREC G99) is an industry document that provides requirements for the connection process from standards of functionality to site commissioning, such that customers, manufacturers and generators are aware of the requirements that will be made by the local DNO before the power generating facility will be accepted for connection to the distribution network.

Customers connecting generation to our network need to install their equipment in compliance with EREC G99. The tasks undertaken to get connected differ dependent on the size of the generating capacity. In general, the bigger the power generating module, the more complex the connection requirements.

We have developed a short guidance document that focuses on the information exchanges that occur between the customer and WPD from the initial planning stage, through design and construction and ending at energisation, testing and witnessing.

G99 divides generators and battery storage systems into four classes (A-D) and the compliance requirements will vary for each type.

Type A generators or storage: <1MW and <110kV

Type B generators or storage: 1MW – 10MW<110kV

Type C generators or storage: 10MW – 50MW< 110kV

Type D generators or storage: 50MW + <110kV

Our guidance document explains which forms need to be completed to evidence compliance and which operational notifications should be submitted according to generation type.



We have written a guidance document ‘G99 Connection Procedures’ which is available on our website via the following link www.westernpower.co.uk/connections-landing/g99-connection-procedures

12 Competition in Connections (CiC) understanding

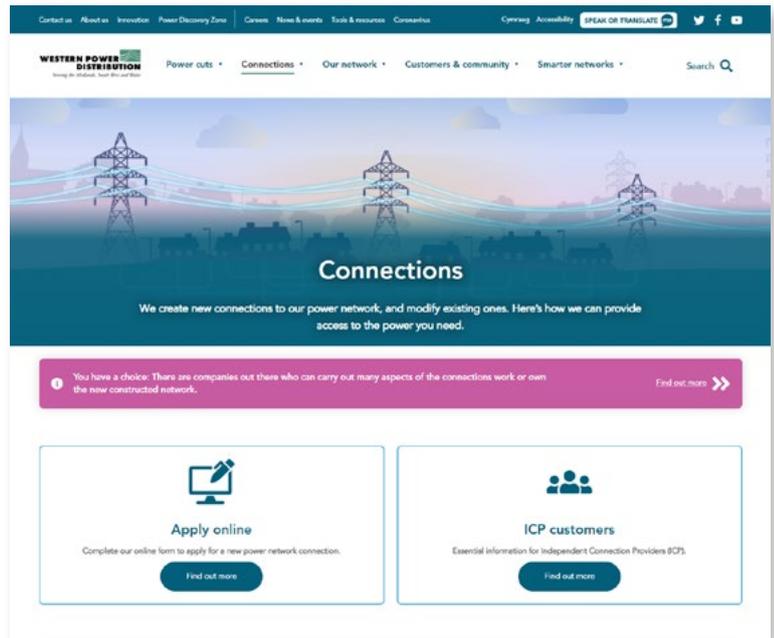
Stakeholder feedback	Our action	Measures of success	Connection areas	Target date
Sometimes customers struggle to understand the whole network ownership, especially the Independent Distribution Network Operators (IDNO) interface. They understand they can go to a Connections Provider but not necessarily understand the IDNO possibilities and what that means to them.	Undertake a review and improve the existing information on CiC. Update the connections webpage to enhance clarity in relation to the options available to customers.	Positive feedback from customers.	<div style="display: flex; gap: 10px;"> <div style="background-color: #4a7c59; color: white; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 5px;">MD</div> <div style="background-color: #c0c0c0; color: #4a7c59; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 5px;">UMS</div> <div style="background-color: #4a7c59; color: white; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 5px;">DER</div> <div style="background-color: #4a7c59; color: white; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 5px;">ICP</div> </div>	Q3 Sept 2021

Outcomes

- Review completed.
- Connections website updated in September 2021.

We undertook a review of the existing information published about the role of ICPs and IDNOs. Although the information provided was accurate, we recognised that customers who are unfamiliar with competitive connections would not know to look for it.

We have updated the primary connections website page, www.westernpower.co.uk/connections-landing, with a banner which promotes that customers have a choice in who constructs or owns the new network.



www.westernpower.co.uk/connections-landing/competition-in-connections/information-for-customers sets out what an ICP is and what an IDNO is.

Links are included to enable customers to locate ICP and IDNO companies operating in WPD's area.

The IDNO information has been refined to provide clarity that connectees will be customers of the IDNO and not WPD, and that the IDNO will be responsible for its operation, repairs and maintenance.

If you would like to share your thoughts and feedback, please contact our Connections Strategy Team at: wpdconnpolicysupport@westernpower.co.uk

Stakeholder comments before review from major customer survey comments April 2021.

“Not sure where or how to get information about contestable and non-contestable providers.”

“Because we did not know we could. We thought we had to go to WPD.”

13 Connections jargon buster

Stakeholder feedback	Our action	Measures of success	Connection areas	Target date
Provide clarity surrounding the use of technical terms by explaining terms in greater detail.	Provide granular information for customers and stakeholders to find connections and technical acronyms in a jargon buster guide/factsheet on the WPD connections website.	Positive feedback.	<div style="display: flex; gap: 10px;"> <div style="background-color: #4a4a4a; color: white; border-radius: 50%; width: 20px; height: 20px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">MD</div> <div style="background-color: #c0c0c0; border-radius: 50%; width: 20px; height: 20px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">UMS</div> <div style="background-color: #4a4a4a; color: white; border-radius: 50%; width: 20px; height: 20px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">DER</div> <div style="background-color: #c0c0c0; border-radius: 50%; width: 20px; height: 20px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">ICP</div> </div>	Q3 Sept 2021

Outcomes

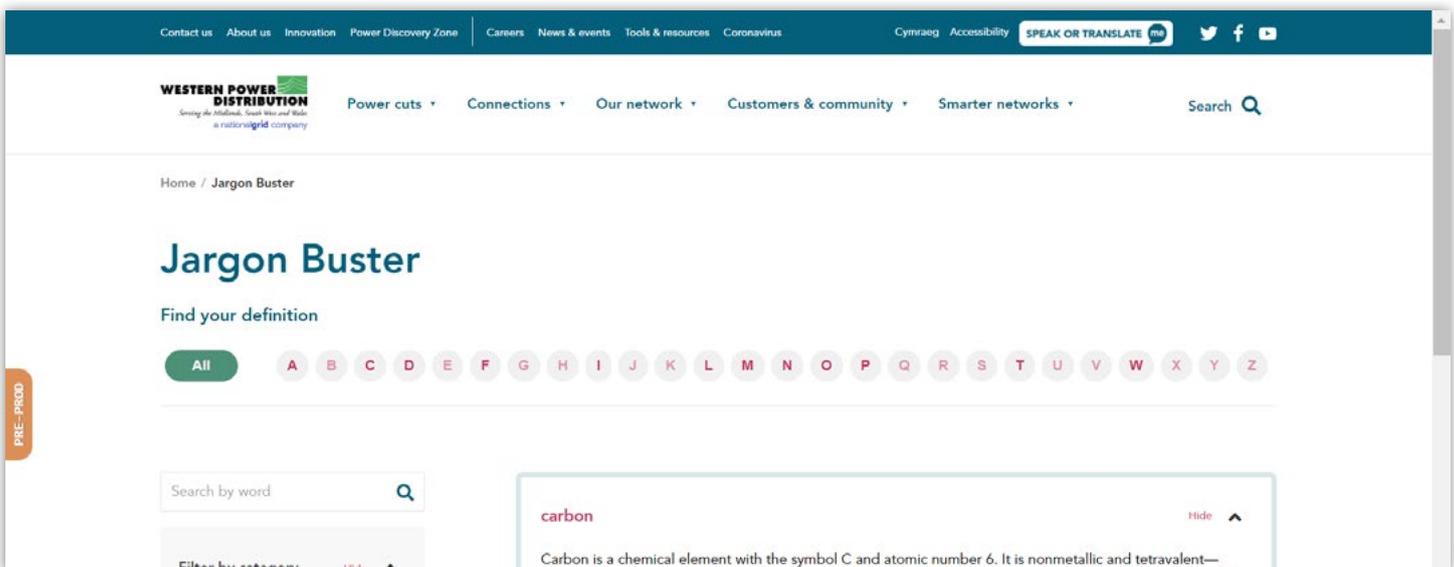
- ✓ Jargon buster guide/factsheet on website in September 2021.
- ✓ Link to website: www.westernpower.co.uk/wpd-glossary/
- ✓ 694 views on the connections jargon buster glossary from September 2021.

The jargon buster aims to give simple, plain English explanations of typical words and phrases used in the electricity connections world. The guide is to help our customers understand what they read or hear when in the process of applying for a new or augmented connection.

Our connections jargon buster helps to explain what many terms mean to enable customers to make an informed choice about the products and services that could help their connection. Getting to grips with connections application processes can be difficult when you are also trying to run a business or you are a one off customer and you may encounter words, terms and phrases that are hard to understand. With our jargon buster we explain them in plain English.

Looking forward, we will also introduce to the new connections website a new search page for the connections jargon, that can be filtered in alphabetical order or by the various connection areas e.g. flexibility, innovation, low carbon technology.

Our key challenge moving forward and evolving our jargon buster is we don't want the user to have to leave a page online to understand a term or phrase. We are now investigating the best interface to allow users to see those descriptions in the context of the page. Our website designer is now working on this concept, **we have raised a continuation ICE action in our October ICE 2021/22 resubmission – Action 22.**



Stakeholder comment in major connections survey August 2021.
“WPD use a lot of electrical terminology that the average person does not understand.”

14 Connections planning - internal communication

Stakeholder feedback	Our action	Measures of success	Connection areas	Target date
Create best practice and consistency throughout WPD on Connections process and policy, to ensure customers receive an excellent service.	<p>Develop communication pathways between the policy team, front line design engineers and planners to ensure customers receive a consistent approach across our four distribution areas.</p> <p>Collaborate with internal connections representatives, to understand any feedback, concerns or constructive suggestions, on connection areas for improvement/change.</p>	Actions and changes identified as a result of this initiative.		Q1 Mar 2022

Outcomes

- Committed actions identified on a monthly with targets and timescales.

Our Connection Strategy Team has now developed communication pathways between the Strategy Team, front line Design Engineers and Planners to ensure customers receive a consistent approach across our four distribution areas.

We collaborate on a monthly basis with internal connections representatives, to understand any feedback, concerns or constructive suggestions, on connection areas for improvement/change.

This is now known as the “Planner Efficiencies Forum”. The forum is held virtually to cover all four WPD licence areas to ensure a best practice consistent approach.

This has been actioned as follows: -

- Following us holding an inaugural “Planner Efficiencies” meeting in January 2022, and due to the success of this inaugural meeting, this meeting now takes place on an ongoing monthly basis. This is chaired by a Network Services Manager (NSM) and consists of planners from WPD’s four DNO areas plus colleagues from Connections Strategy, Data and Digitalisation, Mapping and Records, Finance and IT. The meeting provides updates on company initiatives which will benefit the planners and is an opportunity for staff to raise concerns and constructive suggestions which can then be actioned.
- The Connections Strategy Team has been enhanced and a new Connections Strategy Team structure and contact list has been circulated. Connections Strategy Engineers are now responsible for dedicated specialist areas and this allows internal and external customers to contact the relevant Engineer for specialist advice.
- Following the changes in 2 above, we updated the community forum pages on the WPD intranet called SharePoint, so that Connections Strategy related queries get routed to the relevant Engineer for advice to be provided.

The Planner Efficiencies forum will now continue as business as usual, ensuring we transform and evolve our processes, to enable the planners to give a great customer experience.

Essentially SharePoint is WPD’s dedicated internal website just for staff.



Proactive customer service. The act of providing contextual service at the right time, right place, and the right way with the right offer, even before customers ask for it or know they need it.

15 Reinforcement trigger level

Stakeholder feedback	Our action	Measures of success	Connection areas	Target date
<p>Create something that identifies ‘tipping points’ where connection costs change.</p> <p>Allow the planner/ designer to be proactive in contacting the customer giving feedback on the connection (Tipping point).</p>	<p>Improve the application process for major connections at 33kV to provide the reinforcement trigger level for relevant customer applications.</p> <p>The process will allow WPD to inform a customer of the level of reduction in capacity required to not trigger reinforcement, so that a customer can make an informed choice as to whether to proceed with their full capacity and avoid reinforcement.</p>	<p>Positive feedback from stakeholders on the improvements completed.</p>	<p>MD UMS DER ICP</p>	<p>Q4 Dec 2021</p>

Outcomes

- ✓ Positive feedback received.
- ✓ Action completed December 2021.
- ✓ Advised customers on 150 schemes with trigger point information for 33kV and above from January 2022.

Trigger point information on major connections at 33kV went live on the 6th December 2021. We are now providing customers with reinforcement trigger point information whenever they trigger significant reinforcement where a reduction in their otherwise requested capacity could negate the need for reinforcement.

This is being provided and included in the Point of Connection (PoC) information that is formally sent to customers prior to the formal offer. The customers are given an opportunity to revise their requested capacity, should they choose to do so, to negate the need for reinforcement works.

We have now also introduced trigger point trials relating to a further two connection scenarios, providing the customer with a window of opportunity in the application process to minimise the cost of connection.

Again, when relevant, the capacity which can be accommodated without the reinforcement works being required (the trigger point) is provided to the customer. A window of opportunity allows the customer to decide whether to proceed for a reduced level of capacity based on the trigger point, or proceed with the original requested capacity and receive a connection offer for the additional works and associated costs.

33kV and above: trigger point identified for the load that can be accommodated without the need for reinforcement.

Dedicated EV charging hub requiring 1MVA or more: trigger point identified for the load that can be accommodated without the need for reinforcement, provided the trigger point is not less than 500kVA.

Generation at existing premises with supplies up to 100A per phase: trigger point identified for the load that can be accommodated on the existing connection without requiring chargeable connection works.



16 Domestic LCT acceptance

Stakeholder feedback	Our action	Measures of success	Connection areas	Target date
Make it as easy as possible for customers to connect LCTs and reduce times to provide approval to install LCT equipment.	<p>To prepare for increased volumes of LCT notifications and connections we plan to adopt an automatic acceptance process for most domestic LCTs. The work which we would normally complete as part of the acceptance process, such as network modelling, will now be completed in retrospect for connections where reinforcement works are socialised. We will also make more use of data provided by installers to assess the service which feeds the customer.</p> <p>Any works to upgrade the service connection will also be completed in retrospect. Some LCTs with a known high level of duty on our network will be excluded from the automatic process.</p>	Update of LCT acceptance policy documents.		Q3 Sept 2021

Outcomes

- ✓ Completed – LCT acceptance policy in place and operating.
- ✓ Since Go-Live of the new process 19,356 applications have been received.
- ✓ 47% LCT connections approved instantly with no further works.

Following a successful trial we have now implemented a streamlined acceptance process for domestic low carbon technologies (LCTs). All EV and most HP applications will now get a quicker response from us, with any remedial works following on as a separate task. This means customers can connect their equipment without undue delay. Our internal policy was issued in September 2021 and brings the trial into a BAU solution across the business.

Specific notification requirements for LCTs allow us to obtain information relating to the cut out and termination in a customer’s home. In most cases the installation of a LCT is a notifiable event under Part P of the building regulations so installers are suitably qualified to provide a simple assessment of our equipment.

The generic assessments that have been made in relation to load approval at domestic premises. The two key factors that must be considered before any load increase may be accepted.

- **Equipment ratings must not be exceeded.**
- **The load must not cause significant voltage or harmonic disturbances which affect other customers.**

Now we have identified a suitable application process, we are looking to develop a web-based service for assessing requests for additional load at domestic premises as a result of LCT installations, facilitating a same day response to approve connections where pre-determined load acceptance criteria are met. We have included this as a new action in our ICE following ICE 2022/23 Plan action 9, to be completed by Q4 2022.



Customer feedback Dec 2021

‘Many thanks for sending acceptance so promptly. Western Power are by far one of the best DNO boards.’

17 Network Capacity Map for ANM - provision of indicative curtailment for ANM

Stakeholder feedback	Our action	Measures of success	Connection areas	Target date
Continue to improve the Network Availability/ Headroom Capacity Map data - Transmission ANM and curtailment levels for the different DG technologies.	Continue to improve the Network Availability Capacity Map to provide better information for Transmission ANM (TANM) and explore options for providing indicative curtailment information. (Continuation from ICE 2020/21 Plan Action 8).	Positive feedback from stakeholders on the improvements completed.		Q4 Dec 2020 Extended to ICE 2021/22 Plan Q3 Sept 2021.

Outcomes

- ✓ ANM Curtailment report now published on our website at: www.westernpower.co.uk/anm-curtailment-reports
- ✓ 15 ANM reports available.

We have investigated options for how predicted curtailment can be presented, either on the Network Capacity Map or through information on the website. We have now introduced our new ANM curtailment report webpage.

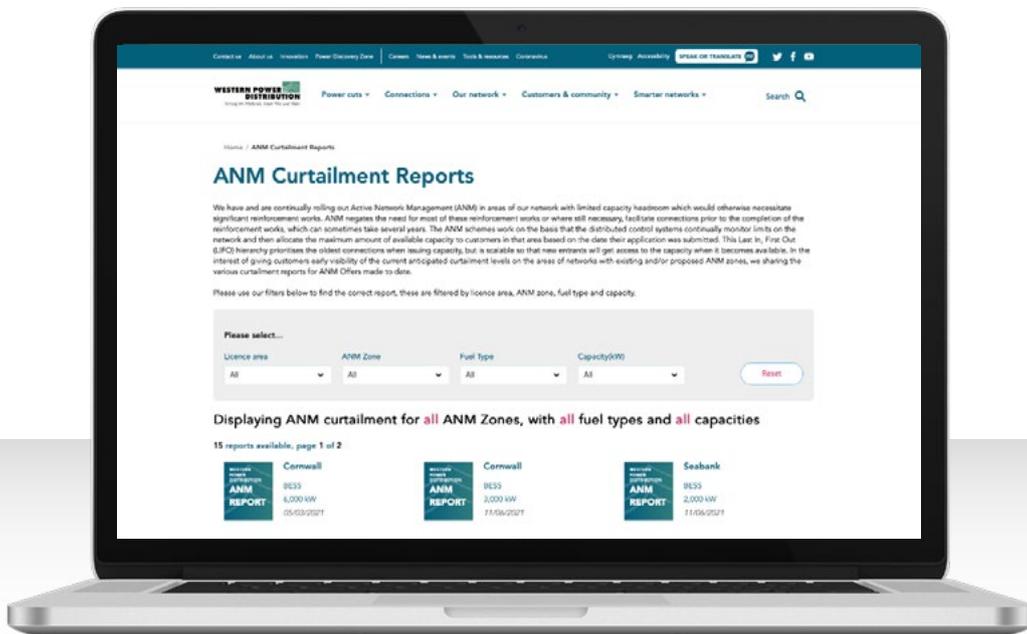
Our webpage will continually be rolling out Active Network Management (ANM) in areas of our network with limited capacity headroom which would otherwise necessitate significant reinforcement works. ANM negates the need for most of these reinforcement works or where still necessary, facilitate connections prior to the completion of the reinforcement works, which can sometimes take several years.

The ANM schemes work on the basis that the distributed control systems continually monitor limits on the network and then allocate the maximum amount of available capacity to customers in that area based on the date their application was submitted.

This last in, first out hierarchy prioritises the oldest connections when issuing capacity, but is scalable so that new entrants will get access to the capacity when it becomes available. In the interest of giving customers early visibility of the current anticipated curtailment levels on the areas of networks with existing and/or proposed ANM zones, we are now sharing the various curtailment reports on our website for ANM offers made to date.



WPD Website – ANM Reports
www.westernpower.co.uk/anm-curtailment-reports



18 Provision of outage information for DER customers

Stakeholder feedback	Our action	Measures of success	Connection areas	Target date
Provide email communication to DER customers for any new outage plans and altered plans going forward so that the DER community do not have to log into our portal to check to see if there was anything new that would be of relevance to them.	To work with our consultants to establish a firm framework with a view to deliver a solution. Proposed solution is that updates created within the portal will auto-generate an email to the relevant party.	Positive feedback on the revised DG portal.		Q4 Dec 2021

Outcomes

- ✓ Go-Live January 2022.
- ✓ 98 customers signed up to access the DG portal.
- ✓ Positive feedback received.

At our Distributed Generation Owner Operator (DGOO) Forum in January 2021, stakeholders requested an instant notification be sent to them whenever there was a change in status to one of the outages affecting their distributed generation (DG) sites.

WPD and our web developers created a project to capture the customer requirements with the intention to auto-generate an email to each registered DG portal customer for every outage change/creation within our Outage Management System.

This project entered its trial stages in December 2021 and the trials proved to be successful with no issues encountered. The project went live to all customers in January 2022.

WPD’s DG Portal has been updated to send customers an email notification whenever an outage is created, amended or cancelled. The customer is then invited to log in to their DG portal account to view the change that has occurred.



To access the portal please visit: generation.westernpower.co.uk



Stakeholder comment

“I think a 24/7 proactive system is far better than phoning or emailing. It gives greater flexibility’ CCSG Stakeholder feedback Feb 22 Storage and renewables provider/installer”

19 Smart meter load data

Stakeholder feedback	Our action	Measures of success	Connection areas	Target date
Improve LV data through smart metering, to help with capacity levels and connectivity for new customers.	To generate load profiles from feeders with smart metering data to improve accuracy of current load profiles. This will provide better data visibility and enhanced modelling, allowing more accurate feeder analysis and earlier identification of potential capacity constraints. Improved data will optimise network assessments, identify reinforcement works ahead of need and increase our ability to accommodate new connections and the installation of LCTs.	Feedback of progress to stakeholders, and use of profiles in WPD planning tools.		Q1 Mar 2022

Outcomes

- 80% smart metering data load profiles from feeders.
- Data visibility enhanced.
- Data to be used from June 2022.

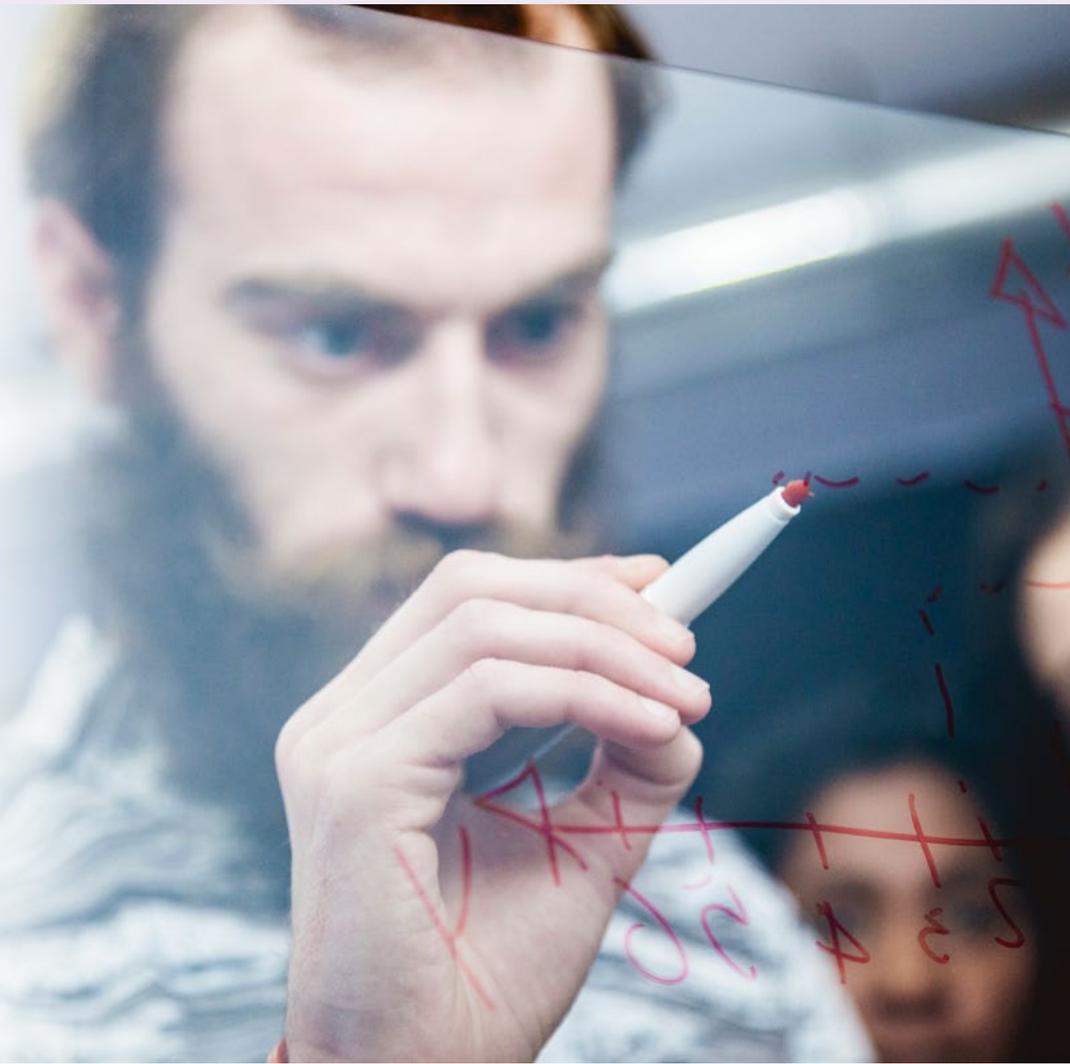
Loughborough University compiled a report, the report went to Smart Meter Team to analyse the formulae created to compile consumption profiles from the data we receive.

All substations with ≥80% smart meter penetration are now having their consumption data collected in to the WPD database on a scheduled basis.

Our information resources (IR) support team are currently creating the coding to extract the data in to the correct format for planning teams to use, and adding the algorithms to create whole feeder profiles.

Next steps are to decide what data is required and in what format from the collected smart meter data streams, and can this be easily transposed in to our planning tools.

Following the integration into our systems we expect to see load profiles by the end of June 2022.



20 Developers Guide through visual context

Stakeholder feedback	Our action	Measures of success	Connection areas	Target date
Provide enhanced guidance for inexperienced developers wishing to apply for connections.	<p>Following on from our initiative from ICE 2020/21 Plan - Action 6.</p> <p>We will improve information available to facilitate new entrants on our processes and procedures for a connection application by establishing a new customer focussed guide on our website area, including the provision of animated guidance.</p>	Number of hits on the website area.	<div style="display: flex; gap: 10px;"> <div style="background-color: #4a4a8a; color: white; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 5px;">MD</div> <div style="background-color: #c0c0c0; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 5px;">UMS</div> <div style="background-color: #c0c0c0; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 5px;">DER</div> <div style="background-color: #4a4a8a; color: white; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 5px;">ICP</div> </div>	Q2 June 2021

Outcomes

- ✓ Connections animation guide launched July 2021.
- ✓ 1,445 hits on the connections animation in the first nine months.

Following stakeholder feedback from our CCSG and stakeholder workshops we undertook to develop guidance for smaller developers and house builders who may have little experience or knowledge of the connections process. This work was completed in parallel with our commitment to improve the post-acceptance guidance by including pre-application information.

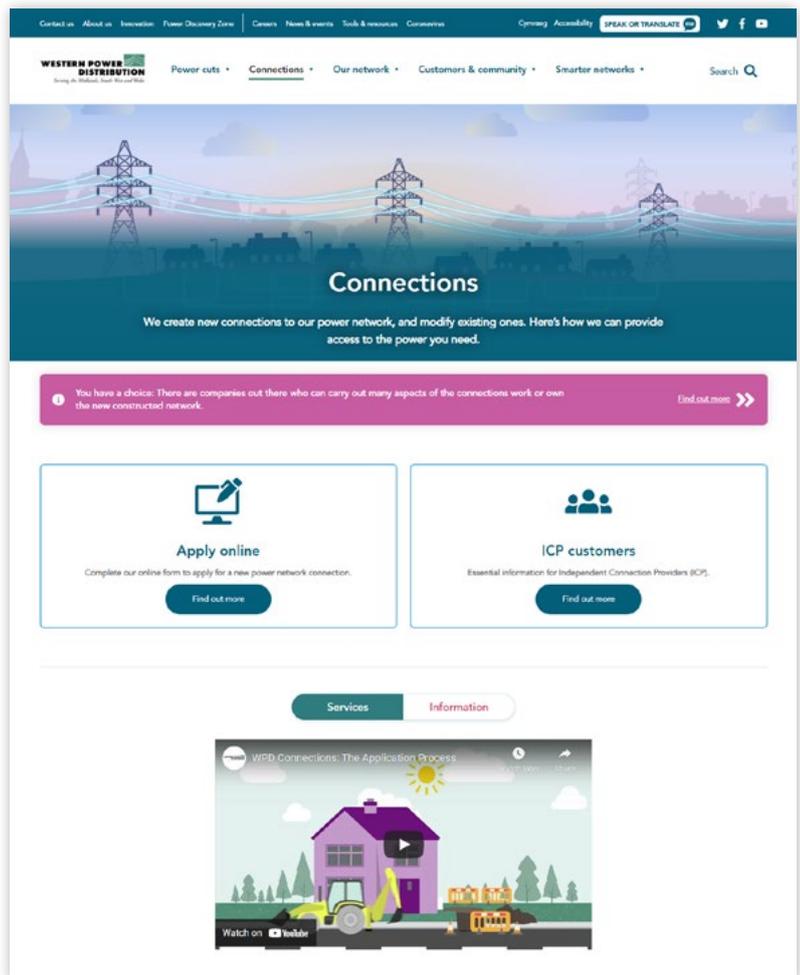
We have now provided visual guides using the social media tools that are available to us as a means to convey health and safety, technical and practical information in an easily accessible format.

The visual guides are in the form of animations as it was believed to be the best way to convey the message to stakeholders and that by breaking them down in to parts will help those with little or no understanding of the process. The animation will take the viewer through the step by process for obtaining a new connection:-

- Step 1** – Application process
- Step 2** - Pre-quote site visit
- Step 3** – Getting a quotation
- Step 4** – Preparing your site
- Step 5** – Work begins onsite

Each step will provide relevant details, i.e. the time scale to get a quotation, methods of application and site safety information when the work begins.

Since the launch of the animation in July, we have had 1,445 hits on the Connections Animation Guide. We have placed the animation front and centre of our connections landing page.



www.westernpower.co.uk/connections-landing



21 NEW - Independent connection providers safety and compliance event

Stakeholder feedback	Our action	Measures of success	Connection areas	Target date
Stakeholders fed back to say the number of ICP operatives that are active in WPD's area has increased year on year. They would like assurances that all the ICPs/IDNOs are fully conversant with procedure and compliance requirements.	We will investigate hosting a WPD safety and compliance conference for all registered ICPs and IDNOs in our four licence areas.	Collate all safety and compliance issues and communicate outcomes.		Q1 Mar 2022

Outcomes

- ✓ ICPs invited to WPD safety, health and environment conferences in May 2022, covering all four WPD licence areas.

Core business joint staff, contractor and third party SHE conference.

A number of large Independent Connection Providers (ICP) organisations have been invited to WPD safety, health and environment conferences that are being held during May 2022, so that feedback can be obtained about future direction of ICP/Independent Distribution Network Operators (IDNO) safety and compliance events.

The Conference topics will include;

- WPD safety and health update.
- Fair culture – The way forward and incident workshop.
- Mental health – 'from mental hell to staying well'.
- Environmental workshop 'Our environment'.

Following feedback from one of our Customer Connections Steering Group (CCSG) members, in October 2021 "More IDNO and ICP discussions, is there a separate meeting for this?"

We are looking to hold a bespoke ICP/IDNO stakeholder hybrid workshop in quarter three, covering policies and compliances in the Competition in Connections (CiC) area.



There is no higher priority at WPD than health and safety of our staff, contractors and third parties who could be affected by our work activities.

www.westernpower.co.uk/customers-and-community/health-safety



Our health and safety policy is at: www.westernpower.co.uk/downloads-view-recite/242356



22 NEW - Connections Jargon Buster advancement

Stakeholder feedback	Our action	Measures of success	Connection areas	Target date
WPD use a lot of electrical and technical terminology that the average person does not understand.	We will develop a simplified web-based Jargon Buster. That will enable the user to immediately access descriptions relating to electrical and technical terms without leaving the relevant connections page. We are investigating the best interface to allow users to see those descriptions in the context of connection pages.	Webpage hits on new Jargon Buster 'search' facility pages.	MD UMS DER ICP	Q1 Mar 2022

Outcomes

- ✓ Live March 2022.
- ✓ Enhanced Jargon Buster on our connections web pages.

Our Connections Jargon Buster exists to help our customers understand the terminology used in the process of using our website, application forms or guides.

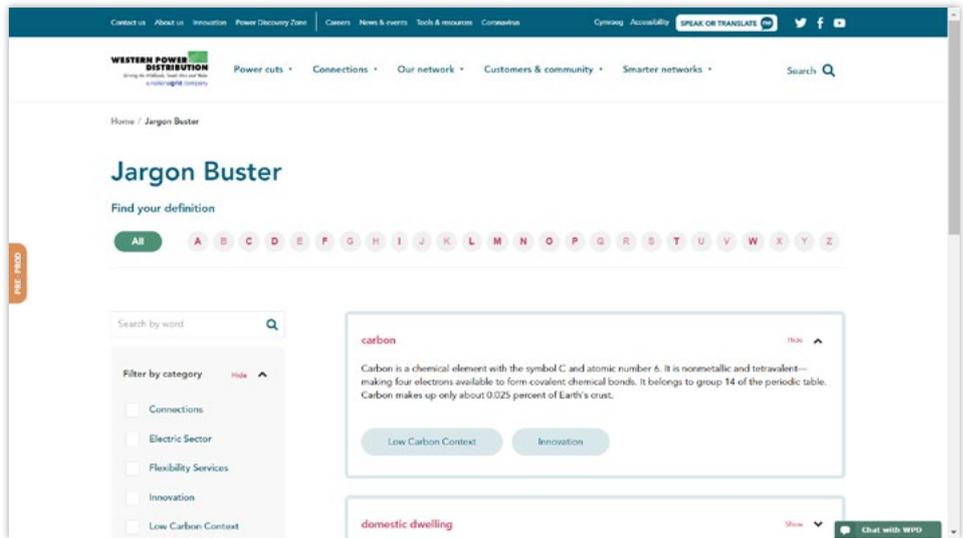
Getting to grips with DNO's acronyms and technical terms can be difficult when you are also trying to apply for a connection, you may encounter words, terms and phrases that are difficult to understand.

The enhanced Jargon Buster is designed to help through complexity and get straight to the definition, explanation and content that our customers can use. Our Web Designers have put a button in the top of our web site to switch on or off the Jargon Buster.

- This is provided in the way of two customer-facing website tools:
- An interactive glossary page.
 - Interactive in-page tool tips.

On the glossary page, users can search for a word, or phrase, that they are unsure about and read a definition of it – this has the benefit of all those definitions being accessible from one place.

With the tool tips, a user can see a word or phrase's definition directly in the context of the page – this has the benefit of a user not having to navigate away from the page that they are currently reading.



By taking both approaches users have the option of using the tool which is most useful to them at the time that they need it.

23 NEW - Domestic LCT acceptance web-based

Stakeholder feedback	Our action	Measures of success	Connection areas	Target date
Make it as easy as possible for customers to connect LCTs and reduce times to provide approval to install LCT equipment.	Provide a web-based service for assessing requests for additional load at domestic premises as a result of low carbon technologies (LCT) installations, facilitating a same day response to approve connections where pre-determined load acceptance criteria are met.	Positive feedback from stakeholders on the improvements completed.		Q4 Dec 2022

Outcomes

- ✓ The initial project has started.
- ✓ Now action 9 on the ICE 2022/23 Plan.

To prepare for increased volumes of LCT notifications and connections we plan to adopt an online automatic acceptance process for most domestic LCTs. We have already implemented under ICE action 16 the domestic LCT acceptance through our connections contact centre. All EV and most HP applications now get a quick response from us, with any retrospective works following on as a separate task. Customers can now connect their equipment quicker.

In October 2021 ICE submission, we enhanced our initial action (16) to have an online self-serve application, facilitating a same day response to approve connections where pre-determined load acceptance criteria are met.

Our approach is:

- Stage 1** Assessment of data and identify our design with website designers.
- Stage 2** Identification and assessment of customer friendly tool for online.
- Stage 3** Phased approach, rollout testing, user feedback and post development.
- Stage 4** Roll-out LCT acceptance online tool.



Any works to upgrade the service connection will also be completed in retrospect. Some LCTs with a known high level of duty on our network will be excluded from the automatic process.





Incentive on Connections Engagement

Section 3:

Looking Forward Report 2022/23



Introduction

Our ICE 2022/23 Plan ICE consists of 14 improvement initiatives that have been co-created with the help of our stakeholders.

In this looking forward section we set out the stakeholder engagement activities we will be undertaking in the coming year, explain how our ICE Plan outputs and measures have been developed and look at some of the key priorities for the year. Whilst this section sets out our plans for 2022/23, it is a starting point rather than conclusion. Our ICE Plan and engagement activities will evolve and expand through the year as we identify new areas requiring action.

While the last two years have proven a challenge for us we have not let it curtail our stakeholder engagement programme. We have continued to gather feedback through various means including virtual events and hybrid workshops, surveys and one-to-one discussions. This has helped us to draw our suite of initiatives together and test and refine them with our stakeholders prior to embedding them in our ICE Plan.

The 14 initiatives cover a wide spectrum of connections activities and are built around five key areas of delivery; policy guidance, customer support, communication, process improvement

and stakeholder engagement. Within the ICE Plan we set a target date for delivery and state how we will measure our success.

Our 2022/23 curriculum of stakeholder engagement will provide the foundation for our connections stakeholders to inform and collaborate on our connections improvement initiatives and long term strategic plans.

In this section we explain our stakeholder engagement strategy, how it underpins our ICE activity allowing us to identify our stakeholders' requirements, share knowledge and obtain the feedback required to maximise the impact of the improvements we undertake.

We recognise that it is important that we identify not only the areas of immediate concern for our stakeholders but also the emerging challenges that will impact our ability to provide a safe and secure network in the future. Everything we do now will act as a stepping stone toward meeting our customers' needs as the industry evolves to meet net zero.

The electrification of transport and heat and our ability to cope with an associated increase in capacity requirements is central to our Future Energy Strategy.

We will invest in our network to support the increase in volumes but also use flexibility and innovative solutions where it delivers the greatest benefits to customers. This is incredibly important for our customers and will lead to lower network costs, fewer delays waiting for connections to the network, a more resilient and safer electricity supply.

We believe our 2022/23 ICE Plan will improve our customers' experience and address the feedback we received from our stakeholders.

However, ongoing engagement is key to the success of the ICE process and we encourage all our customers and stakeholders to continue to contribute to our service improvement plans. It is only through continued dialogue that we can ensure we understand their needs and how best we can support them and to the long term growth and viability of their businesses.



To consider the following questions...

- 1) Blank page – what are the priorities you want delivered under each topic?
- 2) Review the priorities other stakeholders have started to fill in on the slide – do you agree, is there anything missing?
- 3) Blank page – what can you do to deliver under each topic?

Topic group 1a	Topic group 1b
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network reliability • Network resilience (to severe weather) • Cyber resilience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole systems approach to net zero • Innovation and new services



“Conversations are free and we encourage you to talk to us early.”

Alison Sleightholm
WPD Resources and
External Affairs Director

Our approach

Our approach is always to engage with a purpose and collaborate with stakeholders to co-create our action plans.

Feedback from our connections customers and stakeholders that we capture for ICE is also fed into our wider stakeholder engagement strategy via established reporting channels including our Strategic Stakeholder Engagement Management Group.

Led by our Operations Director, each area of our business is required to develop an annual strategic engagement plan and report on progress against that plan.

This group is helping to raise awareness of engagement activities taking place across our business and to identify any areas of overlap or potential for collaborative working. It also underlines the importance that we place on effective stakeholder engagement.

This group of critical stakeholders provides expert challenge on our strategic business priorities and helps set the agenda for our future direction. We have also created our RIIO-ED2 Major Connections Strategy, which will provide stakeholders the opportunity to challenge and drive us to be as ambitious as possible when formulating our future plans. In this year's ICE Plan we have put initiatives in place for the preparatory work that will lead into the RIIO-ED2 period next year.

Our approach to stakeholder engagement continues to align with the principles of our Stakeholder Engagement Core Strategy. Over time, stakeholder views and priorities change so we follow a cyclical process.





Development of the ICE Plan

The development our ICE Plan begins with analysis of stakeholder feedback sourced through a full range of engagement activity in the year leading up to its development. We use this feedback to identify what the key priorities are for stakeholders to determine where we should focus our activities. These priorities are checked back with our stakeholders to ensure we captured them correctly, at our CCSG, major customer connections event and annual stakeholder workshops.

We use these priorities and further engagement to develop a set of initiatives designed with the help of WPD senior managers who will be responsible for their delivery. The initiatives follow a framework structure to ensure consistency of approach and quality (see below) and need to be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (or 'SMART') so that it is clear to stakeholders what we are intending to achieve and to be able to easily assess whether we have delivered.

Although we will undertake 'quick-wins' where identified as stakeholder requirements, the majority of our ICE initiatives are intended to be stretching to ensure that we deliver maximum benefits to the customer. We set target completion dates and specific measures to assess the impact of the initiatives.

The plan does not stand still during the year, it expands as new priorities emerge and as the cycle of engagement, delivery and feedback generates further initiatives.



Standard structure of initiatives:

To ensure that WPD delivers an ICE plan with initiatives meeting the requirements of our stakeholders, we use a standard structure of actions we aim to undertake when delivering an improvement initiative. This provides consistency and ensures we include stakeholders throughout the process.

The steps below set out the standard structure of actions for our ICE initiatives:



Identify improvements

Assess the issue stakeholders have raised and identify improvements.



Design the solutions

Create plan of actions which will deliver improvements.



Check with stakeholders

Seek feedback on the solution ensuring we understand and will meet the requirement.



Amend where required

Update actions if required based on feedback.



Develop improvements

Deliver the actions required.



Test with stakeholders

Seek input where possible for development/testing. Gain feedback on finished solution.



Implement

Deliver improvements and communicate to stakeholders.



Seek stakeholder feedback

Ascertain if we have met their requirements and identify any further improvements.



Measure impact

Use feedback, performance data, surveys, attentiveness on webinars etc. To demonstrate the effectiveness and stakeholder's satisfaction.



With these steps we can demonstrate the improvements delivered and describe the impact they have had with the support of our stakeholders. Whilst there may be initiatives which do not lend themselves to each of these steps, our updates will be clear on reporting the steps we have undertaken.



Our engagement activity in 2022/23

Our programme of stakeholder engagement is vital to the success of our ICE activity. It ensures that we know the areas our stakeholders want us to focus on, ensures we develop initiatives with the most successful outcomes and it informs our decisions on long term plans. Our 2022/23 engagement will ensure that we obtain input from a full range of stakeholders representing all areas of connections activity.

Our Engagement Strategy ensures that engagement is fundamental to how we operate and for ICE it is central to the creation of the plan, which leads to positive outputs for our customers.

This fully embedded approach has enabled us to develop enduring engagement with stakeholders, building their trust through delivering on their input and feedback.

Following on from last year, we will continue to have an increased focus on targeted engagement enabling discussion on specific topics to improve the detail of input from stakeholders. Whilst we will continue to favour face-to-face engagement for detailed discussion, we will continue to expand our use of other methods such as virtual platforms, hybrid meetings, webinars, videos and social media. It is important that we embrace this technology to ensure that our engagement continues to be broad and inclusive of all stakeholder groups.





Stakeholder activities 2022/23

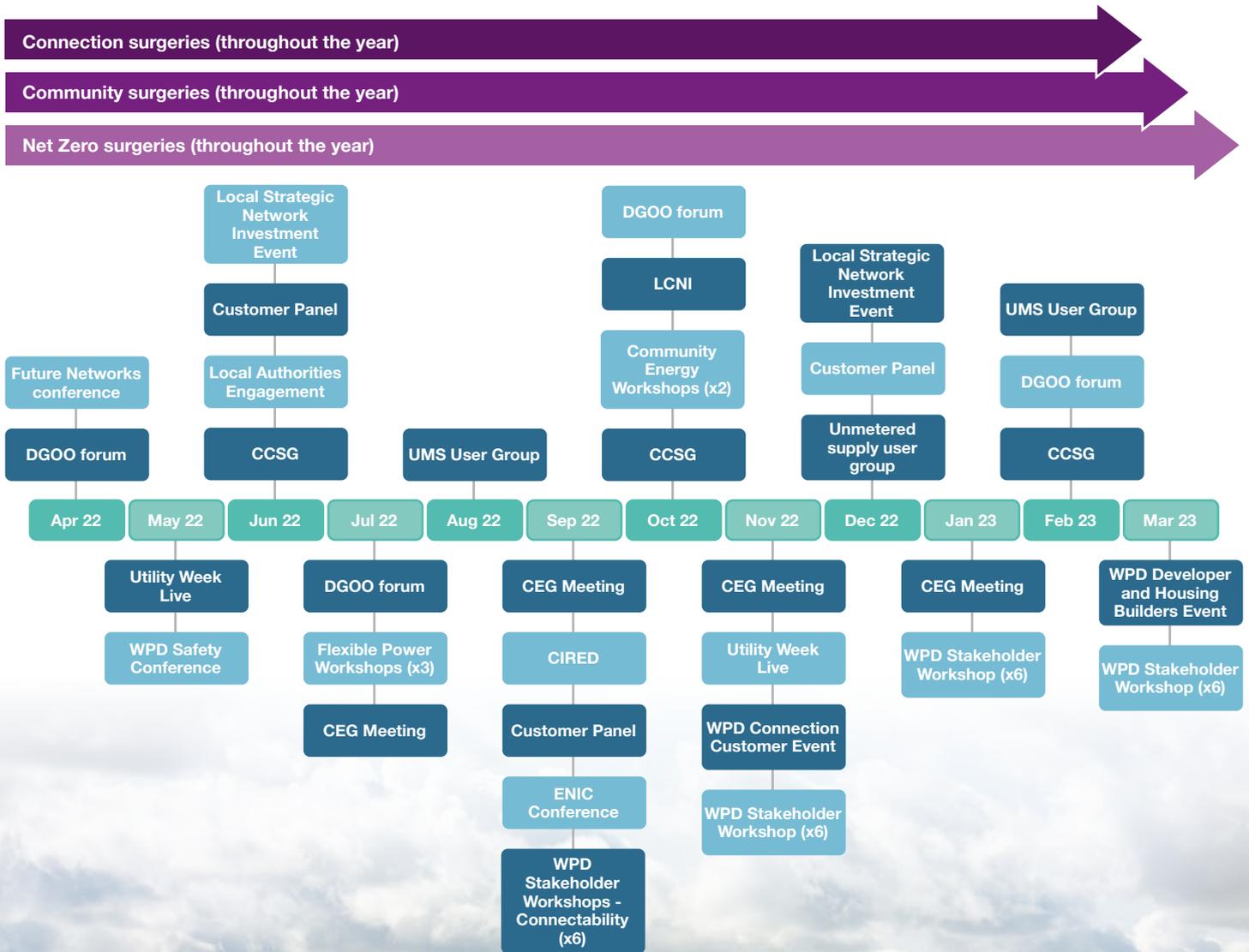
Activity	Description	Reach	Market Sector
Major customer survey	A WPD commissioned monthly customer satisfaction survey of connections customers covering the market segments under the ICE scope. The style of the survey remains in line with that conducted under the Ofgem Broad Measure Survey.	2,000	UMS MD DER ICP
Distributed Generation (DG) Survey	A WPD commissioned customer satisfaction survey of distributed generation connections customers. The style of the survey remains in line with that conducted under the Ofgem Broad Measure Survey.	400	UMS MD DER ICP
Customer Connection Steering Group (CCSG)	Panel of experts across the connections market to inform, influence and feedback on WPD connections plans and activities. The outputs from this group also feed into our overarching customer panel.	50	UMS MD DER ICP
Customer Engagement Group (CEG)	WPD's independent Customer Engagement Group providing input and challenge to our proposals around areas such as our transition to DSO as we plan for RIIO-ED2.	150	UMS MD DER ICP
Customer panel	Customer panel meetings help to inform WPD's strategy and action plans for a variety of areas.	100	UMS MD DER ICP
Distributed Generation Owner Operators (DGOO) forum	Four meetings are planned throughout 2022/23 The forum enables WPD to gain an understanding of DG owner/operator needs to develop actions to improve the services we provide.	115	UMS MD DER ICP
Unmetered Supply (UMS) group	Meetings held for local authorities in the Midlands, South West and South Wales, allowing the LA's to discuss connection issues and feedback on performance.	50	UMS MD DER ICP
WPD stakeholder workshops	Eight workshops in September 2022 covering a wide range of topics, including connections, held at various locations across all four WPD licensed areas.	650	UMS MD DER ICP
WPD safety conferences	561 members of staff, contractors, ICPs and 129 trainees followed case studies and virtual training to raise the profile of safety, health and the environment.	800	UMS MD DER ICP
WPD local strategic network investment event	Two Strategic Network Investment Stakeholder Events June 2022 and December 2022.	130	UMS MD DER ICP
Connection surgeries	Connection surgeries are held to facilitate customers with a virtual/telephone discussion on a one to one with our engineers/planners about their connection requirements.	850	UMS MD DER ICP
Community energy surgeries	Hold Community energy surgeries so that stakeholders can request bi-lateral meetings.	120	UMS MD DER ICP
Net Zero surgeries	Stakeholders will be able to request bi-lateral meetings with a local multi-disciplinary team to help facilitate progress towards decarbonisation.	25	UMS MD DER ICP
WPD local authorities engagement	Proactively engage with all local authorities to share our Distribution Future Energy Scenario (DFES) data.	130	UMS MD DER ICP
WPD developer and housing builders event	Hold an event in spring 2023 to brief a wide spectrum of developer/builder stakeholders on WPD connection strategies, RIIO-ED2 and the net zero future.	80	UMS MD DER ICP
WPD connection customer event	This event will be used to brief stakeholder on our ICE activity and seek feedback and discussion in November 2022.	120	UMS MD DER ICP
Electric vehicle events - hybrid	A range of EV engagement events including CENEX Low Carbon Vehicle Event 2022. The Annual Low Carbon Vehicle Event, connected automated mobility and WPD targeted engagement events.	2,500	UMS MD DER ICP
DSO information for local/rural stakeholders	Raise awareness regarding how rural areas might be impacted as we move to a DSO.	130	UMS MD DER ICP
CIRED	International conference on electricity distribution to be held provisionally September 2022.	1,000	UMS MD DER ICP
Utility Week Live	To exhibit at Utility Week Live in May 2022 at Birmingham NEC.	6,000	UMS MD DER ICP
Energy Networks Innovation Conference	The Energy Networks Innovation Conference (ENIC), formerly the Low Carbon Networks and Innovation Conference (LNCI), is managed by the ENA. The conference is on managing, developing or implementing innovations and will pave the way for the future net zero emissions. To be held September 2022.	2,500	UMS MD DER ICP

Total **17,900**





Our stakeholder engagement calendar 2022/23



The ICE 2022/23 Plan

WPD’s ICE 2022/23 Plan has been developed around the key areas identified by our stakeholders and will deliver a set of initiatives across a full range of connections activities.

The format of the ICE Plan has been designed to be simple, straightforward and most importantly, accessible to all of our stakeholders. It is important to us that all of our stakeholders can engage with our plan to ensure that we are meeting their requirements and that they are clear on what improvements we are delivering for them. The structure ensures that actions are clearly defined and stakeholders can see where these have come from and which market sectors they will deliver for.

Each of the actions are numbered for ease of reference and have a target date to track progress. The market sectors to which the action relates are identified in three columns, identified simply as unmetered services (UMS), demand connections (DMD), distribution energy resources (DER) and independent connection providers (ICP).

As updates are published new actions will be clearly identified along with additional status updates on existing actions.

The actions in the ICE Plan have been grouped into a series of four headline areas. We provide a summary below of the key themes of the initiatives in the ICE 2022/23 Plan against the ICE stakeholder priorities we have established for this year.

ICE 2022/23 Plan categories	Actions in each area
Policy guidance	3 actions
Customer support	3 actions
Communication	2 actions
Process improvement	3 actions
Stakeholder engagement	3 actions





Policy guidance

We are committed to continually driving improvements, delivering quality policy guidance in the constantly changing electricity distribution market. Involving our stakeholders in engagement every step of the way, we want to ensure that our policies are developed and enhanced in a meaningful and effective way.

Policy guidance is the first key area of our new ICE Plan. We understand that giving a clear, plain English speaking and concise guidance is critical to ensuring that both our customers and our own staff clearly understand processes and policies for the connections services journey.

We have three initiatives in policy guidance that we will deliver in this area.

One of our initiatives that we are targeting is to deliver and improve our CiC inspection process and policy. We are investigating the use of virtual audits/inspections and if successful we will adopt the process.

Stakeholders have told us they need better information and transparency of post acceptance inspections programme – clarity on when an Engineer will be appointed and the provision of a programme/works schedule for the ICP installations, in relation to the inspections. This will provide a good practice and may evolve into other connection areas.



Policy guidance

Action number and subject	Initiative stakeholder feedback	Initiative outcome	Measure	Target date (Q2;Q3;Q4;Q1)	Connections area
1 ICP virtual audits	Better transparency of post acceptance inspections programme – clarity on when an engineer will be appointed, provision of a programme/works schedule for the ICP installations, in relation to the inspections.	Investigation of adoption of virtual audits/inspections as part of CiC inspection policy. Run a series of trials for virtual audits across WPD's regions, in a phased approach.	To trial a new virtual audit process. Positive stakeholder feedback.	Q4 Dec 2022	MD UMS DER ICP
2 Statement of Works (SoW)	Provide guidance relating to how the Statement of Works process will develop following codification.	To update external guidance document, information on WPD's website and template letters following the outcome of CMP298, which is designed to formally codify the Appendix G process into CUSC. Following the improvements made we will identify and implement any further enhancements to the 'Connections Information' pages on the WPD website. Extended from ICE 2021/22 Plan - Action 4.	Updated document issued to stakeholders. Positive feedback from stakeholders through a questionnaire in relation to the updated document.	Q4 Dec 2022	MD UMS DER ICP
3 G99 application advice	Update through information on how the G99 process is working on the ground, office studies and onsite testing.	Provide improved guidance advice for customers on completing applications when applying for G98 or small G99 installations. Include example application forms and schematic drawings.	Complete guidance for customers. Example scenarios produced on our website.	Q3 Sep 2022	MD UMS DER ICP



Customer support

Customer support is the second key area in our ICE Plan. It is essential we deliver services that meet and exceed our customers' expectations. We have three initiatives in the customer support area that provide a range of services for our customers, that aim to help and inform them so that they are not left confused or frustrated during the connections process.

As we are a customer driven company, we understand why customer support is very important and that giving timely and empathetic help, that keeps the customer's needs at the forefront of every interaction and part of their journey is very important.

One way that we want to support customers is through EV charging mobility, we will undertake some pilot schemes, in partnership with mobility charities, consumer groups and local authorities. Exploring data and evidence to identify the needs for accessibility for disabled drivers, the analysis will help recommend the most effective intervention and support engagement.

Information awareness for our application process for customers who are considering electric heating it is critical to our many stakeholders to help them make the formal or informal decisions about the viability of a new connection.

In our WPD Connections Workshop in November 2021, stakeholders made it clear that – “simplicity is the key idea here. Customers need to be given information in a simple manner.”

Hopefully, this will dispel uncertainty and improve awareness and knowledge of the customer journey.



Customer Support

Action number and subject	Initiative stakeholder feedback	Initiative outcome	Measure	Target date (Q2;Q3;Q4;Q1)	Connections area
4 Distribution Use of System (DUoS) advice/information	In connection offers there is no information on when payment needs to be made or standing charges. It is only when the application is accepted that we are told when it should be paid by. It would be good to have clarity during the application stage.	Proactively sign post in the Connection Agreement (CA) to the charging methodology. Simplifying and improve the 'use of system charges' web page to enable our relevant staff to sign post customers to the system charging information.	Update the connection agreement by Q3 2022. Completion of implementation of the 'use of system charges' web page.	Q4 Dec 2022	
5 EV charging mobility	EV charging for non-domestic customers i.e. large public charging/airports/distribution/large retail/bus and transportation. Also for disabled car charging facilities.	We will undertake some pilot schemes, in partnership with mobility charities, consumer groups and local authorities. Exploring data and evidence to identify the needs for accessibility for disabled drivers, the analysis will help recommend the most effective intervention. - Outline an implementation plan with practical ideas that can be put forward for trial. - Define an engagement plan to socialise findings with relevant parties. - Support engagement and develop well-rounded views of differing needs.	Updated document issued to stakeholders. Implement stakeholder engagement plan.	Q1 Mar 2023	
6 Electric heating online portal	It would be great to have improved visibility of upcoming changes to policies and standards, as it takes time to get equipment manufactured. Access to policy and specification documents needs to be made easier.	Identify and implement any improvements to existing guidance to improve consistency, transparency and fair application of electric heating. We will develop an online knowledge base for our staff, installers and electrical contractors with practical guidance and technical information on a electric heating portal.	Review existing guidance - end Q2 June 2022. Implement online knowledge base - end Q4 Dec 2022.	Q4 Dec 2022	



Communication

Communication is our third key area of our ICE Plan and is significant to our plan to impart and exchange of information in a simplified and concise format. We are seeking to establish the most effective channels of communication and access for all of our stakeholders and customers and with particular benefit to connection customers.

Communication is simply the act of transferring information from one place, person or group to another.

At our Connections Stakeholder Workshop in November 2021 it was noted that stakeholders felt that “Being able to check your application progress is a positive thing, using a portal is a good idea for certain kinds of customers that are more often than not a one off interaction.”

As a first step in our goal to improve communication, our action is to provide a customer connections portal, ensuring the customer has visibility of the connection application from inception to connection.

Initially we will look to implement for our smaller customers (1-4/69kVA), to establish a quality service for our customers before releasing to the larger customers.

Communication

Action number and subject	Initiative stakeholder feedback	Initiative outcome	Measure	Target date (Q2;Q3;Q4;Q1)	Connections area
7 Customer connections portal	<p>Being able to check your application progress is a positive thing, using a portal is a good idea for certain kinds of customer that are more often that not a one off interaction.</p> <p>An ongoing portal of advice and conversation would be great.</p>	<p>To develop a web-based customer portal for an end to end scheme progression during the application process, through to delivery and connection.</p> <p>Initially for our smaller customers (1-4/69kVA), to establish a quality service for our customers before releasing to the larger customers.</p> <p>Following the survey, feedback and trial from last years ICE action 7- enquiry tracker for non-ICPs. We will enable all major customers to have access to the tracker, and to further monitor feedback.</p>	85% positive feedback from our customers.	Q1 Mar 2023	
8 Interactive map	<p>Data is critical to everybody in terms of making decisions. It is really essential that they have a centralised mapping functionality that is interactive for customers.</p> <p>This will save us time and help with our customer experience.</p>	To engage with our stakeholders to understand the digital customer journey cases for which they would require an online mapping tool, and develop a new solution that can empower them to realise those journeys.	Completion of stakeholder engagement.	Q1 Mar 2023	



Process improvement

Process improvement is our fourth key area and has three initiatives. We are speaking to the full spectrum of stakeholders impacted by our processes. We work collaboratively with them and ask them to identify where they think we can improve our processes to make them more efficient and less of an administrative burden.

Process improvement also impacts our own people at WPD and so continuously engaging with them helps to develop best practice. Our staff are talking to customers every day so by liaising with them we can ensure that we are obtaining the best and most informed feedback possible. One of our ICE actions from 2021/22 was to implement a domestic LCT application acceptance process, we completed this action in quarter 3. Since the commencement of the new domestic LCT acceptance in September 2021 up to the end of April 2022, we have received and processed 18,000 applications.

Following additional stakeholder feedback, we have enhanced our action into developing an online domestic LCT application process, to enable our customers to communicate with us at any time. The ICE action reflects the original action, to prepare for the increased volume of LCTs and to provide a customer friendly process with a self-serve capability in connection of low carbon technologies such as electric vehicles and heat pumps. The online LCT application process is in progress and we are working to trial it by September 2022.



“Make it as easy as possible for customers to connect LCTs and reduce times to provide approval to install LCT equipment.”

Stakeholder feedback from WPD Connections Workshop November 2021.



Process improvement

Action number and subject	Initiative stakeholder feedback	Initiative outcome	Measure	Target date (Q2;Q3;Q4;Q1)	Connections area
9 Domestic LCT acceptance web-based	Make it as easy as possible for customers to connect LCTs and reduce times to provide approval to install LCT equipment.	Provide a web-based service for assessing requests for additional load at domestic premises as a result of low carbon technology (LCT) installations, facilitating a same day response to approve connections where pre-determined load acceptance criteria are met. Develop a mobile app functionality to automate the provision of low carbon technology (LCT) application process. Continuation from ICE 2021/22 Plan - Action 23.	Positive feedback from stakeholders on the improvements completed.	Q4 Dec 2022	MD UMS DER ICP
10 Connection agreement reduction of authorised supply capacity (ASC)	It makes our lives a lot easier to not have to pick up the phone.	Develop a process for reduction of Authorised Supply Capacity (ASC) in the connection agreement process to be available as an online application.	Completion of online application.	Q4 Dec 2022	MD UMS DER ICP
11 Interactive video solutions	We are seeing an increase in all applications, and the systems you have in place are not up to the task for what is coming in the future.	Investigate the development of an interactive video call option to replace some site visits to ensure that the customer experience is faster, safer, easier and more efficient. To enable our staff to give a new customer experience that enables our connections staff to focus on the customer needs and requirements.	Completion of interactive video solution.	Q4 Dec 2022	MD UMS DER ICP



Stakeholder engagement

Stakeholder engagement is our fifth key area and has three initiatives. We are speaking to the full spectrum of people impacted by our connections area now and in the future. It is important that we continue our stakeholder engagement throughout the year in order to communicate effectively and to ensure that our ICE Plan evolves.

Our second Connections Workshop held in November 2021 as a hybrid workshop (in-person and online) was judged a success, 93% of the attendees agreed it was a great success. It helped us to understand our stakeholder's needs and we are keen to replicate and build upon that by holding another event this year. We are also tailoring our engagement in this year's plan to our housing developers/builders to drive better customer outcomes.

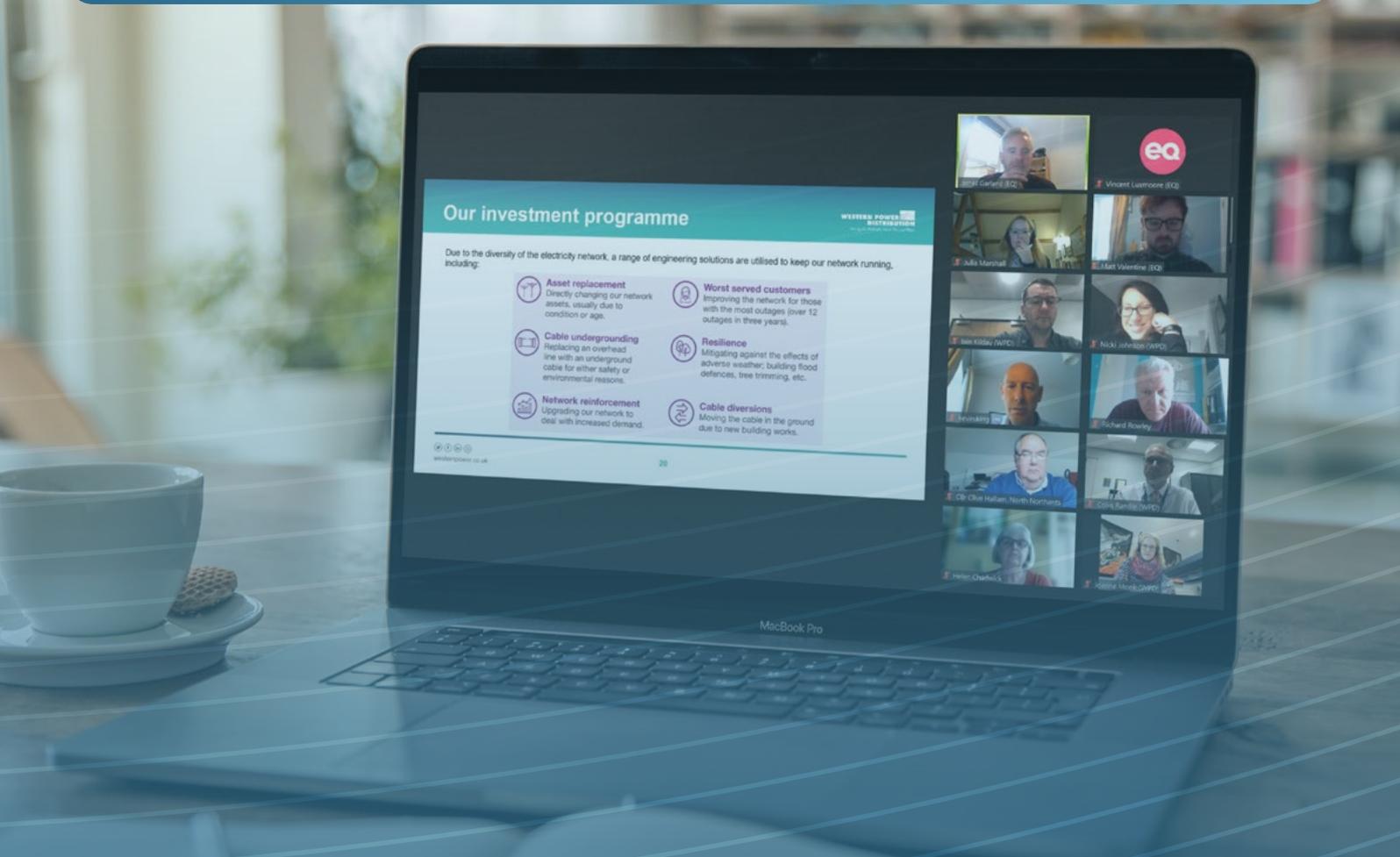
Connection surgeries are also a very beneficial way for us to interact. We have enabled surgeries for community energy customers and net zero to support delivery of small scale energy projects. We also want to engage by publishing a guide to Network Innovation Allowance (NIA) projects for communities, to encourage community groups to come forward with projects, so we can offer support and guidance through their community journey. Engagement underpins our decision making and everyone at WPD has a role to play. If we are to achieve our goal of being the best in the eyes of our customers, we must never presume to know what they want.

Verbatim comment from Connections Workshop Nov 2021.



“Some DNOs are leaders and others are followers. Lots will instinctively wait for someone else to come up with the best solution and then rush to put it in place themselves. As a result, lots of heads are buried in the sand in the meantime, which doesn't help support wider efforts to get the right infrastructure in place for low carbon technology at a wider level. However, WPD are definitely one of the DNOs that are instinctively happy to lead and engage”

Storage and renewables provider / installer Connections Workshop Nov 21.





Stakeholder engagement

Action number and subject	Initiative stakeholder feedback	Initiative outcome	Measure	Target date (Q2;Q3;Q4;Q1)	Connections area
12 Developer engagement event	Please keep us informed of progress. We are most grateful to be kept in touch with.	Hold an event in spring 2023 to brief a wide spectrum of developer/builder stakeholders on WPD's connection strategies, RIIO-ED2 and the net zero future. Encourage round table discussion to generate feedback and potentially develop further initiatives.	85% positive feedback from housing developer/builder customer event.	Q1 Mar 2023	
13 Customer engagement report	I like the idea of each region having a specific contact point. That would provide a consistent approach. The connections process is very good, but the correct point of contact can be tricky.	Enhance the provision of named/nominated lead customer relationship contact points for returning customers across all four WPD licence areas. To provide nominated WPD customer relationship leads to customers.	The provision of nominated WPD customer relationship leads/point of contact to customers.	Q1 Mar 2023	
14 Community energy schemes	Support a growth in community energy schemes by facilitating their access to available funding streams.	Publicise new case studies as they arise on our website and newsletter. - Develop a process for innovation referrals and promote at events and community surgeries. - Publish a guide to Network Innovation Allowance (NIA) projects for communities, to encourage community groups to come forward with projects, offering a digital call with Network Innovation Engineers.	Deliver a small community generation/demand demonstrator including funding.	Q1 Mar 2023	



The success of the plan

We determine success by getting the job done well first time. We are always striving to develop and achieve goals which are highly ambitious. We welcome opportunities to improve.

To evaluate whether we have successfully met our stakeholders' expectations, it is important that we understand the impact our ICE incentives have on the services we provide to our customers. Alongside our ICE initiatives, we set out measures to monitor the impact and obtain feedback from stakeholders since they are best placed to tell us if we have met their needs.

These measures have been developed with the commitment of WPD's Operations Director and continue to be embedded in the way in which we manage improvements and enhancements in our connection services.

We recognise that, for some initiatives, we cannot always set measurable targets for determining the impact of improvements we have undertaken. We will however, where applicable, continue to survey our stakeholders to receive feedback from them in response to the improvements we aim to deliver.



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