

Incentive on Connections Engagement



2021-22

# Looking Forward Report Overview

SEPD/SHEPD Plans and Commitments  
for Connections Customers



**Scottish & Southern**  
Electricity Networks



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## About this document

This is Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks' (SSEN's) annual Incentive on Connections Engagement (ICE) Looking Forward Workplan report for 2021-22. It covers our Scottish Hydro Electric Power Distribution (SHEPD) and Southern Electric Power Distribution (SEPD) licence areas.

Ofgem's Incentive on Connections Engagement encourages Distribution Network Operators (DNOs) to engage proactively with large connections stakeholders to improve their customer service and connections experience.

# Foreword

This has been a pivotal year for the UK efforts to tackle climate change while also managing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Distribution networks have a critical role in accommodating new ambitious targets and enabling the net zero aims of the communities we serve, while maintaining network reliability and continuing to provide strong customer service under challenging times. SSEN is committed to supporting these efforts and delivering the leading service our 3.8 million customers expect.

Having joined Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks as the new Managing Director for Distribution in January 2021, I have truly come to appreciate the challenges we face and the opportunities we can seize at such an important time for the company, and the UK, as we seek to continue the journey to net zero. I have been pleased to see the high level of importance placed, by SSEN, on effective stakeholder engagement which was exemplified when I attended the new Expert Panel sessions hosted by the Connections Engagement team in February 2021. It was great to virtually sit down with industry expert Connections stakeholders as well as the SSEN Connections Leadership team. This engagement allowed us to review proposals together, listen and discuss how we can continue to drive improvements in the business and reflect customer needs. These conversations will also be critical as we prepare for RIIO-ED2 with the households and businesses at the center of our considerations. I was assured that the SSEN Connections business recognises the value and power of feedback towards business improvement; it is a vital element in how we do what we do, especially considering SSEN's critical role in enabling the UK's net zero ambitions to ensure we work in synergy with our customers and stakeholders.

The year 2020 will go down in history under many labels and one of them undoubtedly will reflect the rapid acceleration of digital engagement in many aspects of our lives. Restrictions and lockdowns alongside rapid take up of technology presented a number of challenges, both practical and logistical.

However, I am pleased to have witnessed the Connections business' swift adaptation to new ways of working and their ability to find a way to continue the critical work we do to keep the power flowing to your homes and businesses. The Connections team's priority throughout has been to ensure we continue to provide connections in a timely fashion and keep communication channels open so that we are able to accommodate evolving changes in the industry or in customer and stakeholder needs.

Following the positive outcome of Ofgem's 2019-20 Incentive on Connections Engagement assessment, we are pleased to publish in this report the further improvements we are planning to make to our Connections business throughout 2021-22 and beyond, with some longer-term commitments which we plan to align with our RIIO-ED2 goals.

We have acted on your feedback and have introduced changes to our Looking Forward report this year. Among these changes, we worked with our Expert Panel members to create three strategic pillars we will be focusing on for the remainder of RIIO-ED1: Customer Service & Communication, Enhancing the Connections Journey and Net Zero.

I look forward to supporting your ambitions as we work together to address the challenges of net zero, further improving the connections experience and building excellent customer service and communication standards.

**Chris Burchell**  
Managing Director, SSEN Distribution



# Our Workplan Overview

We have all been presented with several challenges and changes to business as usual proceedings over the past year. For us at SSEN, one of the biggest changes was how we engaged with our customers and stakeholders to get their feedback.

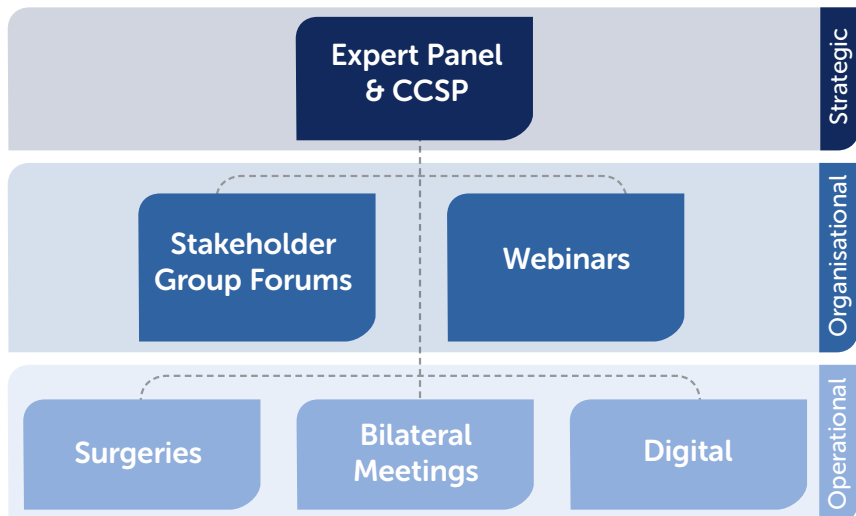


Figure 1: Three tiers of engagement

We committed to reform our engagement model in 2020-21 and worked to deliver this throughout the year. We gathered feedback and ideas at the Operational and Organisational levels. Stakeholders then reviewed and prioritised these at the Strategic level at the Connections Customer Steering Panels (CCSPs), producing a list of the top voted ideas to take forward as our newly proposed commitments for 2021-22. We then investigated each of the ideas and discussed each proposal in detail with our Expert Panel in February 2021. Therefore, we are committing to deliver 23 commitments in 2021-22. Out of all the ideas discussed at the Expert Panel, it was suggested that three could benefit from further investigation and collaboration with stakeholders. As a result, we have not included them in our workplan at this time. We will continue to investigate these and seek the most efficient solution that fits the needs of our stakeholders.

Together with Expert Panel members, we identified three strategic pillars we want to focus on for the remaining two years of RIIO-ED1. Our commitments are categorised into these pillars. These can be seen on pages 5-7 in the commitment table and in figure 2.



Figure 2: Three strategic pillars

Feedback received via our annual Ofgem consultation in 2020 indicated that stakeholders wanted us to include long-term commitments to not only change processes, but also embed changes in SSEN's culture. We took this feedback on board and have introduced five commitments this year which will span two years with a completion date of 2022-23.

**217**   
engagement  
sessions  
hosted

**1503**   
stakeholders  
engaged with

**23 proposed  
commitments**  
**100%**  
agreement

# 2021-22 Our workplan

## Our workplan

Strategic Pillar	Theme	Commitment number	Our commitment	Measure	Distributed Generation	Local Authorities & Community Energy Groups	Housing Developers	Commercial/Industrial/Consultants	ICP/IDNO*	Target
Customer Service & Communication	Communicating with Customers	21.01	We will co-create standard communication email templates with stakeholders	Templates launched for all Connection job types	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	2022-23
		21.02	We will work with Plain English on how to further make our quotation letters clearer to customers of all knowledge levels	Quotation letter proposals created and discussed with stakeholders for Demand, Unmetered, Generation and Competition in Connections	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	2022-23
		21.03	We will produce information packs to make it easier for our new customers to access relevant information for their connections journey	Three information packs created: Introductory Delivery Competition in Connections	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Q3
		21.04	We will create a frequently asked questions (FAQ) document for Housing Developer stakeholders	FAQ published			✓			Q2
	Being Flexible	21.05	We will engage on various components of commercial policy changes affecting customers, e.g. Queue Management	Number of policy changes engaged on recorded Feedback gathered Number of stakeholders engaged with recorded	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Q4
		21.06	We will improve our internal procedures to make it easier to identify and communicate with contracted parties and consultants/third parties	Application forms improved Internal systems improved Feedback gathered	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Q4
	Digital Journey	21.07	We will streamline how customers can request connections meetings	New process implemented	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Q1
		21.08	We will launch our new Connections website to create a further enhanced online experience in collaboration with our customers and stakeholders. This will include improved search functionality, customer journey mapping and will enable future capabilities on emerging technologies	New website launched Feedback gathered	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	2022-23
		21.09	We will create connection journey videos to help customers understand their connections journey	Six videos created: Quotation types & COE EVs & Heat Pumps Competition in Connections Flexible Connections G99 Project Progression	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	2022-23

\* COE Connection Offer Expenses

EV Electric Vehicles

G99 Engineering Recommendation G99

Q1: Apr-Jun

Q2: Jul-Sept

FAQ Frequently Asked Questions

ICP Independent Connection Provider

IDNO Independent Distribution Network Operator

Q3: Oct-Dec

Q4: Jan-Mar



# 2021-22 Our workplan

## Our workplan

Strategic Pillar	Theme	Commitment number	Our commitment	Measure	Distributed Generation	Local Authorities & Community Energy Groups	Housing Developers	Commercial/Industrial/Consultants	ICP/IDNO*	Target
Customer Service & Communication	Customer-first Culture	21.10	<b>Our connections business will take part in our customer service programme, Empowered to Care, with the aim to improve our connections customers' experience</b>	First module of programme completed	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Q4
		21.11	<b>We will introduce a Customer Impact Assessment (CIA) to clearly assess how our business changes impact customers to ensure we add value</b>	Customer Impact Assessment launched	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Q1
Enhancing the Connections Journey	Streamlining Connections Processes	21.12	<b>We will improve clarity to customers and stakeholders on minimum requirements at application stage</b>	Website updated Stakeholders notified	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Q2
		21.13	<b>We will implement enhancements to our guidance on queue management in line with concurrent ENA work</b>	New process implemented Quotation letters updated Amendments to website implemented	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Q2
		21.14	<b>We will conduct a stakeholder-led Unmetered process improvement project</b>	Feedback gathered Improvements and next steps identified		✓	✓		✓	Q2
		21.15	<b>We will host a workshop to review the completed Part-Funded Reinforcement (PFR) trial and map out potential improvements</b>	Workshop held Review findings and next steps published					✓	Q3
		21.16	<b>We will improve our requote process</b>	New procedures implemented Guidance document updated	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Q1
		21.17	<b>We will improve our refunds process</b>	Improvements implemented to: Information Communication Internal process Internal training	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Q1

\* ENA Energy Networks Association

Q1: Apr-Jun      Q2: Jul-Sept  
Q3: Oct-Dec      Q4: Jan-Mar

# 2021-22 Our workplan

Strategic Pillar	Theme	Commitment number	Our commitment	Measure	Distributed Generation	Local Authorities & Community Energy Groups	Housing Developers	Commercial/Industrial/Consultants	ICP/IDNO*	Target
Net Zero	Connecting New Technologies	21.18	We will create an online calculator for EV and Heat Pump diversity factors	Digital calculator created		✓	✓	✓	✓	2022-23
		21.19	We will host local capacity engagement sessions, partnering with Local Energy Scotland and the Energy Hubs to improve insight and support to Local Authorities and Community Energy Groups on their developing local network plans	Local capacity engagement sessions hosted Feedback gathered		✓				Q4
		21.20	We will host a webinar on our current technical policy on EV chargers with the aim to inform and educate whilst responding to customer needs and ensuring our policy is fit for purpose for the future	1 webinar hosted Webinar recorded & published on YouTube		✓	✓	✓	✓	Q2
	Changing Energy World	21.21	We will adopt the updated industry standard agreement on flexibility services, which will cover both DNO and National Grid ESO services	Industry standard agreement adopted Stakeholders notified	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Q3
		21.22	We will create a timeline for the publication of new technical policies to raise awareness of the policies customers may want to consult on	Timeline published on website	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Q1
		21.23	We will develop a battery storage technical policy for consultation on our G81 library to recognise the developments in battery storage and their potential role in reaching net zero	Battery storage policy consultation published	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Q4

\* EV Electric Vehicles

NG ESO National Grid Electricity System Operator

DNO Distribution Network Operator

Q1: Apr-Jun  
Q3: Oct-Dec

Q2: Jul-Sept  
Q4: Jan-Mar

Thank you for reading our report, please remember keeping in contact and engaging with us has never been easier and your views will make a real difference to our connections business in the future.

To register and receive regular updates on our business performance and opportunities for future engagement, please follow [this link to sign up](#).

## Engage with us online

-  Search 'SSEN Connections Engagement'
-  [twitter.com/ssencommunity](https://twitter.com/ssencommunity)
-  [facebook.com/ssencommunity](https://facebook.com/ssencommunity)
-  [instagram.com/ssencommunity](https://instagram.com/ssencommunity)
-  [www.ssen.co.uk/Connections](http://www.ssen.co.uk/Connections)
-  Find us on YouTube under 'Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks'

## Email us

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