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Combined 2023 regional stakeholder engagement event capture report

December 2023

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Introduction



Welcome to the Electricity North West's combined regional stakeholder events capture report. The purpose of this report is to capture and play back the discussions that took place across our 2023 regional stakeholder engagement workshops in November 2023. We are grateful to all those who attended one of the workshops and value the discussions that took place.

Stakeholders play a key role in helping us prioritise and set objectives for our business plan and future activity and we want our stakeholders to have a say on how we move forward and help us transform the communities we all work in.

This year we were delighted to welcome all our stakeholders and we were particularly keen to speak with representatives associated with the region's local authorities and housing associations.

The workshop had two key themes:

- Network development and how we incorporate local plans into our network planning
- Connections and the application process

Attendees heard from Lancashire County Council, Cumberland Council, Westmorland & Furness Council and Greater Manchester Combined Authority, and their plans for investing in the region's long-term economic development.

We also heard how Electricity North West is investing in our region and the strategic planning for the region in collaboration with you, our stakeholders. This included information on network development and how Electricity North West incorporates local area energy plans into its network planning. An overview of flexibility services, what they are and how stakeholders can generate additional income. Finally, an illustration of the connections and application process, managing capacity and the grid, and how the Electricity North West PACE team can provide support and guidance.

We held a Q&A panel with attendees able to ask questions to both Electricity North West and the councils and hosted round table discussions to get stakeholders' views on what they considered to be the key areas where we can support them in their adoption of low carbon technologies and the transition to net zero.

This report reflects what we told stakeholders, and what they told us. The insights we received will continue to feed into our current and future business planning. If you would like to see analysis from all three regional workshops, [click here](#).

We hope you find this report useful and welcome your feedback about the report or the event – please send any comments you have to StakeholderEngagement@enwl.co.uk



Why your engagement is important to us:

Provides us with a fuller understanding of our operating environment

Helps us identify and address emerging and changing needs

Gives our stakeholders and customers the opportunity to hold us to account

Gives us a chance to share our learning and best practice

Ensures our activity is always relevant to and valued by our stakeholders

We commit to respond to all of the issues you raise

Understanding our stakeholders

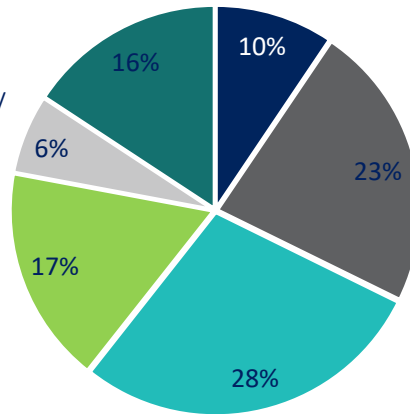


Our 2023 stakeholder workshops were attended by a total of 84 stakeholders, with 136 registrations including; 33 local authority representatives from 19 different authorities, 11 housing associations and 17 first time attendees. Understanding our stakeholders' demographics enables us to appreciate their needs and how and where to engage with them. Here is what you told us:

How do we engage with you?

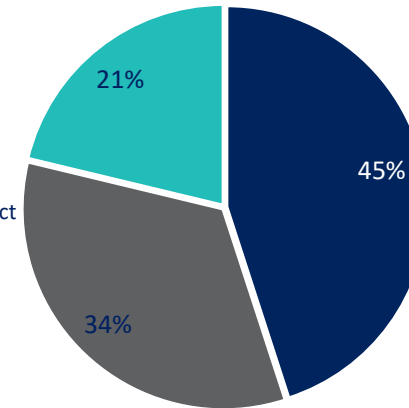
We were pleased to see a spread across several different topics that we engage with attendees on, such as advisory panels, local/strategic planning and different types of connections stakeholders.

- I am a member of a Stakeholder Advisory Panel or expert panel
- I attend ENWL net zero / LCT events / webinars
- Local Area / Strategic Planning
- Connections enquiries (LCT)
- Connections enquiries (Non-LCT)
- Other



How do often do you engage with us?

- I am in regular contact with ENWL
- I have occasional contact with ENWL
- I am new to this – I've have never met or contacted ENWL before

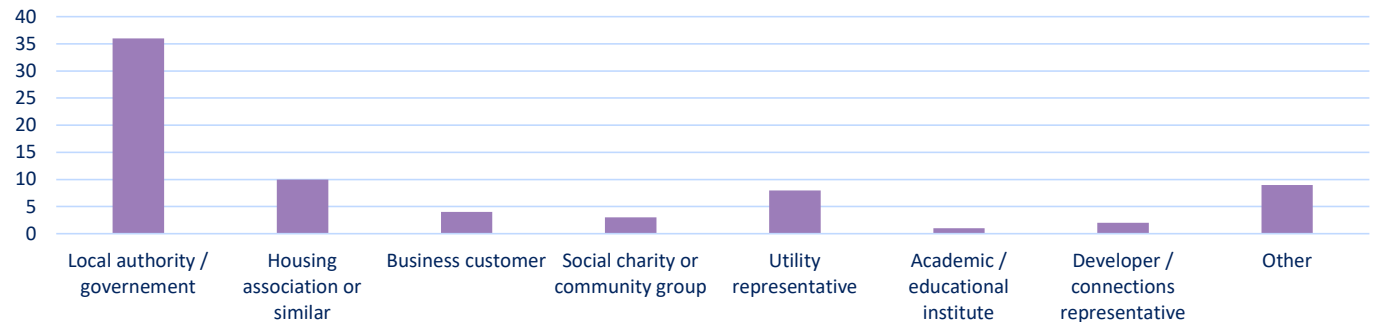


As we continually seek the views of a variety of stakeholders, we aim to increase the involvement of new stakeholders. We were delighted to see a good spread of attendees that have regular, occasional or had never had contact with ENWL before. We will continue to encourage engagement from all attendees, both regular and new.

We were pleased to see that the types of organisations we had targeted were represented at this event.

This event was particularly aimed at local authorities and housing associations (whilst all stakeholders were of course welcome). There was also representation from the utility industry.

What type of stakeholder are you?



Network investment, development and local plans Q&A discussions



Following presentations on regional investment, development and capacity planning Paul Bircham - Safety, Compliance & Markets Director, Cara Blockley - DSO Manager (ENWL) and the council guest speakers of the day, made up the panel for question-and-answer sessions with attendees. *Attendees were given the opportunity to ask questions in advance of the event or in-person on the day.*

Lancashire discussion

In Lancashire, we discussed a range of topics including Smart Street and its benefits, the West Coast Connections scheme, applications for connections of diesel generation and if there is a low carbon alternative that is not prohibitively expensive, for example battery storage and flexible services. The value versus the cost of LAEPs and if & how local authorities can help farms and other rural businesses to decarbonise.



Lancashire stakeholders in attendance

The demographic in the room for this discussion was majoritively local authorities, with a small number of housing associations and utility representatives.

Cumbria discussion

In Cumbria, we mainly discussed the cost of new connections and/or updating of an existing connection to the network, repeated issues with losing power and SME revenue lost and what ENWL is doing to improve this situation e.g. automatic fault detection. A perception that local authorities and ENWL do not fully understand the financial impact on small businesses as a result of storms and if it is possible to move overhead lines underground in rural areas and what the councils' views on the use of tidal power are.



Cumbria stakeholders in attendance

The demographic in the room for this discussion was a much broader split with local authorities, housing associations and developers, SMEs, charities and academic representatives.

Greater Manchester discussion

In Greater Manchester, we mainly discussed whether GMCA have any plans for developing a digital twin, advice on working with Ofgem, ENWL's approach to sharing network data and the benefits of collaborative working between ENWL and the local authorities.



Greater Manchester stakeholders in attendance

The demographic in the room for this discussion was a much broader split with local authorities, housing associations and developers, SMEs, charities and utility representatives.

Connections and the application process

Roundtable discussion part 1



Following a presentation on grid capacity and the connections process we asked stakeholders to discuss

- What do you consider to be the key areas where ENWL can support you in your transition to LCTs/net zero?
- Have you had any experiences with other DNOs or utility providers that you think are examples of exceptional service?

Access to and visibility of information

- **Availability of data** - open data promotion of what's available, heat maps etc. Easy access and helping people better understand the data
- **GDP - Business advice in non-technical terms.** Communication and independent advice for small rural businesses
- **ENWL to give independent, un-bias information** - ENWL need to be better at shouting about it
- **Complexity of completing forms** - PACE team can help with this but again people don't know and ENWL need to shout about it more

Planning

- 1:1 flexibility to include in future plans for example heat pump plans to offset cost
- District level local plans challenge - calling for renewables
- Help in knowing where to plan geographically for renewables - how to assess (local planning). LAs can move their constrained areas available to ENWL e.g. Green spaces, major transport schemes
- Do LAEPs together and once - LAs get together with ENWL and other parties to do a plan together
- Approach to how ENWL engage with applications, large-scale applications and major projects engagement

Financials

- Prohibitive costs
- Net Zero often feels too far away and cost prohibitive + loss of income ahead
- The net zero journey is becoming incredibly commercialised and monopolised
- The costs would be very high to retrofit homes with LCTs
- Subsidies for installations that are directly driven by LCT
- Smaller commercial sites found the cost of upgrades prohibitive. For example, upgrading their 3-phase supply to allow for EV install

Timescales

- Delivery Queue times - compounding the supply chain problem with so many projects
- ENW time scales really didn't match with the plan - deadlines around funding
- Speed of service / delay (retrofit)
- Timelines of funding very short

You told us your key themes were.....



Stakeholders at all three events consistently flagged these common themes indicating that each region is facing similar challenges in this area

The feedback you gave us will be incorporated into our improvement plan for developing the customer journey for LCT connections

Connections and the application process

Roundtable discussion part 2



Stakeholders also discussed:

- What do you consider to be the key areas where ENWL can support you in your transition to LCTs/net zero?
- Have you had any experiences with other DNOs or utility providers that you think are examples of exceptional service?

Network load & capacity

- Technical input from ENWL- Installation process- Network constraints – load and location issues
- 2030 target of council buildings set up to triple electrical load LAEP - need detail. Can we cope with technical ability capacity?
- Understanding constraints at specific sites
- Multiple installations (HA) Vs single
- Joined up strategy, new builds, retrofit houses ready to reduce the strain on the network
- Capacity import / export - difference between domestic vs Large Business vs Small Business
- Heightened risk of outages in LA area
- NFU having to adapt LCT - huge energy volumes - commercial units

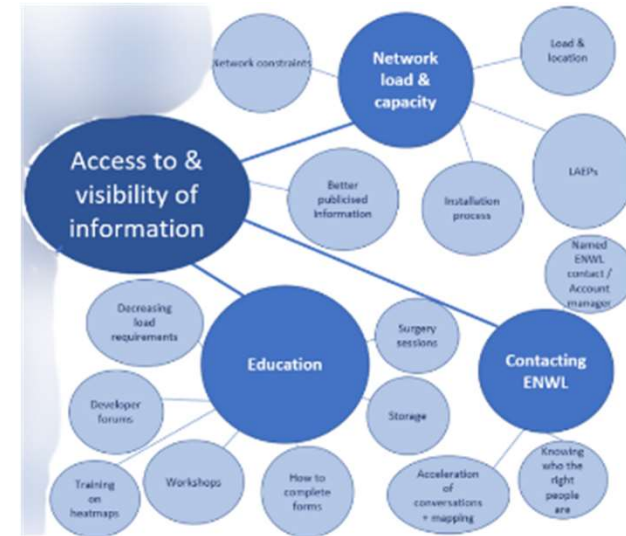
Contacting ENWL

- Local plans - more engagement for funding applications - access to the right people and knowing who the right people are
- Need a named contact - who deals with what? - Have lots of contacts but it can be unclear who to approach. A one-pager that can be circulated with the LAs
- Engagement leads for each LA
- Acceleration of conversations (from council) + mapping
- Account Managers - dedicated support and single point of contact from start to finish
- Consultancy / support needed very early in the process
- PACE Team and Christos's team to hold qtrly bilateral with relevant stakeholders?

Education

- Offer training on heat maps & other network tools - classroom / online. Make tools simpler and more intuitive
- Developer education including decreasing load requirements. Storage heaters V HP
- ENWL surgery sessions to educate and give info + clarity of process + understanding the blockers - map them and identify where they sit
- Connections specific engagement events to explain process, forms, info in detail
- Events on data - tailor or explain by sector. Target events based on different sectors - explain data
- ES collab event with NPG - clients / NFU - DNO explained connection process. ICP connections
- Collaboration between stakeholders facilitated by ENWL
- Unlooping comms - case study, support for customers - safety etc. planned intervention - simple case study examples

You told us your key themes were.....



Stakeholders at all three events consistently flagged these common themes indicating that each region is facing similar challenges in this area

The feedback you gave us will be incorporated into our improvement plan for developing the customer journey for LCT connections

Follow up after the event



The feedback you gave us will be incorporated into our improvement plan for developing the journey for LCT connections.

We will also use it to review the way we let people know about the information available.

Lancashire

- Organised introductory meetings with local authorities focussing on their LAEPs and planned developments
- ENWL will be attending and potentially speaking at an upcoming Developer Forum
- Invited attendees to ENWL Carbon Literacy Training
- Identified gaps in membership of our Environment & Sustainability Stakeholder Advisory Panel and invited new attendees to join
- Reached out to work with an attendee on their net zero homes policy and shared our net zero terrace policy
- New points of contact established at some local authorities that ENWL didn't have previously. The contacts made have also introduced ENWL to more departments within each LA including transport, planning and housing.

Cumbria

- LCT installation and the issues with overhead line delivery work - The ENWL PACE team reached out at the event and followed up afterwards to review the delivery program.
- Information on automatic fault detection / monitoring equipment for overhead lines which will help with detecting faults and getting people back on faster. Plans to improve areas of the network that we know are particularly vulnerable
- Challenges of SMEs to decarbonise and install LCT equipment – The ENWL PACE team reached out at the event and on email. PACE team are supporting with updates on inflight schemes and pre-application surgery sessions.
- Difficulty managing a project that crosses multiple ENWL departments due to the lack of continuity/consistency and difficulty contacting the relevant team. PACE team attending meeting to discuss delivery.

Greater Manchester

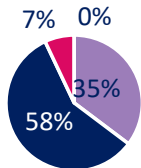
- PACE team to discuss how they can support further with housing associations looking for the LV network to be more flexible in accommodating LCT rollout in retrofit.
- Link to ENWL's Heatmap tool issued along with an offer to support planning and pre-connection from ENWL Network Engineer.
- Heat pump size may be higher/lower than in the connections application, subject to the survey findings on large-scale projects. The PACE team are supporting on this and have supported the installation of ASHPs on 1000 homes, with 2599 planned on future retrofits.
- A joined-up approach from ENWL Connections and DSO teams to ensure that any projects fed into ENWL's planning process are also fed into ENWL's connections process. ENWL Network Engineer in contact.

Feedback – polling results



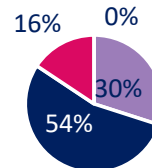
Stakeholder feedback on our events is extremely helpful, so we can make it better for you next year. Thank you!

Has this event increased your understanding of how we incorporate local plans into our network development planning?



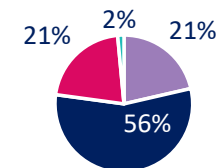
■ Yes, a lot ■ Yes, somewhat ■ Neutral ■ No

Has this event increased your understanding of how we can help with your own development plans?



■ Yes, a lot ■ Yes, somewhat ■ Neutral ■ No

Has this event increased your understanding of how the connections application process works?

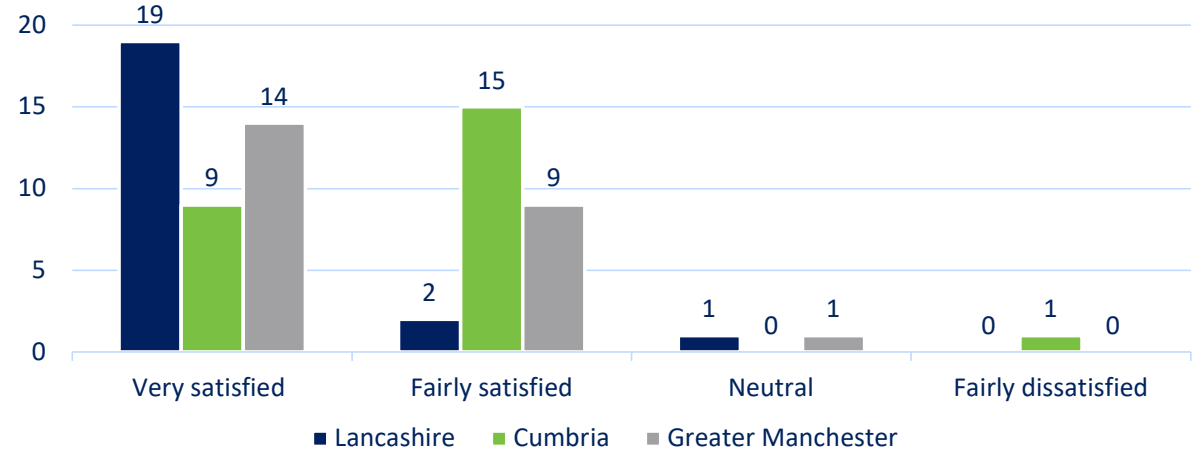


■ Yes, a lot ■ Yes, somewhat ■ Neutral ■ No

The feedback illustrated that the workshop had achieved its objective of increasing knowledge in key areas amongst attendees

- 93% of attendees felt the workshop had increased their understanding of how we incorporate local plans into our network development planning
- 84% of attendees felt the workshop had increased their understanding of how ENWL can help with their own development plans
- 77% of attendees felt the workshop had increased their understanding of how the connections application process works.

Overall Satisfaction of the event



Topics you would like to hear more about in the future.....



We'll tailor future content around the topics you would like to hear more about. In the meantime, here are some useful links around the themes you highlighted.

Community

- Community Energy
- Customer support initiatives
- Climate change resilience
- Energy planning
- Engagement with the fuel poor
- Support for small businesses



Infrastructure

- More detail on connections process
- Unlooping process
- Local area energy planning
- CLASS impact on G99



Community related support & information resources

- [Community & Local Energy](#)
- [Extra Care](#)
- [Take Charge](#)
- [Local area energy planning](#)
- [Climate adoption](#)



Infrastructure related support & information resources

- [Get connected](#)
- [Network development plan](#)
- [The PACE team](#)
- [Engineering Recommendation \(EREC\) G99](#)
- [Local area energy planning](#)
- [Know before you dig](#)



Low Carbon

- Decarbonisation of the grid
- Decarbonisation of the network
- Industrial decarbonisation
- Net zero and local plan links
- The impact carbon neutral infrastructure will have on outages
- Decarbonising domestic heat
- Heat networks



Understanding & information

- Examples of good practices
- Examples from local authorities
- National policy changes
- Connections packages
- Information on central Govt
- Employment strategy in region
- How funding required works takes place and timescales of requirements
- Sharing datasets
- Heatmap tool



Low Carbon related support & information resources

- [Future Energy](#)
- [Facilitating net zero](#)
- [Flexible services](#)
- [Innovation](#)
- [UK Business Climate Hub](#)
- [Bee Net Zero](#)



Understanding related support & information resources

- [Engaging with our stakeholders](#)
- [Stakeholder events calendar](#)
- [Our 2023-2028 business plan](#)
- [Releasing capacity and enabling connections](#)
- [Connections](#)
- [Heatmap tool](#)



Continue the conversation



We would like to thank all our stakeholders you for their involvement – here are some of the ways you can continue the conversation with us...

- If you would like any more information or would like to provide your views on any of our activities, please contact stakeholderengagement@enwl.co.uk.
- We hold regular stakeholder advisory panels which help us to shape our activity – if you are interested in getting involved, please review our advisory panels [here](#).
- If you would like to receive regular updates on our activity (newsletters etc) please click [here](#).
- Click [here](#) to find out more about all our upcoming stakeholder events, including updates on our advisory panels.
- If you would like to find out more about getting connected, and how we can help you, please visit our connections webpages [here](#).



Read our regional investment booklets [here](#).