Electricity Distribution

Connections: Collective

Thursday 2nd October 2025

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09:30 – 09:55	Welcome
	A Journey Through Our Network
	Connections in Focus – Today's Distribution Network
	Blockers and Barriers: A Collaborative Discussion
	Connect and Categorise: Addressing Our Biggest Hurdles Together
11:20 – 12:00	Break
	Pathways to Progress: Information Hubs on Grid Development
13:10 – 14:15	Lunch
	Connecting Voices
15:15 – 15:40	Break
	A New Connections World Panel Session
	Future Events and Close
16:30 Onwards	Networking Reception

NGED Connections Collective
Password: NGEDCC_2025!

Connections in Focus: Today's Distribution Landscape

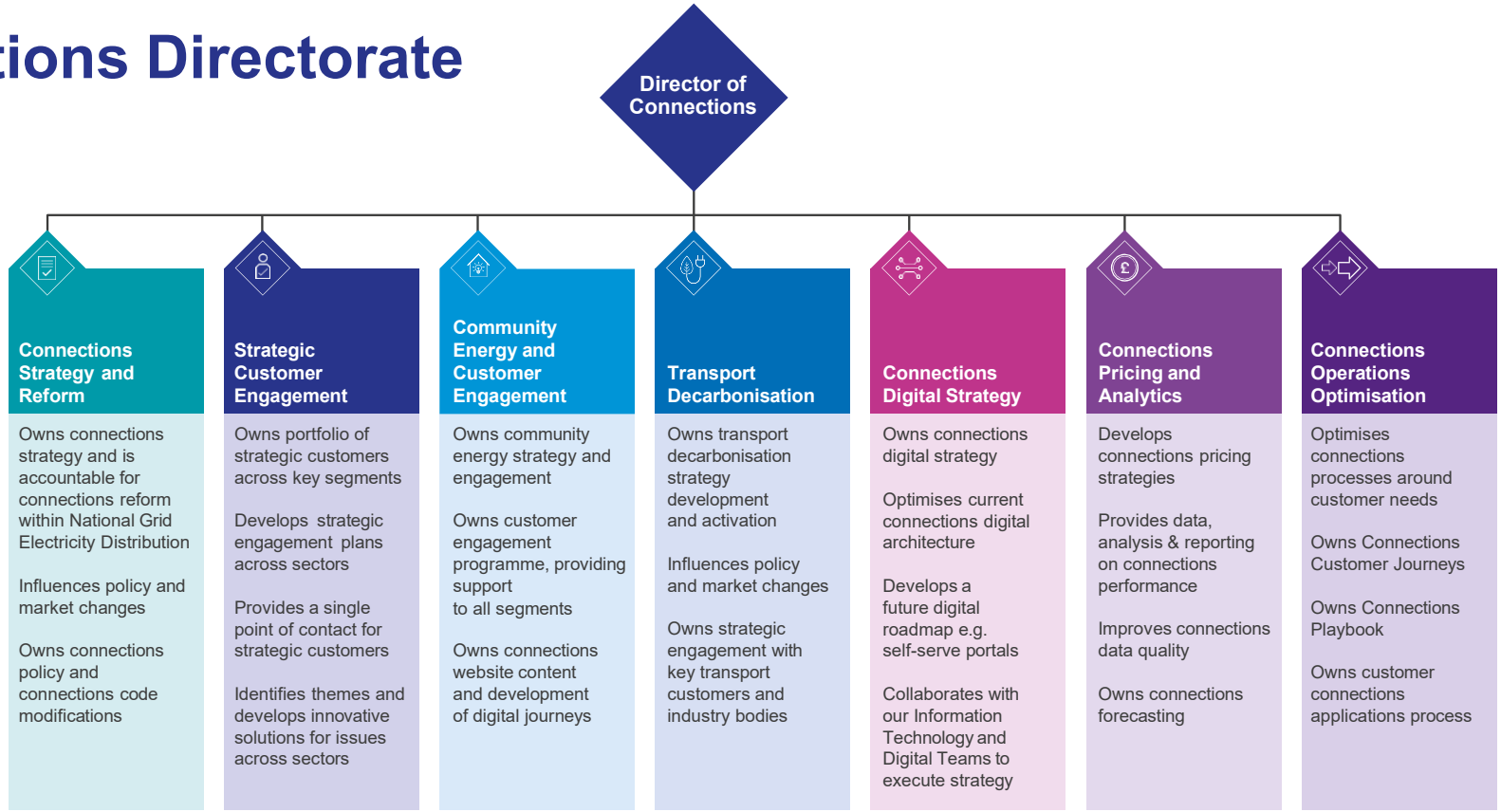
Amanda Le Brocq

Director of Connections, National Grid Electricity Distribution

Connections Directorate

The Connections Directorate at National Grid Electricity Distribution is built around seven key pillars in response to the changing connections landscape and our ambitions as an organisation.

This structure is designed to enhance efficiency, improve customer engagement, and support the transition to a low-carbon energy system.



Our Ask of You

Pathways to Progress: Rotating Information Hubs on Connections Development

Connections Digitisation

Greg Hunt
Head of Connections Digital Strategy

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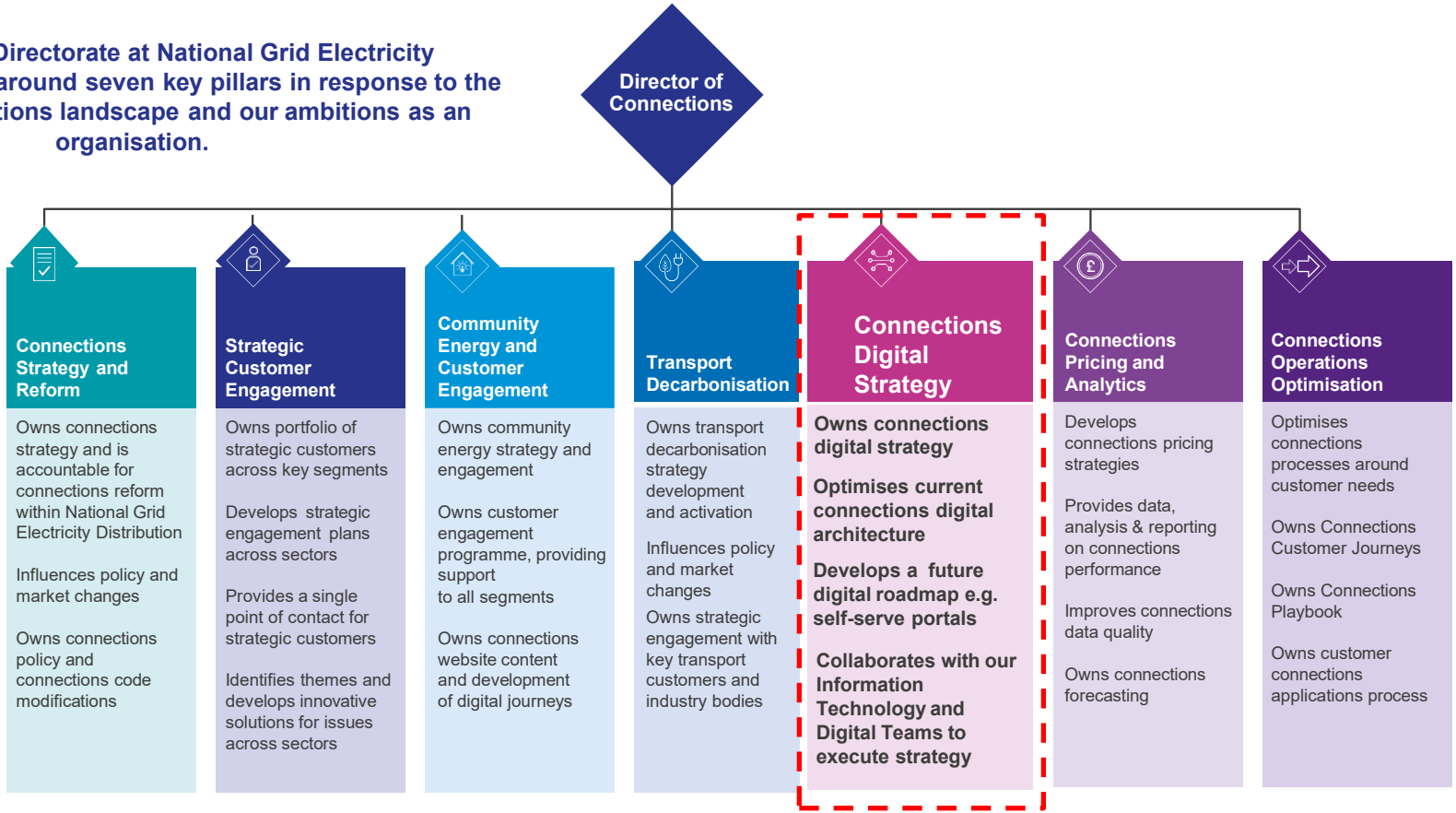


Connections Digital Focus Areas

DIGITAL TOOLS

Customer Platforms

Portals

Open Data

Website Content

SYSTEM & PROCESS

Process Efficiency

Internal Systems

Automated Workflows

Future Proofing

DATA & REPORTING

Data Integrity

Data Accessibility

Data Transparency

INDUSTRY COLLABORATION

Stakeholder Feedback

Innovation

Customer Focus

Recent Activities

We have been working on a number of digital tools; introducing new methods of applying to NGED and improving existing tools to improve customer experience

- Connections Reform – Gate 2 Evidence
- Local Electric Vehicle Infastructure Customer Portal
- Budget Estimate Tool
- Self Serve Quotations (not yet live)

Future Priorities

Our future priorities are informing our strategic direction. We have 6 areas of focus that we will be prioritising as part of our digital roadmap

Digital journeys across all application types / market segments **01**

Enhanced Customer Portal **04**

Connections Reform Enduring Process **02**

IT&D Transformation **05**

Enhanced internal systems & automated workflows **03**

Data Accessibility **06**

Break in 4 groups to discuss and feedback on the following:

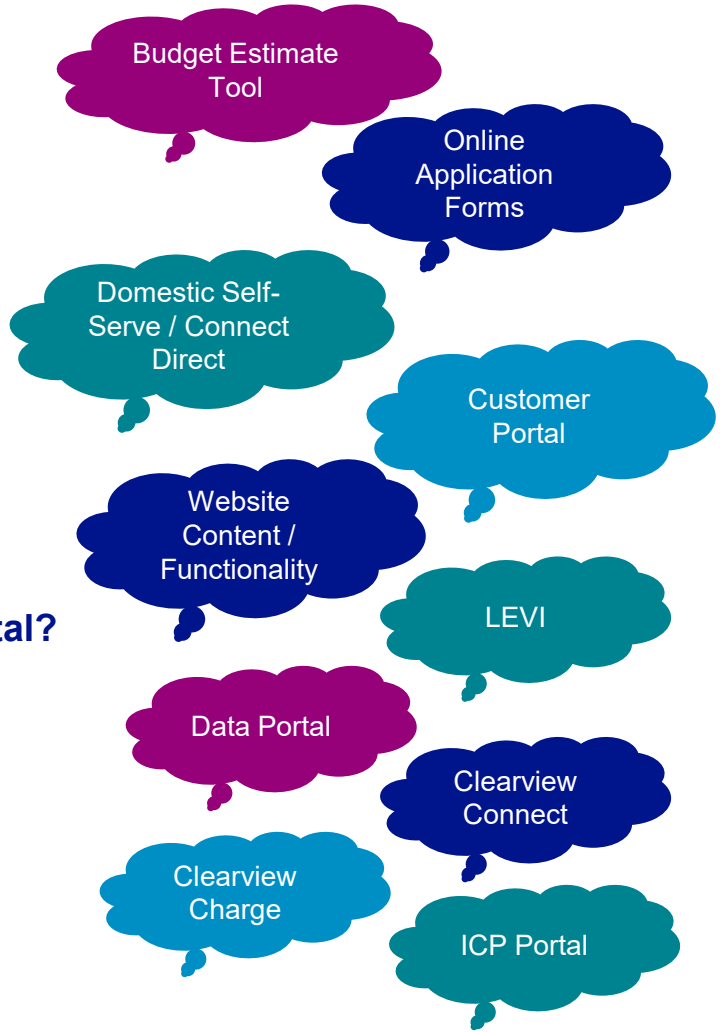
1. Your experience of the current digital tools

2. What works well / what doesn't work well

3. What functionality would you like to see from a customer portal?

4. What do you feel are the gaps in the current NGED Digital offering?

Each group will get 2 mins to summarise their discussion.



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Connections Policy

Laura Henry
Head of Connections Policy

Jack Purchase
Connections Strategy Engineer

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Connections Reform Programme | Policy & Code Update

Gate 1

A defined process for how a project will move from a Gate 1 offer to a Gate 2 offer ha now been agreed with DNOs. Gate 1 offers are due to go out towards the end of the year.

Update to Queue Management Milestones

The way the industry manages contractual milestones is going to be updated (milestone guidance). This will ensure that projects cannot stay in the connections queue without progressing through Gate 2. The new guidance is going to go live from the 1st October and will apply to Gate 2 Offers that are received as part of the CMP 435 process.

CMP 446

This code modification went live in May and raises the threshold for projects having to go through the Transmission Impact Assessment process from 1MW to 5 MW where there are no fault level constraints. Where there are fault level constraints then the threshold remains at 1MW

Strategic Demand

In May DESNZ launched a series of workshops which cover to look at both the Regulation process and the Connections Acceleration Service (CAS) for strategic demand projects, both workstreams are looking at ways strategic demand can be proposed in the queue. The work is currently in early development stage.

CMP 448 (Progression Commitment Fee)

CMP 448 is now with Ofgem for a final decision. NGED provided a response to the Codde Admin Consultation, not supporting this Code Modification. This will impact projects receiving a Gate 2 Offer if the decision is made before the Offers go out.

ENA Queue Mgt Milestones | Updated Guidance goes live from 1st October 2025

Update	Reason for change
Updated milestone information	Review of the information provided on each milestone and the evidence required to add further clarity of the process
Updated M4 to reflect connections reform	Revise M4 to reflect the connections reform process giving projects two years to obtain a Gate 2 contract
Change tolerance period to remedy notice	Remove the tolerance period and instead have a remedy notice period to make it clearer when a project is close to termination
Defined Customer Journeys	Making it clearer the three routes that projects can take i.e Projects that require a TIA, projects that do not require a TIA and demand projects

New Milestones will apply to

- Projects that receive a Gate 2 Offer
- Projects that have received a Distribution Offer during the transitional period
- New demand and generation projects applying

Milestones will be managed in accordance with the terms and conditions set out in the connection offer for existing projects.

Gate 1 proposal for DNOs | Agreed Options

DNOs have agreed on the following options for projects that wish to go from a Gate 1 to a Gate 2 offer.

A

- Projects requests a full distribution offer before going through the next Gate 2 window
- Offer will be fully studied where a point of connection, date, works and costs will be determined
- Queue position will be from the date the customer asks for the variation
- Project will still be subject to the outcome of the NESO Offer

B

- Project goes through the next Gate 2 window with no updated distribution offer
- Project does not know the point of connection, date, works or costs from the distribution perspective
- Queue position is granted from the date the offer comes back from NESO
- Project will find out both the distribution and the transmission aspects of the offer at the same time and may have less time to sign due o the 90 day period in which the DNO has to sign the NESO offer

C

- Project changes outside of the allowable changes process
- A brand new application will be required
- The Gate 1 Offer will terminate

Demand | Industry Engagement

In light of significant growth in demand connections, we are working with industry to identify improvements to the BAU process, alongside supporting DESNZ with the development of acceleration mechanisms for strategic demand.

Improvements to BAU processes

- Reviewing the demand connection process, identifying possible changes.

Strategic Demand

Connections Accelerator Service (CAS)

- Announced through the Industrial Strategy, the CAS will provide support to strategic demand projects with securing timely connections.
- We are feeding in to the development of the service through DESNZ-led workshops, which is expected to be in operation end of 2025.

Regulatory Change

- Drawing on new powers within the Planning and Infrastructure Bill (PiB) to support timely connections for strategically important projects.
- We are exploring how powers to designate government strategic documents will translate in to acceleration mechanisms for strategic demand.

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Legal process for connections

…the doctor will see you now

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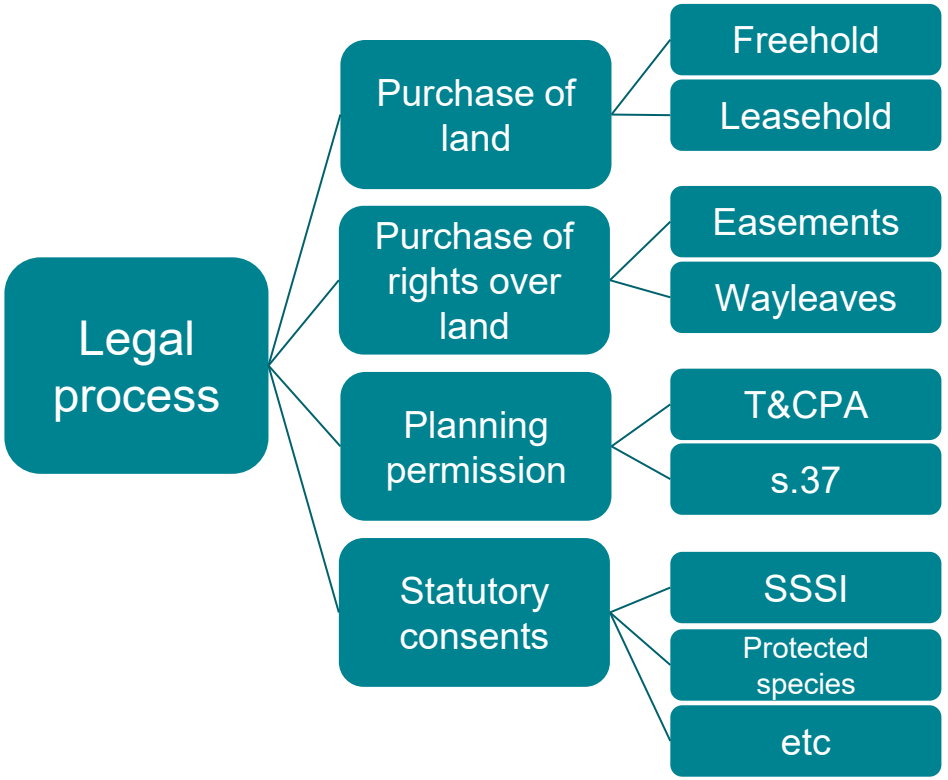
Anatomy


Legal process
Purchase of land
Freehold
Leasehold
Purchase of rights over land
Easements
Wayleaves
Planning permission
T&CPA
s.37
Statutory consents
SSSI
Protected species
etc

Symptoms

Legal processes can take too long and delay connections

Diagnosis

On-site legals	The other side's lawyers are always evil The legal process is designed by lawyers Paying for the privilege of waiting a long time
Off-site legals	Third party landowners don't always have your best interests at heart Negotiations take a long time and you can be held to ransom When problems arise, statutory powers are expensive and time-consuming
Planning permission	Planning authority decisions can be unpredictable (note: planning authorities aren't evil) Their processes can be slow

Treatment

On-site legals

Lawyer-lite legal process

Side-step conventional legal processes
Focus on NGED's minimum requirements
Reposition the risk equation

Conventional legal process	Lawyer-led	Negotiations	Deeds	Land registry	Secure assets	Connection
Lawyer-lite process	NGED / Customer-led	Connection agreement	Indemnity for NGED	Secure assets	Connection	Rapid, simple Lawyer-free Inexpensive

Treatment

On-site legals

Lawyer-lite legal process

Applicable to certain connection types (e.g. many EV charge point connections)
….though, not suitable for all connections
Through the ENA, NGED is leading the development of new, industry-wide best practice

Launch is imminent!

Treatment

Off-site legals

Off-site, third party landowner negotiations present challenges to the delivery of connections:

- *Delays*
- *Costs*
- *Uncertainty / project risks*

Treatment

Off-site legals

Off-site, third party landowner negotiations present challenges to the delivery of connections:

- *Delays*
- *Costs*
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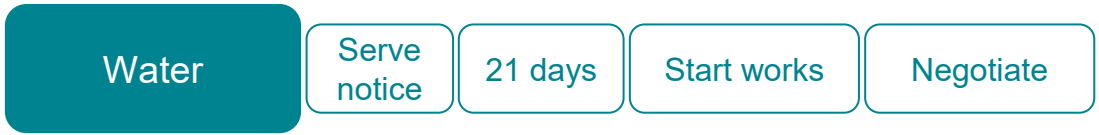
Treatment

Off-site legals

Contrast with other utilities, e.g. water…..



Statutory powers for electricity connections:

2 year(?) process

c.£50k

….***drives decisions for (costly) compromise!***

Treatment

Off-site legals

What are we doing about it?

Lobbying DESNZ – limited action so far
Leading via ENA

What can you do?

Repeat the messages
Apply pressure!

Treatment

Planning permission

Imposes delay and cost / uncertainty which are barriers to connection project delivery

What are we doing about it?

Lobbying DESNZ

Leading via ENA

Good progress – recent DESNZ consultation on Consents, Land Access and Rights

Substations

Increasing size of kiosk substations which are exempt from planning permission

Overhead lines

Widening the range of overhead line works which are exempt from s.37 consent

Prognosis

	Therapeutic potential	Challenge of finding a cure	Confidence of positive outcome
On-site legals	High		High
Off-site legals	Life-changing		Uncertain
Planning permission	Beneficial		High

Connecting Voices: Uniting Perspectives to Shape Our Future

Susana Neves E Brooks
Head of Connections, Policy, Strategy & Reform

Cuan Rowlands
Connections Strategy Manager

RIIO: Revenue = Incentives + Innovation + Outputs

- RIIO-ED2 is the current regulatory framework for all electricity distribution network operators (DNOs).
- It covers the five-year period from April 2023 to March 2028.
- Set by Ofgem, it defines how much revenue DNOs can earn and how we are incentivised to deliver for customers.

Key priorities in RIIO-ED2

- Supporting Net Zero
- Reliability & resilience
- Customer service
- Innovation & efficiency
- Regional investment

The next price control, RIIO-ED3, will run from April 2028 to March 2033

We are preparing for the next price control RIIO ED3 and we are seeing some key trends emerge

Clean power and energy security

- Increase in connection volumes (on both primary and secondary parts of the network)
- Agile and adaptive network planning as government energy policy evolves

Cost of living and affordability

- Ensuring that ED3 consumer costs remain affordable for all consumers, and that most at risk consumers can afford new ED3 tariffs

Digitalisation and AI

- Embracing the opportunities presented by AI and digital solutions to create a network fit for the future and better serve our Customers

Consumer, customer and community

- The acceleration of the energy transition is driving greater consumer engagement with electricity networks, as more people adopt low carbon technologies.
- Increasing emphasis on ensuring that the communities we serve can play an active role in shaping our plans.

Future supply chain

- We are building our workforce, supply chains, and resources, to meet rapid national and international buildout of power systems

Climate risk and resilience

- Maintaining network resilience against increasing climate hazards and risks

Your engagement is key to shaping our plan

Transforming for tomorrow

Investing in our network to support **growth** and the transition to a **secure**, **low-carbon** energy system

Built for you

Providing **reliable services** for **our customers,** with extra support for those in **vulnerable circumstances**

Leading the way

Embracing digitalisation, data and innovation **to improve how we reduce costs and meet future needs**

Value that lasts

Investing responsibly today to deliver **lasting benefits** for current and future generations

We’re transforming how we deliver electricity connections

Clear and Streamlined Processes

Digital from Start to Finish

Investing Ahead to Unlock Capacity

Leading the Way in Industry Reform

Committed to Innovation and Leadership

Engagement forms the foundation of our approach. It connects our innovation, investment
and service delivery to ensure everything we do aligns with your evolving needs.

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Thank you for attending

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