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# MAJOR CONNECTIONS STRATEGY

**During 2023-28 we will deliver an efficient and cost-effective connections service with smarter, more flexible solutions that support our region's net zero ambitions. We will give our customers more choice and deliver a range of additional services and benefits, while aiming to keep the price of a connection flat.**

## Matching the local and national focus

Nationally, action on climate change has accelerated and this is changing our connections landscape. The ban on the sale of new fossil fuel powered cars and large goods vehicles will now come into force in 2030, and we have witnessed the number of registered plug-in battery and plug-in hybrid vehicles increase by 135 per cent in 2020, accounting for over 10 per cent of all new car registrations. Our latest forecasts show that there could well be over five million electric vehicles (EVs) on our region's roads by 2050. At the same time, the Government's 2020 ten-point plan demonstrated a clear commitment to heat pump expansion, with a target to install 600,000 heat pumps a year by 2028.

This national picture is reflected locally. We have seen climate coalitions formed and three quarters of our region's local authorities and combined authorities declaring climate emergencies, with around 60 per cent having declared their own net zero targets sooner than 2050, some as early as 2030.

Alongside the surge in low carbon technologies (LCTs) and related infrastructure, net zero targets are driving significant growth in low carbon generation.

We are acutely aware that the connections decisions we make today will affect our region's ability to reach net zero and we intend to be an enabler of this transition, by making it as easy and cost-effective as possible to connect LCTs and generation to our network.

New connections will be critical to achieving our collective decarbonisation goals and to enabling a whole system approach. To be an enabler of this change, we need to invest in the capability of our network and deliver smarter, more flexible solutions that will support the net zero transition. We need to do this while delivering a cost-effective and efficient connections service that meets the needs of all our customers.

Consequently, we have created our major connections strategy based on three core, customer-focussed principles:

- supporting connection stakeholders prior to application by providing accurate, comprehensive and user-friendly information;
- delivering value for customers by ensuring simplicity and transparency through the applications process; and
- facilitating the delivery of timely and economical connections that meet customers' needs.

## A strategy shaped by our stakeholders

To shape our strategy around the priorities of our stakeholders, we undertook a broad and inclusive programme of engagement in three waves. This engagement highlighted the challenges and pressures faced by our connections customers and broader stakeholders, and allowed us to shape a plan that meets their needs.

During the first wave, we identified and engaged with a broad and inclusive range of major works connections stakeholders.

We benchmarked our current performance and delivered a comprehensive programme of targeted stakeholder engagement activities that enabled us to understand their views of our current service, as well as their evolving needs.

During wave two, we explored our emerging thinking with our stakeholders and sought their feedback to refine our propositions on key areas including customer service and costs, and in wave three, we sought endorsement from stakeholders on our propositions and overall plan.

All our engagement activities have been scrutinised by our customer engagement group (CEG), which is playing a key role in challenging our business plan. This has helped us to develop a plan that truly reflects our customers' future needs and priorities.

We work hard to understand the views of our connections stakeholders and customers and to continuously improve the service we provide. During 2015-23, we developed a robust and effective process for engaging with our major works connections customers and stakeholders, translating their feedback into meaningful service improvement actions.

As a result, we have a clearly defined strategy for engaging with connections stakeholders that aligns with and adds value to our overarching engagement strategy and approach.

In the 2023-28 period, we intend to build on our existing strategy, utilising well-established channels such as our connections surgeries and events to seek feedback that will improve our service, while scaling up our digital engagement. We will also be seeking our customers' views on our service via focus groups and an enhanced major works customer survey that will provide clear and quantifiable measures of our customers' satisfaction at various stages of the connections process.

We will set clear objectives and targets for any commitments we make and engage with our stakeholders throughout the process to ensure we have met their expectations and can continually develop and improve.

#### **The priorities our stakeholders brought forward**

Although many of our stakeholders are driven by the same aims (growing their business, limiting costs, meeting net zero and protecting the most vulnerable in our society), our engagement identified that different stakeholder groups had different priorities.

In general, our major works connections customers prioritised cost, an efficient connections service and better communication. They told us they wanted access to more comprehensive network data and better visibility on when and where capacity becomes available. They also wanted to be able to speak to our experts before making an application and to be supported through the end-to-end process.

- For consultants and developers, availability of network data was critical to allow them to perform their own upfront assessments, together with access to our experts for pre-application advice and support. Consultants and developers were not alone in this view. Network visibility and data has also been highlighted as key for independent connections providers (ICPs) who need access to the same information and design tools as our engineers.
- Local authorities said more support was needed to enable them to deliver their decarbonisation targets and wanted confidence in our network's capacity to support their long-term strategic plans.
- Generators want to understand more about commercial opportunities with regard to flexibility. They want to see plenty of pre-application advice and have a single point of contact post-application.

Our major connections strategy addresses these priorities – but also ensures we have scope and space to flex over the coming years as our customers' needs evolve.

### Delivering more

From 2023 onwards, we will see an evolved and improved approach to the customer service we provide to our major works connections customers. They can expect to benefit from a range of additional benefits and services in the 2023-28 period, including tailored pre-application support, more network data availability and rapid self-serve options that will accelerate the connections process.

We are aiming to deliver these additional benefits while keeping the cost of connections flat.

### Focus on customer satisfaction

Alongside physical changes to the networks and connections landscape, we are seeing an attitude shift. Now more than ever, energy is a consumer product that has choice attached to it. The ways our customers are choosing to generate, consume and engage with electricity are changing. To respond, we need to understand and forecast for our customers' evolving needs, to ensure that our network has the capacity to support their long-term plans and aspirations.

Improving the customer journey so we can offer high-quality connections services will be a key focus. To do this we will:

- ensure customers have a clear choice between self-serve and an expert-led service, with the ability to switch seamlessly between the two;
- maximise the number of customers self-serving by making more connections services available online;
- make many of the same tools that our engineers use, available for our customers and stakeholders;
- provide more data to customers about our network, together with locational signals for capacity availability and forecast load growth to assist deployment strategies; and
- make it quicker and easier to engage with us when we are planning and delivering work for our customers.

We have set quantitative targets to measure the increases in satisfaction we hope these actions will deliver. This will be supported by metrics published on our website that show performance levels, including our guaranteed standards of performance.

Measure	Target for 2023-28
Major connections customer satisfaction survey – pre-application	90%
Major connections customer satisfaction survey – quotations	90%
Major connections customer satisfaction survey – delivery	90%

*Table 1: Major connections customer satisfaction targets*

Our approach will not be static and will be measured not only by firm numbers which can sometimes fail to capture the complexity of customer feedback but also by qualitative feedback on our customers' experience, which we will gain through our well-developed engagement channels and where appropriate, translate into meaningful service improvement actions.

We will report on our progress and delivery against the commitments we are making in a major connections strategy annual report.

### **Service level expectations**

Ofgem has set out the principles and baseline expectations for the standards of service that it expects us to deliver to major works connections customers. Our strategy and service level propositions align to these principles and expectations (see the detail in Appendix 4).

Where appropriate, we have included specific performance measures and targets that will enable us, Ofgem and our stakeholders to assess our performance.

Many areas exceed Ofgem's expectations. Notably, where we should "provide access to up-to-date and relevant information to enable a connection stakeholder to decide whether and where, to connect to the distribution network" we will deliver an enhanced programme. This will see us develop our high voltage (HV) and extra high voltage (EHV) network availability heat maps to make them more dynamic and user-friendly, including integrated long-term development statements (LTDS). We will also create a bespoke AutoDesign platform for ICPs and independent distribution network operators (IDNOs).

Meeting Ofgem's baseline standards will also mean new areas of activity for us.

For instance, we must "have processes in place for the promotion of certain types of customers (such as storage) in the connection queue, in circumstances where they will help others connect more quickly/cheaply". We will need to increase our understanding of this issue, discuss with our stakeholders and review and enhance the queue management code of practice. We will also develop our processes so that we are able to better manage customers' positions in the queue, and post-acceptance, facilitate other connections to come forward quicker where appropriate.

### **Principles in detail:**

#### **Principle 1 - support connections stakeholders prior to application by providing accurate, comprehensive and user-friendly information.**

Throughout our extensive engagement, major works connections customers told us that comprehensive network data that is easy to access and understand is critical to enable them to make informed decisions about how and where to connect.

Some of the key actions in our plan that support this principle include:

- utilising AutoDesign technology to develop an industry-first low voltage (LV) heat map that utilises monitoring and smart meter data to enable real-time system planning and investment by us and our customers;
- empowering our customers to make more informed decisions with the provision of network data that is easy to access and understand;
- creating an open data platform so that customers can access more comprehensive network planning and capacity data in an open and accessible format;
- developing AutoDesign's functionality to enable customers to self-serve and produce quotations for LV demand connections, load increases for existing LV connections and budget estimates for new LV generation connections;
- enhancing our EHV and HV network availability heat maps to make them more dynamic and user-friendly, including an integrated LTDS; and
- providing enhanced, pre-application support and advice.

**Principle 2 - deliver value for customers by ensuring simplicity and transparency through the applications process.**

While network data and online tools are critical, our customers also highlighted that being able to speak to the right person at the right time is key when they are deciding how and where to connect.

They want to be able to talk to our experts in a timely manner before making an application, to explore their options and benefit from their local knowledge of the network. They also want a single point of contact to guide them through the connections process.

With this in mind our plan to address this includes:

- complementing our digital offerings with enhanced upfront advice and support and an ‘ask the expert’ technical advice service; and
- facilitating better, more frequent discussions for customers seeking flexible connections at all voltage levels to help them understand when this type of offer could result in a quicker and cheaper connection.

We will continue to ensure that we communicate clearly with our customers when it comes to the cost of a connection. As such, we will include a cost breakdown and the underpinning assumptions made when we issue a connection quotation.

We are also aware of the need to provide guidance to help customers progress through the connections process. In particular, we will provide guidance to help distributed generation customers ensure that their connection meets the compliance criteria set out in the relevant engineering recommendations (G98/G99).

Another way that we deliver value to our customers is by limiting the negative impacts of damage to critical infrastructure, such as internet cabinets. We will continue to review and enhance our approach to the reconnection of supplies to this type of critical infrastructure, developing an appropriate, streamlined approach to reconnect supplies quickly.

**Principle 3 - facilitate the delivery of timely and economical connections that meet customers’ needs.**

Quicker is not necessarily better for larger connection projects. This is one of the key learnings from our stakeholder interactions.

Major works connections customers told us that they did not always want the next available connection date. It is all about timing for them, and so they prioritised a longer and reliable lead time that supports the overall delivery of the project by fitting into the ‘right place at the right time’ in their project management time frame.

To meet our customers’ needs in this area, we will be:

- automating systems to streamline the notification and application process for LCTs;
- deploying active network management (ANM) schemes that will enable them to get connected quicker and without the need for significant reinforcement;
- completing any cost reconciliation in a timely manner;
- providing access to services that will help deliver timely and economical connections; and
- continuing to promote fair and open competition so that our customers have a choice in who delivers their connections.

A summary of our major connections plan is set out in Appendix 2.

# Appendix 1 - Outputs and incentives

This appendix explains how our proposed outcomes link to the range of outputs and incentives in Ofgem’s 2023-28 price control framework.

We are proposing a bespoke reputational output delivery incentive (ODI-R) to cover performance reporting commitments for our major connections strategy and to supplement Ofgem’s strategy for the delivery of financial output delivery incentives (ODI-F). We propose this mechanism to ensure we account for our performance in areas that cannot be easily measured by quantitative metrics. Where robust metrics are available, we have included them in our proposed performance scorecard through the common ODI-F mechanism, to measure our delivery in the period.

## A summary of our outputs and incentives

Output/Incentive	Type	Target/Mechanism
Time to connect	Common ODI-F	Targets to be determined by Ofgem
Connections guaranteed standards of performance	Common LO	Meet standards
Improving service standards for major connection customers	Common ODI-F	Performance scorecard proposed in our plan
Major connections delivery report	Bespoke ODI-R	Annual reporting

*Table 1: Outputs and incentives*

More information is provided in the following appendices:

## Appendix 2: Customer outcomes

- outcomes - our commitments for the 2023-28 period;
- benefits - how these outcomes benefit our customers;
- deliverables - what we plan to do to support the delivery of our outcomes; and
- metrics - how we plan to measure our success, including:
  - output measures to track the delivery of our outcomes – shown as licence obligations (LOs), price control deliverables (PCDs) and output delivery incentives (ODIs) as appropriate; and
  - indicative input measures showing underlying input/volume assumptions (where relevant).

## Appendix 3: Proposed ODI-F scorecard

## Appendix 4: Mapping to Ofgem’s baseline requirements

- details the relevant key actions in our plan;
- highlights where our plan meets or exceeds baseline requirements;
- labels delivery through the ODI-F or ODI-R mechanisms (detailed above); and
- demonstrates where they are included in our plan outcomes and deliverables.

## Appendix 5: Key measures



## Appendix 2: Customer Outcomes

This table provides a summary of our major connections strategy plan and the outcomes we will deliver for our customers during the 2023-28 period, developed in response to their feedback. It clearly identifies the benefits we will deliver, key actions required and the targets we have set that will enable us, Ofgem and our stakeholders to assess our performance.

Connections outcomes	Benefits	Deliverables	Measure <sup>1</sup> (output/indicative inputs)	ED1 to date	ED1 Forecast	ED2 Target
<b>CN1) Help our small works customers to get connected quickly by providing more self-service options, greater support and more flexibility over delivery</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Customers have more choice in how they engage and interact with us</li> <li>Better support through the connections process</li> <li>Customers able to understand likely costs and timescales before making an application</li> <li>Independent technical advice</li> <li>Quicker, more efficient connections</li> </ul>	<p><b>CN1.1)</b> Develop our digital platforms for customers who want to self-serve and provide enhanced upfront support for those who prefer to talk to us before making an application 🌐💡</p> <p><b>CN1.2)</b> Provide a free advice and application checking service for small works customers and community energy groups, including for low carbon technologies (LCTs) and generation</p> <p><b>CN1.3)</b> Give small works customers the option to pick the date and time of their connection</p>	<b>BMCS connections – small works (ODI-F)<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>88.9%</b>	<b>91.2%</b>	<b>92.5%</b>
			<b>Average connections lead time – small works<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>71.2</b>	<b>36.2</b>	<b>29.0</b>
			<b>Time to quote LVSSA – small works (ODI-F)<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>6.6</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>2.7</b>
			<b>Time to quote LVSSB – small works (ODI-F)<sup>5</sup></b>	<b>14.3</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>4.4</b>
			<b>Time to deliver LVSSA – small works (ODI-F)</b>	<b>48.7</b>	<b>28.3</b>	<b>22.7</b>
			<b>Time to deliver LVSSB – small works (ODI-F)</b>	<b>78.5</b>	<b>36.5</b>	<b>29.2</b>
			<b>Connections guaranteed standards (LO) % compliance – small works</b>	<b>98.9%<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>99.0%</b>	<b>99.5%</b>
<b>CN2) Facilitate the mass uptake of LCTs, flexible connections and network flexibility to support the drive to net zero<sup>7</sup> ✓</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Customers able to identify the most viable and cost-effective connections and get a cost for the work in real-time</li> <li>New automated processes to streamline the connection process for LCTs</li> <li>Quicker connections</li> <li>Cheaper connections</li> </ul>	<p><b>CN2.1)</b> Develop AutoDesign functionality to enable customers to self-serve and generate quotations for LV demand connections, load increases for existing LV connections and budget estimates for new LV generation connections. Go-live planned for 2025/26. ✓🌐💡</p> <p><b>CN2.2)</b> Utilise AutoDesign technology to develop an LV network availability heat map that utilises LV monitoring and smart meter data to enable real-time system planning. Go-live planned for 2024/25. ✓🌐💡</p> <p><b>CN2.3)</b> Introduce new automated systems to streamline the notification/application process for LCTs and facilitate mass uptake. Go-live planned for 2023/24. ✓🌐💡</p> <p><b>CN2.4)</b> Provide service upgrades that enable net zero ready homes</p>	<b>Major connections satisfaction (overall)</b>	<b>84.3%</b>	<b>85.0%</b>	<b>90.0%</b>
			<b>Major connections satisfaction – pre-application services ✓ (ODI-F)</b>	-	-	<b>90.0%</b>
			<b>Major connections satisfaction – quotations ✓ (ODI-F)</b>	-	-	<b>90.0%</b>
			<b>Major connections satisfaction – delivery ✓ (ODI-F)</b>	-	-	<b>90.0%</b>

<sup>1</sup>. Measures are shown to track delivery of our customer outcomes. Whilst some measures may directly relate to deliverables, this may not be true in all cases. Numbers shown may be subject to rounding - see Annex 'A1.4 - key targets & measures' for profiled targets.

<sup>2</sup>. BMCS: Broader Measure of Customer Satisfaction.

<sup>3</sup>. This is an average based on the ratio of LVSSA and LVSSB volumes.

<sup>4</sup>. LVSSA: single service low voltage connections.

<sup>5</sup>. LVSSB: small project demand connections.

<sup>6</sup>. ED1 annual average.

<sup>7</sup>. Cross-reference Whole Systems WS2.2) Energy matchmaking scheme.

Connections outcomes	Benefits	Deliverables	Measure <sup>1</sup> (output/indicative inputs)	ED1 to date	ED1 Forecast	ED2 Target
<b>CN3) Empower our customers to make more informed decisions about how and where to connect by expanding the scope of network information</b> <sup>8</sup> ✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased information about where to connect</li> <li>Easy access and understand network information</li> <li>Ability to undertake upfront assessments</li> </ul>	<b>CN3.1)</b> Make improvements to our HV and EHV network capacity heat maps to include the provision of an integrated LTDS and information that can forecast changes in capacity availability. ✓💡	<i>HV and EHV heat map upgrades – Go-live</i>	-	-	2024/25
<b>CN4) Continue to facilitate fair and open competition so that our customers have a choice in who delivers their connection</b> ✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased choice of connection provider</li> <li>Quicker connections</li> <li>Cheaper connections</li> <li>Independent Connections Providers (ICPs)/Independent Distribution Network Operators (IDNOs) will have access to increased levels of network data</li> </ul>	<b>CN4.1)</b> Work with ICPs and IDNOs to further minimise input services and extend the scope of contestable works. ✓ <b>CN4.2)</b> Publish guide prices and monthly performance metrics as well as providing clear cost breakdowns in connections quotations. ✓ <b>CN4.3)</b> Develop a bespoke AutoDesign platform for ICPs and IDNOs with non-contestable costs. Go-live planned for 2024/25. ✓🌐💡	<b>Introduction of customer satisfaction survey for IDNO and ICP customers</b>	-	-	2023/24
<b>CN5) Deliver an efficient connections service for all our customers, providing more technical advice to customers on smarter and more flexible solutions</b> ✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased connections in areas of constraint</li> <li>Quicker connections</li> <li>Cheaper connections</li> </ul>	<b>CN5.1)</b> Provide an enhanced 'ask the expert' technical advice service. Go-live planned for 2023/24 ✓👥 <b>CN5.2)</b> Up-skill our LV/HV design engineers to facilitate better and more frequent discussions with customers on flexible connections at EHV, HV and LV. 👥	<b>Connections guaranteed standards % compliance – major works</b>	99.8% <sup>6</sup>	99.8%	99.9%
		<b>CN5.3)</b> For EHV connections, where a flexible solution could avoid the need for additional network reinforcement, we will have a detailed discussion with the customer and provide them with the information they need to make an informed choice on the options available. 🌐💡	<b>% of major connections appointments met</b>	99.3% <sup>6</sup>	99.5%	99.7%

Key: 🌐 - Data and digitalisation, 👥 - Workforce Resilience, 💡 – Innovation, ✓ - Included in Major Connections Strategy

**Table 2: Major connections strategy – customer outcomes**

<sup>8</sup>. Cross-reference DSO4.2) Enhance our active network management (ANM).

## Appendix 3: Proposed ODI-F scorecard

Impact Area	ED1 to date	Baseline (2015-23 FOT)	Max incentive target <sup>9</sup>
Major connections satisfaction – pre-application	-	-	90%
Major connections satisfaction – quotations	-	-	90%
Major connections satisfaction – delivery	-	-	90%

*Table 3: Proposed ODI-F scorecard*

The 2015 to date and baseline 2015-23 forecast outturn performance have being derived from surveys currently carried out by independent market research company Explain on an informal basis. These surveys do not provide data to measure pre-application satisfaction, hence no current performance numbers can be reported. We have set the target at 90 per cent as we currently operate at >84% for quotation and delivery (as identified through informal surveys). Our benchmarking of the industry, based on draft plans released, suggests greater than 90 per cent as the frontier performance.

<sup>9</sup> Indicative maximum reward target. Targets and mechanism to be developed with Ofgem and other networks between draft and final business plan submission

## Appendix 4: Mapping to Ofgem's baseline requirements

Unless specified otherwise, target dates for delivery are the end of March 2028. For phasing of the performance metrics, please see the final page of this appendix. The key actions in our major connections strategy relate to all nine of Ofgem's relevant market segments, unless explicitly stated otherwise.

Ofgem baseline standard	Key actions	Incentive mechanism	Meets/ Exceeds	Outcome Ref.
<b>Ofgem principle 1: Support connection stakeholders prior to application by providing accurate, comprehensive and user-friendly information</b>				
<b>1.1</b> Provide access to up to date and relevant information to enable a connection stakeholder to decide whether, and where, to connect to the distribution network. This should include graphical network records that show the location, size and type of assets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Publish more comprehensive information on location, size and type of assets, available capacity and network performance.</li> <li>– Enhance our HV and EHV network availability heat maps to make them more dynamic and user-friendly, including an integrated LTDS Go-live planned for 2024-25.</li> <li>– Develop AutoDesign enabled LV heat maps that utilise LV monitoring and smart meter data Go-live planned for 2024-25.</li> <li>– Create a bespoke AutoDesign platform for ICPs and IDNOs. – Go live planned for 2024-25.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Scorecard, ODI-F</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Major connections satisfaction – pre-application services - =&gt;90%.</li> </ul> <p><b>Annual report, ODI-R</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Enhanced HV and EHV heat maps available on our website.</li> <li>– New LV heat map available on our website</li> <li>– Introduction of our ICP and IDNO AutoDesign platform.</li> <li>– Measure of the numbers of people registering to use the 'toolkit'.</li> <li>– Delivery of our distribution system operation (DSO)/major connections self-service 'Open Insights' analytics toolkit.</li> <li>– Measure of network / self-serve data.</li> </ul>	- Exceeds	<b>CN2/CN3</b>
<b>1.2</b> Communicate a clear connections process for all customers. This should include providing clarity of distribution network operator (DNO), customer and third-party responsibilities. This	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Further develop our digital platforms so that customers can access information and online services more easily.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Scorecard, ODI-F</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Major connections satisfaction – pre-application services - =&gt;90%.</li> </ul> <p><b>Annual report, ODI-R</b></p>	- Meets	<b>CN2</b>

Ofgem baseline standard	Key actions	Incentive mechanism	Meets/ Exceeds	Outcome Ref.
<b>Ofgem principle 1: Support connection stakeholders prior to application by providing accurate, comprehensive and user-friendly information</b>				
should also include providing clarity on how issues that arise can be raised and resolved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Produce an end-to-end connections process guide for major works connections customers, which will include clarity of DNO, customer and third-party responsibilities and confirmation of how any issues can be raised and resolved –2023-24.</li> <li>– Develop a new video/animation that explains the end-to-end process for major works connections – 2023-24.</li> <li>– Make our escalation/complaints process more visible on our website and in our customer guides –2023-24.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Communications published on the website to provide qualitative feedback.</li> </ul>		
<b>1.3</b> Provide clear explanations of the types of connection products available, the associated costs of each and the information that would need to be provided by the customer to make an application. Where appropriate, this should also include the provision of general information on the potential implications for a customer's connection offer if they change their own requirements, if other customers are seeking to connect in the same area or if	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Review and make further improvements as necessary to the content of our “get connected” webpages regarding the connections services we make available, the associated costs and the information to be provided.</li> <li>– Refresh our website to ensure we can provide customers with information on the likely implications, if they change their requirements or a quotation lapses because the validity period expires and of the existence of other potential connections – 2023-24.</li> <li>– Provide information on the different types of connection that are available (e.g. ANM, firm / flexible connections, and storage / battery connections) – 2023 -24.</li> </ul>	<b>Scorecard, ODI-F</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Major connections satisfaction – pre-application services - 90%.</li> </ul>	- Meets	<b>CN5</b>

Ofgem baseline standard	Key actions	Incentive mechanism	Meets/ Exceeds	Outcome Ref.
<b>Ofgem principle 1: Support connection stakeholders prior to application by providing accurate, comprehensive and user-friendly information</b>				
they do not accept an offer within its validity period.				
<b>1.4</b> Provide support and help to customers through appropriate channels which should include, but not be limited to, connections surgeries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Continue to host monthly connections surgeries so that customers can access upfront advice and support and make improvements to our processes as part of business as usual, and in response to feedback received.</li> <li>– Offer an ‘ask the expert’ service, providing independent technical advice on topics such as which EV charging solution to select or typical loadings and connection arrangements for small and medium enterprises – 2023-24.</li> <li>– Proactively engage with trade bodies and major works connections customers to support their low carbon ambitions.</li> <li>– Facilitate better, more frequent discussions with customers seeking flexible connections.</li> <li>– Develop an online platform for customers who want to self-serve and complement this with more upfront advice and support.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Scorecard, ODI-F</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Major connections satisfaction – pre-application services - 90%.</li> </ul> <p><b>Annual report, ODI</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Introduction of ‘ask the expert’ service.</li> <li>– Measure of ‘ask the expert’ utilisation.</li> </ul>	- Meets	<b>CN5</b>
<b>1.5</b> Have robust processes in place to proactively engage with stakeholders. This should include how the DNO plans to both identify and address connections issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Build on our robust strategy for engaging with connections stakeholders, developed during the 2015-23 period and ensure they have plenty of opportunities to provide feedback, identify issues and best practice and drive change in our business.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Scorecard, ODI-F</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Major connections satisfaction – pre-application services - 90%.</li> </ul> <p><b>Annual report, ODI-R</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Measure number of stakeholder events and activities held / stakeholders engaged.</li> </ul>	- Meets	<b>CN2</b>

Ofgem baseline standard	Key actions	Incentive mechanism	Meets/ Exceeds	Outcome Ref.
<b>Ofgem principle 1: Support connection stakeholders prior to application by providing accurate, comprehensive and user-friendly information</b>				
<b>1.6</b> Provide clearly signposted information on capacity available to enable points of connection to be identified.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Develop and implement an open data platform which will clearly signpost available capacity and enable points of connection to be identified via DSO/major connections self-service analytics ‘Open Insights’ toolkit.</li> <li>– Provide a set of free analytical tools to help with the processing of data; capabilities to enable self-serve connection quotations and retro-fitting of existing connections and dynamic heat maps and tools to help customers understand capacity availability and power flows on our network.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Scorecard, ODI-F</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Major connections satisfaction – pre-application services - 90%.</li> </ul> <p><b>Annual report, ODI-R</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Measure of the numbers of people registering to use the Open Insights platform.</li> <li>– Delivery of our DSO/major connections self-service ‘Open Insights’ toolkit.</li> </ul>	- Exceeds	<b>CN2/CN3</b>
<b>1.7</b> Provide guidance that explains to customers the criteria to allow an unmetered connection to be made, ensuring compliance with the Unmetered Supply Regulations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Update our guidance for customers seeking unmetered connections – 2023-24.</li> <li>– Review and update our code of practice documents if required -2023-24.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Scorecard, ODI-F</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Major connections satisfaction – pre-application services - 90%.</li> </ul>	- Meets	<b>CN2</b>
<b>1.8</b> Provide support in the form of tailored pre-application communication to suit different stakeholder needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Engage with unmetered local authority, private finance initiative and other unmetered stakeholders to understand their experience and requirements and develop stakeholder communications plans in line with their feedback.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Scorecard, ODI-F</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Major connections satisfaction – pre-application services - 90%.</li> </ul> <p><b>Annual report, ODI-R</b></p>	- Meets	<b>CN2</b>

Ofgem baseline standard	Key actions	Incentive mechanism	Meets/ Exceeds	Outcome Ref.
<b>Ofgem principle 1: Support connection stakeholders prior to application by providing accurate, comprehensive and user-friendly information</b>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have a nominated single point of contact for each local authority and for other stakeholders who express interest from the relevant market segments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measure of stakeholder events and activities held / stakeholders engaged.</li> </ul>		

Table 4: Mapping of major connections strategy plan to Ofgem's baseline requirements - Ofgem principle 1

Ofgem baseline standard	Key actions	Reporting mechanism	Meets/ Exceeds	Outcome Ref.
<b>Ofgem principle 2: Deliver value for customers by ensuring simplicity and transparency through the applications process</b>				
<b>2.1</b> Have clear and simple customer application process, which accounts for the particular needs of different groups of customers and which can be shaped by the parties involved. This should include providing options for how customers can apply for new connections and ensure these are clearly communicated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with stakeholders to understand their experience and future requirements.</li> <li>Develop our digital platforms for customers who want to self-serve and provide enhanced upfront support for those who prefer to talk to us before making an application.</li> <li>Provide an overview of the end-to-end process on our website and in the guidance we produce, so that customers know what to expect, in what timescale and how to contact us if they need to – 2023-24.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Scorecard, ODI-F</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Major connections satisfaction – quotations =&gt;90%.</li> </ul> <p><b>Annual Report, ODI-R</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measure of the numbers of stakeholders attending surgeries, webinars, seminars and six-monthly focus groups by stakeholder types.</li> <li>Measure of the numbers of people registering to use the self-serve 'Open Insights' toolkit.</li> <li>Measure of the percentage of major works customers self-serving for quotations compared to the overall number of quotations issued.</li> <li>Measure of the average time to quote for major works customers.</li> <li>Connections guaranteed standards percentage compliance – major works quotations.</li> </ul>	- Meets	<b>CN2/CN4</b>



Ofgem baseline standard	Key actions	Reporting mechanism	Meets/ Exceeds	Outcome Ref.
<b>Ofgem principle 2: Deliver value for customers by ensuring simplicity and transparency through the applications process</b>				
<b>2.2</b> Provide tailored communication plans to suit different customer needs, including the provision of specified points of contact during the application process. This should include the provision of various channels through which customers can access support or help.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Develop tailored communication and engagement plans for different types of major works connections customers.</li> <li>– Engage with stakeholders to understand their experience and survey their satisfaction with the service they receive during the application process.</li> <li>– Develop our existing single point of contact customer service model as appropriate.</li> <li>– Develop our digital offerings so that customers making online applications can access help via a web chat function.</li> <li>– Introduce an enhanced ‘ask the expert’ service providing independent technical support and advice.</li> </ul>	<b>Scorecard, ODI-F</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Major connections satisfaction – quotations 90%</li> </ul> <b>Annual Report, ODI-R</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Measure of the average time to quote for major works customers.</li> <li>– Connections guaranteed standards percentage compliance – major works quotations.</li> </ul>	- Meets	<b>CN5</b>
<b>2.3</b> Provide customers with clear connection quotation cost breakdowns, listing out the cost components and any assumptions used in the formulation of a connections offer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Review the format and information contained in our connection quotations in response to feedback received regarding our customers’ experience and requirements and ensure our offers align with best legal practice.</li> </ul>		- Meets	<b>CN2</b>
<b>2.4</b> Have processes in place to help customers identify how they could make changes to their connection requirements that would	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Continue to facilitate pre-application discussions with customers via our monthly surgeries.</li> <li>– Provide post-application advice, via our customer’s single point of contact, depending on the customer’s needs.</li> </ul>		- Meets	<b>CN5</b>

Ofgem baseline standard	Key actions	Reporting mechanism	Meets/ Exceeds	Outcome Ref.
<b>Ofgem principle 2: Deliver value for customers by ensuring simplicity and transparency through the applications process</b>				
meet their needs and allow them to get connected more quickly or cheaply.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate better and more frequent discussions with customers regarding connections at all voltage levels.</li> </ul>			
<b>2.5</b> Specifically, in relation to flexible connection customers, provide clarity around conditions and circumstances of current and future curtailment associated with a connections offer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate better and more frequent discussions with customers regarding flexible connections for metered demand EHV and 132kV and metered distributed generation high voltage (DGHV) and EHV.</li> <li>Include in our connection quotations curtailment information for metered demand EHV and 132kV and metered DGHV and EHV customers.</li> </ul>		- Meets	<b>CN5</b>
<b>2.6</b> Provide guidance that explains to customers the criteria to allow a DG connection to be made to ensure compliance with relevant engineering recommendations (G98/G99).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will provide guidance on our website regarding the different types of connection offers available, including how to ensure compliance with engineering recommendation G98/99 – 2023-24.</li> </ul>		- Meets	<b>CN5</b>
<b>2.7</b> Have in place options for 'fast track' reconnections of critical infrastructure such as internet cabinets that have been damaged in road traffic accidents or similar.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and streamline our existing process for this type of reconnection.</li> <li>Update our process guide and make it more visible on our website.</li> </ul>		- Meet	<b>CN2</b>

Table 5: Mapping of major connections strategy plan to Ofgem's baseline requirements - Ofgem principle 2

Ofgem baseline standard	Key actions	Reporting mechanism	Meets/ Exceeds	Outcome Ref.
<b>Ofgem principle 3: Facilitate the delivery of timely and economical connections that meet customers' needs.</b>				
<b>3.1</b> Provide tailored communication plans to suit different customer needs, including the provision of specified points of contact during the delivery process. Ensure various channels are available for customers to access support or help.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Develop tailored communication and engagement plans for different types of major works connections stakeholders.</li> <li>– Engage with customers to understand their experience and survey their satisfaction with the service they receive during the delivery process.</li> <li>– Develop our existing single point of contact customer service model as appropriate.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Scorecard, ODI-F</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Major connections satisfaction – delivery =&gt;90%</li> </ul> <p><b>Annual report, ODI-R</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Measures of the numbers of stakeholders attending surgeries, webinars, seminars and six-monthly focus groups, by stakeholder types.</li> <li>– Measure the percentage of appointments met.</li> </ul>	- Meets	<b>CN2</b>
<b>3.2</b> Complete any cost reconciliation in a timely manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Though we currently have a process in place that is designed to reconcile costs in a timely manner, we will review that process and implement such changes as may be necessary to make it more efficient, taking account of the complexity of the connection in question.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Scorecard, ODI-F</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Major connections satisfaction – delivery =&gt;90%</li> </ul> <p><b>ODI-R</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Measure compliance percentage of cost reconciliations being completed.</li> </ul>	- Meets	<b>CN2</b>
<b>3.3</b> Where there are slow moving projects and where these may impact on other customers, have processes in place for releasing capacity that is not being used.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– We will develop a new process whereby newly accepted projects can be connected ahead of slow-moving projects which are yet to be energised.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Scorecard, ODI-F</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Major connections satisfaction – delivery =&gt;90%.</li> </ul>	- Meets	<b>CN5</b>

Ofgem baseline standard	Key actions	Reporting mechanism	Meets/ Exceeds	Outcome Ref.
<b>Ofgem principle 3: Facilitate the delivery of timely and economical connections that meet customers' needs.</b>				
<b>3.4</b> Have processes in place for the promotion of certain types of customers (such as storage) in connection queue in circumstances where they will help others connect more quickly/cheaply.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Review and enhance the queue management code of practice.</li> <li>– Develop our processes so that we can implement changes to the queue management code of practice such that we are able to manage customers' positions in the queue to facilitate other connections, where appropriate.</li> </ul>	<b>Scorecard, ODI-F</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Major connections satisfaction – delivery 90%.</li> </ul>	- Meets	<b>CN5</b>
<b>3.5</b> Provide access to services that facilitate the delivery of timely and economical connections such as rent a jointer services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Publish information on our website on how customers can access these services, including a 'rent a jointer' service or the services of an authorised person.</li> <li>– Signpost customers to the services of ICPs, LCT installers and electrical contractors who may be able to provide these services more quickly and cost-effectively.</li> </ul>	<b>Scorecard, ODI-F</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Major connections satisfaction – delivery 90%.</li> </ul>	- Meets	<b>CN4</b>

*Table 6: Mapping of major connections strategy plan to Ofgem's baseline requirements - Ofgem principle 3*

## Appendix 5: Key measures

Key measures - Connections		ED1 performance		ED2 performance Phased targets					Customer outcome	
KPI	Unit	ED1 to date <sup>10</sup>	ED1 forecast <sup>11</sup>	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28		
OUTPUTS										
SMALL WORKS										
BMCS connections – overall	%	88.9%	91.2%	91.5%	91.7%	92.0%	92.2%	92.5%	CN1	
Time to quote LVSSA	Days	6.6	3.4	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	CN1	
Time to quote LVSSB	Days	14.3	5.5	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	CN1	
Time to deliver LVSSA	Days	48.7	28.3	22.7	22.7	22.7	22.7	22.7	CN1	
Time to deliver LVSSB	Days	78.5	36.5	29.2	29.2	29.2	29.2	29.2	CN1	
Average connections lead time – small works	Days	71.2	36.2	29.0	29.0	29.0	29.0	29.0	CN1	
Guaranteed standards met	%	98.9% <sup>12</sup>	99.0%	99.1%	99.2%	99.3%	99.4%	99.5%	CN1	
MAJOR WORKS										
Major connections satisfaction (overall)	%	84.3%	85.0%	86.0%	87.0%	88.0%	89.0%	90.0%	CN2	
Major connections satisfaction (pre-application services)	%	-	-	86.0%	87.0%	88.0%	89.0%	90.0%	CN2	
Major connections satisfaction (quotations)	%	-	-	86.0%	87.0%	88.0%	89.0%	90.0%	CN2	
Major connections satisfaction (delivery)	%	-	-	86.0%	87.0%	88.0%	89.0%	90.0%	CN2	
Guaranteed standards met	%	99.8% <sup>3</sup>	99.8%	99.8%	99.8%	99.8%	99.9%	99.9%	CN5	
Appointments met	%	99.3%	99.5%	99.7%	99.7%	99.7%	99.7%	99.7%	CN5	
OTHER SUPPORTING KPIs										
SMALL WORKS										
Auto design budgets issued (<55kVA)	%	70%	76%	79%	81%	83%	87%	90%	CN2	
Auto design customers registered	Count	430	1,040	1,450	1,890	2,270	2,500	2,500	CN2	
MAJOR WORKS										
Provision/self-service of network data	Count	33,850	41,830	44,520	47,310	50,120	52,890	55,530	CN3, CN4	

**Table 7: KPIs phasing through the period**

<sup>10</sup>. 2020/21 actual performance.

<sup>11</sup>. 2022/23 forecast performance.

<sup>12</sup>. ED1 annual average.

KPI	Definition
<b>OUTPUTS</b>	
<b>SMALL WORKS</b>	
BMCS connections – overall	Average customer satisfaction score (out of 10) for customers surveyed under the Connections service type.
Time to Quote LVSSA	The difference in working days between the date on which a connection application is received and the date on which a quotation is issued for a LVSSA connection. LVSSA is defined in the Regulatory Instructions and Guidance.
Time to Quote LVSSB	As above for a LVSSB connection – LVSSB is defined in the Regulatory Instructions and Guidance.
Time to Deliver LVSSA	The difference in working days between the date on which a quotation is accepted and the date on which the work to provide the connection is completed for a LVSSA connection.
Time to Deliver LVSSB	As above, for a LVSSB connection.
Average connections lead time – small works (Time to Connect)	The difference between the date on which a quotation is accepted and the date on which the work to provide the connection is completed, as further defined in the Regulatory Instructions and Guidance.
Guaranteed standards met	The number of times a quotation is issued, action is taken or work is completed in accordance with the prescribed timescale required by the connections guaranteed standards or the Distributed Generation Standards Direction, as applicable, and where a failure payment is not required to be made.
<b>MAJOR WORKS</b>	
Major connections satisfaction (Overall)	The average customer satisfaction score (out of 10) for customers surveyed under the three major connection satisfaction survey – in line with our ODI-F proposal.
Major connections satisfaction (pre-application services)	The average customer satisfaction score (out of 10) for customers surveyed for the ‘pre-application services’ element of the major connection satisfaction survey – in line with our ODI-F proposal.
Major connections satisfaction (quotations)	The average customer satisfaction score (out of 10) for customers surveyed for the ‘quotations’ element of the major connection satisfaction survey – in line with our ODI-F proposal.
Major connections satisfaction (delivery)	The average customer satisfaction score (out of 10) for customers surveyed for the ‘delivery’ element of the major connection satisfaction survey – in line with our ODI-F proposal.
Guaranteed standards met	The number of times a quotation is issued, action is taken or work is completed in accordance with the prescribed timescale required by the connections guaranteed standards or the Distributed Generation Standards Direction, as applicable, and where a failure payment is not required to be made.
Appointments met	The number of times work commenced on site in accordance with ECGS5 or condition 4(5) of the Distributed Generation Standards Direction, as applicable.
<b>SUPPORTING MEASURES</b>	
Auto Design budgets issued (<55kVA)	The number of budget estimates self-served through AutoDesign as a percentage of the total number of budget estimates issued for Small Works customers i.e. <55kVA through both self-serve and the usual budget estimate process.
Auto Design Customers registered	The number of unique customers e.g. a company, a Local Authority or an individual registered to use AutoDesign.
Provision/self-service of Network data	The number of downloads by and provision of network information to customers on a self-serve basis (e.g. Contracted capacity register, Embedded Capacity register, downloads of Distribution Future Energy Scenarios (DFES), Long Term Development Statement (LTDS), Demand/Generation/Availability maps).

Table 8: Glossary of terms

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