

## Environmental Impact of Reinstatement: How can we reduce the environmental impact of site reinstatement?

The following problem statement has been developed by the innovation teams within the UK's Gas and Electricity Networks for the 2024 Energy Innovation Basecamp.

**Theme: Decarbonising Network Operations**

**Network Areas: Electricity Distribution, Gas Distribution**

### **What is the problem?**

*Environmental Impact of Reinstatement: How can we reduce the environmental impact of site reinstatement?*

As networks, to ensure we maintain a safe and reliable network, we need to maintain, repair and/or replace our below ground assets. To do this, we generally have to break ground and excavate to carry out our activities, depending on the activity, this could be single/multiple excavations and/or trenches. We then have to make good the excavations through various backfill and reinstatement methods.

These reinstatement activities require considerations of type of materials, methods of delivery to site and the process (mechanical or manual) of backfilling, compacting and reinstating.

### **What are we looking for?**

#### **Backfill & Reinstatement techniques**

As networks we already use standard approaches, but we are always looking for alternatives that drive lower environmental impact along with cost efficiencies and reduction to disruption.

#### **Compacting Tools & Equipment**

We already look to use tools & equipment that will ensure the relevant quality of reinstatement as well as to reduce our carbon footprint but again we are always looking for alternatives that do this, as well as being safe and effective for our teams to use.

### **What are the constraints?**

Any new transport, materials, plant, tools and equipment introduced into our networks must meet all the relevant safety and engineering requirements for the relevant activity. Ease and speed of use is also important to ensure training burdens can be mitigated. For gas networks, any potential solutions need to meet future requirements and consider Methane, Hydrogen, Blended Hydrogen/Methane and Biomethane as gases within our networks. As with all Streetworks related activities, there are a number of requirements under NRSWA, TMA, SROH, Red Book etc that need to be considered.

# Energy Innovation Basecamp 2025

## Problem Statement EIP135

### Who are the key players?

This is mainly aimed at the distribution networks due to the nature and volume of excavations & reinstatements carried out in the public highways & footpaths but could apply to transmission.

### Does this problem statement build on existing or anticipated infrastructure, policy decisions, or previous innovation projects?

There have been many previous areas of work on backfill & reinstatement, low carbon tools and equipment but generally driven by cost efficiencies, productivity, quality improvements and reducing disruption rather than being to decarbonise our operations.

### What else do you need to know?

Innovator submissions to this problem statement will be open [here](#) during March and April, but we encourage you to submit your response as early as possible, as networks will be able to review submissions as soon as they come in.

You can also use the virtual Q&A on the Smarter Networks Portal to ask for more information about this problem statement. Questions may be answered online or at the ENA Problem Statement Launch in March 2024. More information on last year's Basecamp programme can be found [here](#).