

EIP051

Can technology engage hard-to-reach customers?

Problem Statement Details

How can the GDNs use technology to ensure that messages and information is accessible and engaging for all? This is particularly seen as a challenge for customers with poor English, those with mobility and cognitive challenges, and to reach school children who are the customers and bill payers of the future.

Key Stakeholders

Gas and Electricity Networks, domestic customers/particularly those in vulnerable situations, housing associations and private landlords, local authorities/resilience forums, local health organisations.

Target Market

Messages could be about energy saving advice, the Priority Service Register, gas safety and carbon monoxide awareness, and the future of energy.

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Enablers and Constraints

We have the ability to translate materials in written and electronic form but with multiple dialects even within a community that does not always work.

Customers may have access to devices and be able to access materials from their home – alternatively we may want to utilise materials in a community setting.

How can we engage the younger customers? Previous work on carbon monoxide shows that gaming scenarios work well for some audiences. Can we apply this to other topics?

Scalability and Target Implementation Date

Initially we want to trial solutions with local community groups and individuals – there is a need to do this now on topics such as energy advice, the Priority Service Register and carbon monoxide. We would then want to make tools and resources available to multiple community groups to cascade through their local networks.

Customers are also becoming more aware of the future energy challenges for the UK, and that the way they heat their homes may change. We need to build tools that can be accessed en masse, to start the education of customers ahead of real change from the 2030s – ensuring that no-one is left behind.

Innovation Strategy Target Areas

Innovation Theme	Target Area	Primary or Secondary
Data and Digitalisation	<p>The shift to data-driven, digitally-enabled networks is critical as we move towards Net Zero.</p> <p>We need your help to drive standardisation, interoperability, security and digital skills whilst accelerating our transformation to data-driven networks by the mid 2030s.</p>	
Flexibility and Market Evolution	<p>Energy networks must quickly and efficiently respond to the rapidly evolving needs of the energy system transition. We need your support to eliminate barriers to new market entrants, deploy novel commercial and network management solutions whilst ensuring fair participation and eliminating regulatory barriers within the RIIO-2 price control periods.</p>	
Net zero and the energy system transition	<p>In order to meet the UK net zero targets of 2050 we must start converting our networks to deliver low carbon fuels today. We want to work with you to develop the role of our gas networks into the future by investigating, trialling, implementing and delivering safe, low carbon alternatives to natural gas such as Hydrogen.</p> <p>Net Zero requires connection of more low and zero carbon sources of energy generation, storage and demand to both the transmission and distribution networks. We need your innovative methods for effective network management and accessing flexibility to improve visibility, forecasting and modelling of low carbon technologies.</p>	
Optimised assets and practices	<p>Innovation has a key role to play in ensuring our networks continue to remain reliable, safe, secure and resilient to our changing climate. We are constantly looking to improve and welcome support to identify methods to prevent interruptions, ensure resilience, reduce climate impact and future-proof our networks.</p>	
Supporting Consumers in Vulnerable Situations	<p>Equality and fairness are the foundations of a just transition to Net Zero. We hope you can provide insight into the transient and situational nature of vulnerability and how we can overcome the impact the energy system has on consumers, building strong relationships for the future.</p>	Primary
Whole Energy System Transition	<p>The energy system must consider the full range of opportunities, risks and interdependencies that exist across the energy networks to integrate and optimise them in a way that best serves the consumer. We are looking for ways to improve visibility of the networks and transitional options, co-ordinate approaches and collaborate across the UK.</p>	Secondary