

Ofgem Incentive on Connections Engagement 2018

WPD looking forward and looking back report

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This report is Western Power Distribution’s submission to Ofgem’s Incentive on Connections Engagement (ICE) for 2018

The report includes both a looking back section for regulatory year 2017/18 and a looking forward section for regulatory year 2018/19, explaining Western Power Distribution’s (WPD) customer engagement strategy and connection activity improvement plans, in line with the requirements of the ICE incentive. The report encompasses these activities in WPD’s four Distribution Service Areas (DSAs): the South West, South Wales, East Midlands and West Midlands.

In accordance with the ICE Incentive, the report explains our engagement and improvement plans for the Relevant Market Segments (RMS) in which WPD did not pass a Competition Test in each of our DSAs. However it is important to WPD that we engage with all connection stakeholders and our continual improvement is aimed at all market segments (see table below); our engagement strategy and ICE workplans therefore cover the full range of connection stakeholders and connections activities and are not just targeted at those required by the ICE incentive. In the report we have identified where either engagement or improvement actions are targeted at specific stakeholder groups, RMS or are for a particular DSA.

Report structure

We have structured the document in three sections together with a set of appendices:

- Introduction** - including an introduction from our Chief Executive, WPD’s connections stakeholder engagement strategy and connections strategy.
- Looking back report** - covering the review of our engagement activities, delivery of our ICE workplan and performance against our outputs and measures in 2017/18.
- Looking forward report** - covering our planned engagement activities, the development of our ICE workplan and the outputs and measures for 2018/19.
- Appendices** - including detailed ICE workplans for 2018/9, for 2017/18 with outcomes and the 2017/18 KPI pack.

The connections Relevant Market Segments

WPDs ICE workplans and engagement activities cover WPD’s four DSAs in each of the 9 Relevant Market Segments (descriptions of the RMS can be found below). For the purposes of this report we have combined the segments into three groups and our ICE workplans identify which of these their actions relate to ▼

Relevant Market Segments									
Demand Connections DMD					Distributed Generation DG		Unmetered Connections UMS		
LV work	HV work	HV & EHV work	EHV work & above		LV work	HV & EHV work	LA work	PFI work	Other work
WPD Connections to metered premises for demand customers at all connection voltages e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Domestic houses ▶ Commercial units ▶ Industrial units ▶ IDNO networks 					Connections to metered premises for generation at all voltages e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Rooftop solar installations ▶ Largescale windfarms ▶ Battery storage 		Connections to unmetered premises for demand connections for local authorities or private sector e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Street lights ▶ Bus shelters ▶ Telecoms kiosks 		

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Looking forward and looking back report

Stakeholder engagement can never be a short term, spur-of-the-moment activity. Across our business it is firmly embedded and meticulously planned, and is crucial to the continuous improvement and development of our long term operational strategy.

Indeed, the simple ethos of listening to and acting upon what customers have to tell us has led to meaningful and effective action being delivered year-on-year. I believe that it is adding real value for people and earning their trust.

While it drives our ICE activity it is also preparing us for the rapid and significant changes faced by our industry as we move from a traditional, passive network as a Distribution Network Operator (DNO) to one that requires the flexibility to adapt to new technologies and customer behaviours as a Distribution System Operator (DSO).

This evolution poses many new challenges so it is vital that our connection stakeholders have a say in the activities we will need to undertake. They have told us already that they regard the move to DSO operations as essential for the future needs of customers.

Stakeholder engagement is part of everyone's job at WPD, including mine. Our programme is centrally co-ordinated, but locally delivered – an approach which ensures that those directly responsible for delivering an improvement discuss it with stakeholders, hear their undiluted feedback, and have accountability for actions taken. It is a process hailed as 'frontier' by the external assessment that takes place annually.

I lead our Connections Customer Steering Group, now in its fifth year, and where the combined experience of the group enables discussion on more in-depth topics so that members can provide us with an even more robust and thorough challenge. I am also committed to reviewing our engagement strategy, annually, ensuring that it is comprehensive and flexible enough to adapt to any new stakeholder priorities.

The past year has seen a significant increase in the scale of our engagement with more than 16,000 connections stakeholders engaged – an increase largely driven by our commitment to placing them at the centre of our plans as we transition to a DSO.

Early and frequent engagement is enabling us to take immediate actions to build the functions and services required for the transition, and not just to discuss it.

Last year, we delivered a fully costed DSO transition strategy with timescales and deliverables which is a DNO first. We also delivered alternative connections for demand customers, which move us towards DSO. Our ICE 2018/19 workplan, which is set out in this report, steps up this work even further.

We intend to stay at the forefront in delivering DSO services for our customers and in leading industry discussion with views informed by our extensive and robust stakeholder engagement.

However, we must not lose sight of the need to continually improve the full range of customer connection services we deliver and to address any immediate service requirements.

In 2017/18 we delivered 37 initiatives, implanting the improvements required by our stakeholders. Outcomes are measured by the outputs and targets we set showing us where we have improved and identifying where we can do more.

For 2018/19 we have created an ICE workplan based on the requirements identified from our extensive engagement. I believe that this will deliver improvements required to meet current requirements and any longer term challenges.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Symons". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Robert Symons, WPD Chief Executive

Core Strategy

“Engagement leads to action” is our overriding strategic principle and embedding engagement with our stakeholders into how we do business is vital in delivering the services they expect. Our goal of constant improvement and our long-term direction has to involve the input of our stakeholders.

WPD’s stakeholder engagement strategy has now been in place for 10 years, and this longevity has ensured that engagement is fully embedded into how we operate and the direction we take as a business. This continued focus has also ensured that everyone at WPD is aware of the role they have in delivering stakeholder engagement and that it leads to effective actions.

The strategy is not static, it is reviewed annually by our Chief Executive and Directors and updated so that it remains fit for purpose to respond to our stakeholders and the impact of external factors.

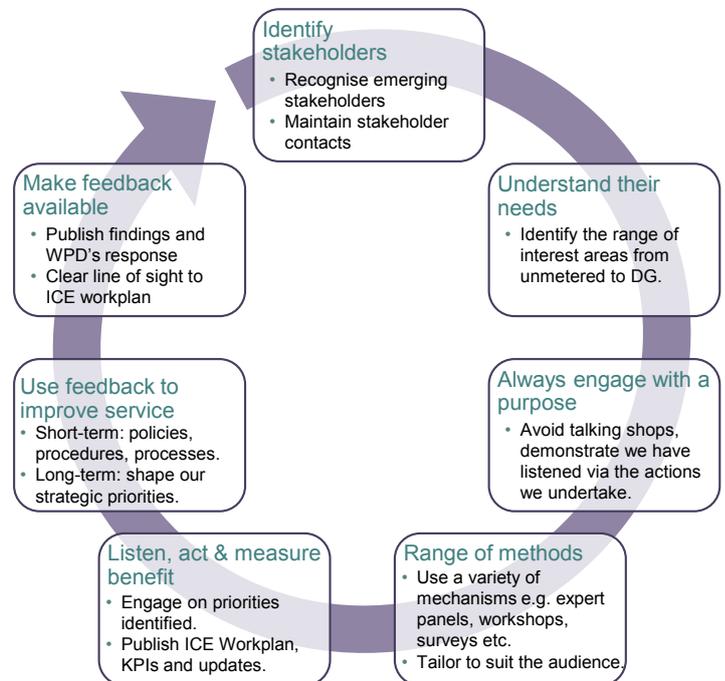
This ability to adapt has meant the strategy continually remains effective, which is now more important than ever as we progress through a period of substantial change for the industry where we will need to establish new interactions with customers and industry participants both existing and new. As we move further in the development of the changes required to transition to becoming a Distribution System Operator (DSO), it is vital that our connection stakeholders have an influence on the direction we take.

The six key principles which underpin our engagement strategy are set out below, these ensure our engagement is robust, meaningful and effective.

The strategy drives a continual cycle of engagement (see right) which ensures our ICE improvement activities are constantly informed by our stakeholders’ views and not just when an annual submission or workplan is due.

To confirm that the strategy remains appropriate and effective it undergoes external assessment every year under the Customer Service Excellence Standard (CSE). This assessment benchmarks the quality and range of WPD’s engagement and the effectiveness of our customer service across multiple leading industries. In 2018 we have maintained full compliance in every area of the CSE and gained five new ‘Compliance Plus’ ratings.

Our long-standing, stakeholder engagement strategy which is continually adapting to the changes we face, is one of our core strengths. It is led by our Chief Executive and Directors who have attended every Connection Customer Steering Group meeting, DG workshop, DSO strategy consultation events and CiC Workshop. This example flows through the business so that engagement is part of everyone’s role at WPD. It is this engagement which underpins WPD’s continual improvement under ICE for our connection stakeholders.



WPD’s principles for engagement

Set out below are the six key principles which drive how we engage and ensure it delivers meaningful outcomes

Engagement must lead to action	We never host talking shops or tick-box exercises. We always engage for a reason and feedback drives outputs.
Engagement is everyone’s responsibility at WPD	Core connections engagement activities are centrally coordinated, but delivery is embedded locally and led by those who will be directly responsible for acting on the feedback.
Utilise a range of engagement methods but face-to-face is always best	We expand the range of engagement methods to suit stakeholder preferences using podcasts, webinars and social media for example. These methods compliment rather than substitute direct interaction which is preferred for discussion / dissemination of complex issues.
Be transparent about feedback and accountability	We publish all presentations, reports and actions - stakeholders can see how their feedback is directly incorporated into WPD’s ICE workplan and track the success of the initiatives they generate.
Build long-term relationships with stakeholders	We earn trust by continually demonstrating that feedback leads to action. As stakeholders’ knowledge and confidence grows, the breadth of their influence and ability to critically challenge will increase.
Collaborate wherever possible, but if it slows progress, take the lead	We share best practise openly, learn from others and encourage co-delivery in common interest areas. If industry is slow to act we do not wait but will share our learning to inform industry wide solutions.



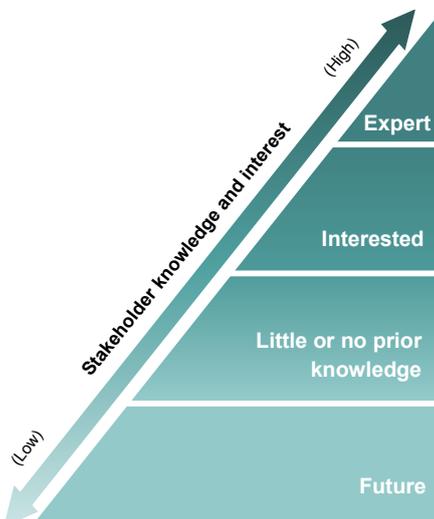
Our approach

Stakeholder engagement is fundamental to the way we deliver improvements to our connections services and how we develop long-term plans. It is therefore vital that the way we engage is tailored to our full range of connection stakeholders and enables them to influence our decisions and for us to react to their concerns.

WPD's aim of continual improvement and leading service performance is driven by the feedback we receive from our stakeholders, our ICE workplan is focussed on delivering these improvements and could not be successfully developed without the input of the full range of our connection stakeholders. We therefore need to undertake a range of engagement which is inclusive of all stakeholders and tailored to them in terms of method and content. Most importantly the engagement must lead to action for it to be considered effective and so that our stakeholders can trust that their time and input is valued.

Our approach which is underpinned by the 6 key principles set out on page 4, is that engagement is led by WPD staff responsible for delivery of the initiatives resulting from the engagement. We recognise that our range of stakeholders have differing levels of knowledge, interest and willingness to engage and our programme of engagement has a full range of engagement methods, but with face-to-face our preference wherever possible. Understanding our stakeholders enables us to maximise the effectiveness of our engagement programme and its reach.

The table below shows how we tailor the methods of engagement delivery to the stakeholder and topic, by their knowledge and interest:



Level 1: Stakeholders we work closely with to build their knowledge to an 'expert' level, or those who already have an in-depth knowledge of connections activities

Level 2: Stakeholders who interact regularly with WPD for connections activities and have a sizeable knowledge and interest in this area

Level 3: Stakeholders who may only interact once or occasionally for connections activities and have little knowledge of WPD or this area

Level 4: Stakeholders who may want connections in the future and may have no knowledge of WPD or this area

Tailored engagement methods:

- CCSG & CIGC
- Stakeholder workshops
- Consultations
- Bilateral meetings
- DG owner / operator forum
- Stakeholder workshops
- Connection surgeries
- Bilateral meetings
- Senior manager point of contact
- DG & customer surveys
- Connections surgeries
- Annual stakeholder & ICE reports
- Information videos
- Connections Surgeries
- Annual stakeholder & ICE reports
- Community energy events & guide
- Information videos
- Industry working groups
- Industry events
- Senior manager point of contact
- Consultations
- Community energy events
- Webinars & podcasts
- Website
- Media awareness campaign
- Social media
- Podcasts
- Media awareness campaign
- Social media
- Website
- Podcasts

Updating our approach

As we continue to transition towards the role of DSO and face challenges in developing new arrangements and relationships with stakeholders. We are also challenged with providing more flexible connection solutions to connect customers as the network becomes more constrained and the cost of conventional reinforcement becomes prohibitive. It is vital that we involve stakeholders at every stage as we develop initiatives to address these challenges. It is also important that we keep a focus on our current services and continual improvement.

Our connection stakeholders have told us that DSO transition and network capacity are a priority and we want to ensure that they can influence our plans and participate in our future operations. To do so we are focussing on these areas:

- Engage on current service standards and options to drive continual improvement
- Allow stakeholders to review our delivery against our ICE workplan and business plan commitments
- Involve stakeholders at every stage of our transition to a DSO, enabling them to influence our plans and participate in (and fully benefit from) our future operations.
- Seek early input to develop our future Business Plan



Our Connections Strategy

WPD's connections strategy is underpinned by our stakeholder engagement strategy which ensures we are focused on delivering the connections service our stakeholders require. We listen to what our stakeholders tell us and translate their requirements into a set of overarching connections outputs designed to fulfil those needs.

The fundamental objective of WPD's connections outputs is to provide excellent service for customers connecting to the network whilst facilitating competition in the connections market. These overarching outputs to our connections strategy are used to develop the WPD ICE workplan. Through our stakeholder engagement we source the feedback we need to formulate a range of initiatives which deliver on the these overarching outputs for our stakeholders. An explanation of the primary connections outputs is provided below:

To provide a faster and more efficient connections service

The key output is to improve the overall time to connect by 20%, whilst still maintaining excellent customer service such that WPD continues to be the top ranked DNO group by customer satisfaction surveys.

To improve communication with customers

This objective centres on delivering outputs that improve how our stakeholders can communicate with us and the information that we can provide them. There is a focus on developing and enhancing online information and interaction for connection customers.

To enhance engagement with major customers

Outputs for this objective centre on ensuring we communicate effectively to gain feedback to better understand the requirements of major customers. Enhancing our engagement leads to improved focus on these customer requirements and drives the development of our priorities for ICE workplan initiatives.

To achieve guaranteed standards of performance

The target to achieve zero failures of connections GSOPs ensures that we maintain our focus on the core connection activities required at each stage of the connection process.

To enable facilitation of the competitive market

WPD has a key role in the facilitation of competition in connections and it is important that we continue to work with customers and connection providers to ensure that we further develop competition in connections to ensure a level playing field in the connections market.

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Section 2: WPD ICE looking back report

Looking back on the year



2017/18 Overview

In this section we present the results of our engagement and improvement activities for connections stakeholders over the 2017/18 year under the ICE incentive. We set out how our workplan has delivered improvements against our stakeholders' priorities which we identified and set out in our Looking Forward Report in May 2017. We also explain how our stakeholder engagement has ensured that we continue to listen to our stakeholders to understand what they want us to focus on to assess the impact our improvements have had.

Responding to our stakeholders' requirements and to the changes which we face in the transition to DSO, over 2017/18 our engagement programme has expanded significantly with new activities and new stakeholder groups engaged. We have established new stakeholder relationships with the expansion of our DSO engagement and the publication of our DSO strategy creating a focal point for engagement in this area. New engagement such as our Competition in Connections Group and our Local Investment Workshops is expanding our reach and increasing the quality of the feedback informing our plans.

Building on the long-term relationships established with our stakeholders such as in our Connection Customer Steering Group or our DG Owner Operator Forum, we continue to evolve our engagement to facilitate more detailed discussion and robust feedback. This quality of engagement is vital to our continued improvement and informing our plans as we move to a smarter move flexible network.

Our engagement underpins the improvements we make and in 2017/18 we delivered 170 actions under our ICE workplan. Building on the work we delivered in the previous workplan, we have continued to address our stakeholders' priorities, increasing the amount and quality of information we make available to assist customers with their connections. We have for example, made substantial enhancements to the information available on the WPD capacity map and our generator portal, both enabling customers to make more informed plans and decisions.

The workplan we set out at the beginning of the year did not stand still, it was expanded through the year with new actions and initiatives identified through our engagement. We listened to our competition in connection stakeholders, adding a range of actions to the workplan and worked with them to make improvements to our policies and procedures which will facilitate further self-service activities by independents connection providers.

The growth of our workplan over the year demonstrates our commitment to constant improvement and continuous engagement - we do not wait for the next plan to start making the improvements our stakeholders ask for.

2017/18 ICE Priority areas

Using the feedback in our engagement activity and with the CCSG's input we refined the priority areas to address with our ICE workplan for 2017/18 :

- ▶ **Availability of information:** further improve information on outages & constraints, the Statement of Works process, communicating work programmes, improve constraint & capacity information including demand and storage capacity.
- ▶ **Customer service:** continue to improve consistency in service and application of policy across WPD teams including SoW, design approval, pre-connection information and post-acceptance communication.
- ▶ **Competition in connections:** refine processes to make improvements to Competition in Connection Code of Practice activities including HV self-connection, design approval and other self-service activities.
- ▶ **Transition to DSO:** develop policies, processes and technology facilitating move to DSO. Engage with stakeholders on the development of the DSO role.

Enabling our stakeholders to challenge and stretch us

2017/18 Engagement summary

The comprehensive engagement programme undertaken in 2017/18 has expanded in number and range of stakeholders enabling WPD to better inform our plans and the decision we make. The discussion and collaboration undertaken has driven the delivery of our ICE initiatives and continues to drive the priorities for our future ICE activities.

In section 1 of this report we explain our engagement strategy, how it is designed to be fully inclusive of our range of connection stakeholders and is embedded in WPD so that it is part of everyone's role.

In 2017/18 our connections engagement has continued to expand with a significant increase in the numbers of stakeholders engaged face to face, driven in part by the expansion in our engagement on the transition to DSO.

To ensure that the developments we work on when implementing our ICE initiatives deliver the desired benefits it is important that we keep our stakeholders engaged in the process. In 2017/18 we increased the focus on collaboration with stakeholders, working closely with them and ensuring they had opportunity to feedback during development and prior to implementation with the aim of delivering positive outcomes. Examples of this approach where stakeholders have been able to directly feedback on developments include the improvements to our online capacity map where users were able to test a prototype and feedback improvement ideas and our collaboration with stakeholders on improvements to our application forms using their input to ensure they were easier to work with and understand. Using more topic-specific engagement, such as our CIC Seminar on self-design, or our DG Owner Operator Forum we are able to focus on more detailed discussion facilitating the delivery of solutions which better meet stakeholder requirements.

This year we have established new engagement activities such as our Local Investment workshops for local government, our CIC Group and Community Energy informal dinner, providing further quality input to our plans. Our existing long-term engagement has evolved and expanded this year as our stakeholders' experience and knowledge facilitates more detailed discussion and priorities change. At our DG workshop we have seen the topic of DSO increase in priority with stakeholders keen to learn more and understand what actions WPD are taking.

To make sure we reach stakeholders who may not have the ability or time to attend events, we have continued to expand the use of engagement methods such as online videos, webinars and consultations. We have also now produced podcasts for Community Energy stakeholders to further expand the engagement we undertake.

Our engagement is key to a successful ICE workplan which delivers for our stakeholders, addressing the issues which are their priorities. Our programme of engagement in 2017/18 has reached more connections stakeholders and this increased range of feedback has provided the platform for making the improvements our stakeholders have challenged us to make and informed the development of our future plans.



Engaging on our stakeholder's priorities

The table below sets out the stakeholder priorities established when developing our 2017/18 ICE workplan and provides some examples of how we have engaged with stakeholders on these areas throughout the year. Elsewhere in this section we go into more depth on some specific highlights of engagement activities against these priorities.

Priority area	Example engagement	Impact
Availability of information	▶ Webinar held for DG EHV customers to help understand Distribution Use of System (DUoS) charging for their connections to discuss a new guide, future charges and tariffs (available here)	New engagement improving information on DUoS charging helping to inform customers. 34 customers joined webinar 24 have also downloaded the recording.
Customer service	▶ Major Customer and DG Surveys: satisfaction surveys of large connection and DG customers providing overall satisfaction and feedback on specific areas of the application and post-acceptance process.	Satisfaction up in both surveys 8.65 and 8.83 for the Major Customer and DG survey respectively. Feedback used to inform ongoing developments and identify priority areas for improvement.
Competition in connections	▶ New engagement activities undertaken with a CIC workshop leading to a new CIC Group establishing enduring engagement steering development in this area.	Enhanced engagement leading to focussed improvement initiatives and dissemination of knowledge.
Transition to DSO	▶ A range of engagement activities set out in more detail in this section including examples such as hosting DSO roundtable sessions with key expert stakeholders to share knowledge and inform our DSO plans	Focussed face to face engagement building long term relations and reaching stakeholders who otherwise might not be engaged.



Summary of our engagement activity in 2017/18

The table below sets out a summary of the engagement activity undertaken by WPD from April 2017 to March 2018 with connections stakeholders.

For each activity the table gives a brief description, the number of stakeholders engaged with this activity through the year (reach) and the market sector the stakeholders broadly represented: unmetered supplies (UMS), demand connections (DMD), distributed generation (DG) and where we have engaged on the DSO transition (DSO). Each activity was either hosted by WPD or WPD were presenting.

Surveys

Activity	Description	Reach	UMS	DMD	DG	DSO
Major Customer Survey	A WPD commissioned monthly customer satisfaction survey of connections customers covering the market segments under the ICE scope. The style of the survey remained in line with that conducted under the Ofgem Broad Measure survey.	2,080	●	●	●	
DG Survey	An customer satisfaction survey of Distributed Generation customers was carried out. More information is available in our KPI pack.	225			●	

Steering Groups

Activity	Description	Reach	UMS	DMD	DG	DSO
CCSG	Panel of experts across the connections market to inform, influence and feedback on WPD connections plans and activities. The outputs from this group also fed into our overarching customer panel.	33	●	●	●	●
Customer panel	Customer panel meetings were held which include reviews of WPD's strategy and action plans for a variety of areas	44	●	●	●	●
UMS User Groups	Unmetered Supply user group meetings held for Local Authorities in the Midlands, South West and South Wales, allowing the Local Authorities to discuss connection issues and feedback on performance.	33	●			
WPD CiC Group	A new customer group specifically targeted at ICPs and IDNOs was created for discussions on processing and policy relating to the Competition in Connections activities.	13	●	●	●	
DG Owner Operator Forum	The DG owner operator forum has been held four times through the year. The forum enables WPD to gain an understanding of DG owner/operator needs and to develop actions to improve the services we provide.	72			●	●

Summary of our engagement activity in 2017/18

Engagement events

Activity	Description	Reach	UMS	DMD	DG	DSO
WPD Stakeholder Workshops	Workshops covering a wide range of topics including connections, held at various locations across all 4 WPD licenced areas.	250	●	●	●	●
Delivering a Smart Energy System	A Regen SW event at which WPD delivered a session on business models for flexible networks and supply.	50	●	●	●	●
Local Network Investment Workshops	Workshops enabling discussions with local operational managers to discuss specific schemes were held within each region.	54	●	●	●	●
CiC Workshop	WPD held a workshop for Independent Connection Providers to hear our proposals for improving the CiC connections processes during 2017/18 and obtain feedback on whether we are targeting the right areas and to identify areas of best practice. A further seminar was then held in November to share new documents relating to simplified methods for determination of the point of connection for High Voltage design and multiple street furniture connections.	111	●	●	●	
Community Energy Events	8 WPD community energy workshops were held throughout 2017/18 at a number of locations across all 4 WPD licenced areas, a community energy site visit plus 2 ENA Community Energy Workshops. In addition we liaised directly with community energy groups and facilitated an MP visit to a new battery installation for a community scheme.	542			●	●
Connection Surgeries	Connection surgeries were held to facilitate customers and ICPs having face-to-face discussions with one of our engineers about their connection requirements.	50	●	●	●	
DSO Events	A number of DSO events have taken place throughout the year, including a DSO launch event, round table discussions in all 4 regions, a presentation to BEIS on WPD's DSO transition, the 'CIRED' conference, 'EDIE live' exhibition and the National Infrastructure Forum. All events are listed in our KPI pack in Appendix 2.	13,809		●	●	●
WPD DG Connection Workshop	An annual workshop which allowed DG connection stakeholders to understand and feedback on our connection services and improvement plans.	46			●	●
Senior Manager Point of Contact	We have continued to offer a senior manager point of contact to major customers throughout the year, increasing to 75 customers with an allocated senior manager during 2017/18.	75	●	●	●	
Parliamentary Reception	WPD hosted a parliamentary reception, with MPs and policy makers with engagement including our DSO strategy.	85		●	●	●
Future Networks - A Balancing Act	A WPD event was hosted in London in May 2017 to discuss the transition from DNO to DSO, the challenges and opportunities involved in creating flexible services and markets and simplifying access to the demand side response project in the East Midlands region.	237		●	●	●
Solar Energy Events	An industry event, Managing European Solar Assets, was held in April 2017. This year Western Power discussed the next steps for the storage market. In addition, WPD presented and sat on an expert panel at the Solar Trade Association conference. We also held meetings and site visits with British Solar Renewables and the Solar Trade Association to discuss industry best practice.	217		●	●	●
Future Network Scenarios	WPD's balancing act conference in October 2017 plus further engagement workshops were held to update on the work we are undertaking to model future DG connection volume scenarios and understand the strategic network investment requirements across the WPD regions.	266		●	●	●
ENA DG Forum	ENA organised forum with breakout session from a WPD on constraint information. This was an opportunity to network with others from the industry and to discuss issues and potential improvements with DNOs.	102			●	●
Distribution charging update	WPD Webinar in March focusing on Distribution charges and our Distribution Charges Overview document. Other topics included the structure of distribution tariffs, recent and possible future changes to methodologies, plus some background on Ofgem's Charging Futures forum.	34		●	●	●
Other	Other smaller events were held including bilateral meetings, account holder reviews and discussions with National Grid Electricity Transmission on connections.	86	●	●	●	●

Delivering our stakeholder's priorities



2017/18 ICE Workplan outcomes

The WPD ICE workplan is created using feedback of a broad range of stakeholders inclusive of the full range of Relevant Market Segments (RMS). As such we ensure that priority areas across the RMS are addressed by the range of deliverables in the ICE workplan.

We completed 170 actions in our 2017/18 ICE workplan delivering a range of initiatives with positive outcomes for our connection stakeholders. We also commenced work on a number of initiatives which we will be continuing in to develop in 2018/19 with timescales which ensure we can deliver the best outcomes.

When developing our ICE workplan we use stakeholder feedback to identify their priority areas for us to focus on and address. These priorities are verified with our stakeholders and form the basis of the initiatives we undertake together with specific feedback identifying the detailed requirements. Over the following pages of this section we highlight some of the key engagement and workplan outcomes addressing these stakeholder priorities which we have delivered throughout the year. We focus on some of the important initiatives which have made successful improvements to the services we provide our stakeholders. We explain the engagement we undertook and some of the outputs this delivered as well as how it was interlinked with the development and delivery of the ICE initiatives.

In the table below we set out the priorities established for our 2017/18 ICE workplan with some additional examples of how we have implemented initiatives making improvements in these areas.



Evolving the ICE workplan

WPDs approach to ICE is underpinned by our aim of continual improvement driven by continuous engagement with our stakeholders. Our ICE workplan therefore does not get fixed in place at the start of April each year, instead it is updated throughout the year as our initiatives, external factors and our engagement identify new requirements.

Our 2017/18 ICE workplan expanded significantly as our engagement delivered new requirements a further 10 initiatives and 55 additional actions were added to the workplan

Our stakeholder's priorities

The table below sets out the stakeholder priorities established when developing our 2017/18 ICE workplan with some examples of the outputs our ICE activities which have delivered against them. Elsewhere in this section we go into more depth on some specific workplan output highlights against these priorities.

Priority area	Example outputs	Impact
Availability of information	▶ Enhanced capacity map functionality and interface providing additional information across a range of categories and adding demand information catering for energy storage customers. Further details can be found on pages 24 and 25	Stakeholder input used to develop increased information helping to better inform customers' plans.
Customer service	▶ Improving the service provided post acceptance of a connection offer by implementing a new process to ensure staff have effective regular contact with customers about their scheme, this is supported by new process flowcharts identifying the steps undertaken by WPD and the customer to complete the connection (see here).	Improved communication post-acceptance to keep customers better informed on their schemes and ensure a smoother connection delivery.
Competition in connections	▶ A range of improvements across CIC services identified through engagement and implemented through additional actions created in workplan described on pages 15 and 16.	Increased self-service options for CIC stakeholders.
Transition to DSO	▶ First DNO to publish fully costed DSO transition strategy with consultation leading to further refinement.	Clear transparent strategy enabling stakeholders to understand our direction and plans.

Summary

Focus area:

All aspects of WPD's connections services

Market Segments:

DMD

DG

UMS

Stakeholder focus:

Major customers, developers, ICPs, IDNOs, community groups, consultants, utilities

Connection Customer Steering Group

The WPD CCSG continues to be a mainstay of our connections engagement and the development of our ICE workplan and activities.

The CCSG is now in its fifth year and remains key to the refinement of our connections stakeholder priorities which underpin the development of our ICE workplan. Many of the members of the CCSG have been involved from the start and have extensive knowledge of our connections activity which enables the group to discuss our improvement activities in detail and with authority. New members have also joined the CCSG this year, ensuring that the group continues to expand its range of experience and insight.

We host three CCSG workshops per year which are attended by Directors and Senior managers giving opportunity for direct feedback and interactions. Our Chief Executive chairs the group, attending each workshop providing an update on recent WPD developments and on developments in the industry as well as other external factors. Each workshop provides a valuable two way interaction via a Q&A with our Chief Executive.

In the past year we have continued to engage on a range of detailed topics at the request of the members. These topics enable members to expand their knowledge of WPD's activities and new developments along with discussion on emerging industry developments. These sessions on specific topics are not one way, the CCSG members provide feedback direct to the WPD person responsible for delivering developments on that topic helping to steer improvements to provide better outcomes for stakeholders.

The knowledge and experience which has built with the CCSG members continues to provide us with valuable insight and feedback into how we can improve our connections services and the priority areas we should address in our ICE workplan. As well as informing the overall priorities the CCSG members also provide specific areas for improvement initiatives such as our work to improve guidance on DUoS charges for connection customers and the creation of a Competition in Connections Group (CICG) as well as to help inform the development of a wide range of ICE initiatives each year. The membership of the CCSG covers a full range of connection activities to ensure all market segments are represented, with many operating across other DNO regions which enables them to inform on areas of best practice they have identified.

Outputs

- ▶ Directly informing the development of priority areas for the focus of our ICE workplan, acting as a sounding board validating the priorities identified by WPD's engagement programme.
- ▶ Feeding back on a range of initiatives in development to those responsible for the outcomes when providing updates to the group
- ▶ New application forms: identified as required improvement and developed with feedback from CCSG member

A full range of stakeholder representation

The CCSG members represent a cross section of connection stakeholders and the full range of market segments. Their experience and knowledge of the connections activity provides a balanced view of WPD's activities as well as other DNO regions. Members represent the following groups:

- ▶ Unmetered connections providers
- ▶ Utilities
- ▶ Large commercial connection customers
- ▶ Connection consultants
- ▶ DG developers (including storage)
- ▶ Community energy schemes
- ▶ Independent connection providers
- ▶ Independent distribution network operators
- ▶ Regional business councils



“ Very open communication
- highly valued

- CCSG member feedback
June 2017

”

Summary

Focus area: Availability of information, customer service, legals & consents, storage, queues & capacity, community energy, DSO.

Market Segments: DG

Stakeholder focus: Customers, generators, community energy, developers, government, consultants, law firms, membership organisations, technology/innovation companies, universities, utilities

DG workshop

Our annual DG Workshop is an important part of our engagement programme providing direct feedback from a broad range of DG stakeholders on our existing and future connections activities and long-term strategic priorities.

On 2nd November 2017 we hosted our fourth DG Workshop at Villa Park in Birmingham. This annual event remains popular with DG stakeholders, drawing in over 40 attendees this year. It is pivotal in our strategy for engagement and provides an opportunity for face to face discussion with a broad range of stakeholders from this sector via roundtable discussion, topic specific surgeries and one-to-one networking.

The workshop provides DG stakeholders with an overview of WPD's progress during the previous year in the development of improvements to our connection services, our plans for the coming year and detail on some of the areas and key issues WPD is working on. Most importantly, stakeholders can feedback directly on these areas, discuss their current priorities and listen to the views of their industry colleagues in open discussion.

We appointed engagement specialist, EQ Communications (EQC) to facilitate the workshop, with a coordinator and scribe on each table to accurately capture the detailed discussions and stakeholders' views, which were recorded verbatim but not attributed to individuals to encourage openness. A WPD expert was also on hand to support the discussions and assist with any technical questions.

Encouraging open dialogue and capturing the feedback in this way is vital to understanding the impact our actions have had as well as informing our priorities and future plans. Being able to discuss areas in which WPD are currently developing improvements is extremely useful to inform the direction we take and finding out whether we are on the right track.

The format of the day involved presentations in the morning by WPD's senior management team, covering our ICE progress, priorities and plans, followed by presentations on key areas of focus. Each presentation was followed by roundtable discussion on the topics covered giving the stakeholders the opportunity to express their views and provide suggestions on how WPD can tackle any of the issues.

At the DG Workshop in 2016, stakeholders flagged DSO transition as a priority development area and at the 2017 workshop we had the opportunity to present our DSO strategy. Our presentation included an overview of the feedback received following the consultation and highlighted areas that we wanted to develop further as part of the transition process. The subsequent discussions provided important feedback and challenge to our planning.

In the afternoon stakeholders were able to take part in one of four 'surgeries' on specific topics. This allowed us to drill down on each of these key issues and provided us with more detailed direct feedback to inform our future development plans in these areas.

A report summarising the feedback from the day and including the verbatim comments was produced by EQC which was sent to attendees and published on our website together with slides from the day (here). We have used this stakeholder feedback in the development of our ongoing initiatives and the ICE priorities and the initiatives in our 2018/19 ICE workplan.

Outputs

- ▶ Validating the priorities for WPD to address in our ICE activities
- ▶ Informing the development of ongoing initiatives, identifying additional improvements

“ Great talking with WPD representatives. Very approachable and available for discussion and challenging questions

- DG Workshop attendee
feedback Nov. 2017 ”

What our stakeholders told us

To inform our ongoing ICE improvement activities and the development of our 2018/19 workplan we asked stakeholders to assess the priorities we had identified. There was broad consensus that we had identified the correct areas along with some new suggestions. We also asked stakeholders to rank their top three in order of importance following group discussion:

Priority Areas	Rank
Availability of information & online service	1
Connection offers & agreements	2
Storage	3=
Distribution System Operator	3=
Customer Service	5
Queue & Capacity Management	6=
Strategic reinforcement & forecasting	6=
Distributed Energy Resources plan	8
Legals & consents	9
Community energy	10
Competition in connections	11

From the top three priorities it was clear that the task of facilitating further DG connecting to the network via transitioning to a more flexible network with flexible alternatives and an active DSO role were a high priority for this stakeholder group. This feedback supported responses to our other DSO engagement and informed the development of our revised strategy. The feedback on our ICE priorities overall, directly informed our ICE improvement initiatives for 2018/19

100%

Found the workshop to be interesting (30%) or very interesting (70%)

100%

Agreed (26%) or strongly agreed (74%) that they had opportunity to make their points and ask questions

98%

Agreed (69%) or strongly agreed (29%) that we covered the right topics

100%

Would be interested in future workshop on this subject



Western Power Distribution Stakeholder Workshop: Distributed Generation November 2017



Summary

Focus area: Availability of information, customer service, legals & consents, Competition in connections.

Market Segments: **DMD** **DG** **UMS**

Stakeholder focus: ICPs, IDNOs, consultants

Engaging competition in connections stakeholders

This year we have increased the range of engagement undertaken specifically for CiC stakeholders to ensure that we can receive the detailed feedback necessary to make improvements in this area of our connection services.

We received feedback at events such as the CCSG which highlighted that stakeholders felt it would be beneficial for WPD to hold a dedicated CiC event which would facilitate more targeted communication relating to connections services provided to ICPs and IDNOs. In response to this we hosted a CiC Workshop which in turn led to specific workshops and a new CiC Group to inform future initiatives. These events are described in more details below.

Through this engagement we were able to get into the detail on the 2017/18 ICE workplan initiatives and identify additional actions where required. Throughout 2017/18 we undertook a range of initiatives, working with CiC stakeholders to ensure the developments were meeting their requirements and using their feedback to make further refinements both before and after implementation to ensure they were successful.

CiC Workshop

WPD's CiC workshop provided an opportunity for enhanced engagement with stakeholders involved in this activity and to therefore increase the feedback to enable further improvements to be identified.

WPD's CiC workshop was held on 1st June 2017 at our Gloucester office. Its overarching purpose was to identify improvements to the services WPD provide for ICPs and IDNOs and seek areas where WPD can learn from improvements made by other DNOs.

There were 57 CiC stakeholders in attendance which began with a presentation on WPD's approach to CiC by our Operations Director, Phil Swift, followed by a Q&A session. Stakeholders were then invited to take part in roundtable discussions and to identify key improvements that WPD could make to its CiC processes. This was followed by two rounds of topic-specific surgeries. Stakeholders were asked to feedback on their experience with WPD and to cite examples of best practice offered by other DNOs. In the surgery sessions, stakeholders were asked to focus in more detail on the following topics: Design Approval; Legals and Consents; Provision of Technical Information; and Self Determination. Each of these sessions were facilitated by senior WPD staff responsible for these activities, and feedback was recorded by independent scribes.

Feedback from stakeholders about the event has been positive with 100% of the 46 who gave written feedback stating they found the workshop 'interesting' or 'very interesting'. They also all agreed that WPD had covered the right topics. Following the event a report was published which summarised the feedback and provided a series of recommendations on the surgery topics as well as broader areas.

As a result of this workshop WPD included a range of additional actions in the ICE workplan targeted at improving the CiC process.

CiC Group

The CiCG was established in 2017 to develop enduring engagement focused on CiC enabling these stakeholders to better inform WPD's improvement initiatives and priorities in this area and to develop agreed actions.

Following feedback at our CCSG and our DG Workshop we wanted to create a forum which would facilitate enduring engagement in this area providing a focus on the specific needs of CiC stakeholders. Recognising the benefits of our CCSG our aim has been to develop a group of expert stakeholders which are able to inform our priorities and to better facilitate the continued development of our CiC services. The CiCG was created in 2017 with the inaugural workshop held on 28th November 2017 at our Gloucester depot.

The CiCG meets 3 times per year and is attended by WPD senior management and a panel of expert CiC stakeholders covering a range of market segments. The group provide feedback on WPDs CiC services, acting as a sounding board for improvement initiatives and informing the development of our ICE workplan. Details of the workshops are published on our website with the slides presented on the day together with the minutes and actions as a result of the discussions.

CiC seminars

In addition to the workshop and CiCG we hold topic specific seminars that allow us to discuss in detail with stakeholders new initiatives.

In November 2017 we held a seminar on connection design covering the updated procedures which had been developed (see page 16) Valuable discussion and feedback was obtained which lead to improvements for simplified HV point of connection design.

Workplan outcomes for CIC:

Enhancing design approval

CIC stakeholders told us we needed to improve the process for approving their connection design and provide a process for partial approval.

Through our engagement we identified that our CIC stakeholders wanted improvements in WPD's processes for handling the approval of their connection designs and visibility of WPD's performance. When discussing this in detail at events such as the CIC Workshop and design seminar stakeholders advised the priority was to have a partial approval process, whereby the ICP can submit their design in stages to enable early commencement of elements of the connection construction. With the help of CIG members we also developed a design approval performance report which was shared with the CIG with positive feedback before implementation.

Outputs

- ▶ Revised policy to facilitate partial design approval process
- ▶ New WPD design approval quarterly performance report published on website improving transparency

Enhancing self design

Our CIC stakeholders challenged us to make further improvements to the self-service processes WPD make available.

Listening to stakeholder feedback we made a range of improvements to the self-service processes available to ICP / and IDNOs to improve efficiency and increase the activity which could be undertaken without detailed analysis.

WPD hosted a seminar for CIC stakeholders on 1st November 2017 to rollout new policies for the simplified methods of determining POCs for HV and multiple LV connections and seek feedback. Working closely with two CIC stakeholders we also developed an email-based process for submitting notifications for self-service schemes as an alternative to WPD's online tracking system 'CIRT'.

Outputs

- ▶ New policy to facilitate the determination of HV POCs using simplified techniques for both WPD and ICP designers.
- ▶ New policy for connecting multiple small LV metered and unmetered connections with minimum network analysis published.
- ▶ New email-based process for self-service notifications and requests implemented.

Improving information & guidance

WPD has made a range of improvements to enhance the information available to assist CIC stakeholders, improving consistency and transparency.

At our CIC engagement events we identified a number of actions to improve the information we make available to CIC stakeholder's in a range of specific areas. We established a range of new actions in our ICE workplan and as a result made a number of improvements to provide new information and update existing resources.

We worked closely with CIC stakeholders to develop an improved inspection and monitoring report to give clearer and more useful information which has been well received.

Outputs

- ▶ New guidance published to assist new and existing ICP entrants looking to undertake unmetered connections on WPD's network.
- ▶ New inspection & monitoring report providing more information in a clearer and more transparent format implemented and issued to ICPs on monthly basis
- ▶ WPD technical information web facility updated with 'guest' access function added, improved search facility and layout.
- ▶ New guidance published incorporating information setting out contestability of communications activity

HV self-connection

Continuing the initiative started in 2016/17 we have implemented a new option for ICP self-connection at HV as business as usual.

Following the successful trial with an ICP and refinements to the process to facilitate a new option for undertaking the operational aspects of HV self-connections, WPD rolled out the option as business as usual to all ICPs. WPD presented on the new 'option 4' at the CIC workshop in June 2017. 'Option 4' was implemented in July 2017 ahead of target and communicated to ICPs.

Outputs

- ▶ New HV self-connection option available, facilitating processes to carry out HV self-connect on discrete sections of our network without the transfer requirements of the existing options
- ▶ 11 HV connections completed by ICPs under option 4 (out of a total of 19) in 2017/18.

Summary

Focus area:

DSO, availability of info, Storage

Market

Segments:

DMD

DG

Stakeholder focus: Customers, generators, community energy, developers, government, consultants, major users, membership organisations, technology/innovation companies, universities, utilities, MPs, Ministers and government departments, ICPS, IDNOs

Transition to a Distribution System Operator

In the transition to becoming a DSO it is vital that we enable our stakeholders to have a key role in determining the directions we take and the arrangements we develop. Our stakeholder engagement is therefore at the core of our DSO strategy.

In 2016/17 our stakeholders told us that future networks and the transition to the role of DSO was a high priority and that WPD should lead the discussion by increasing engagement in this area. In 2017/18 we have undertaken a significant programme of engagement around the DSO transition. Connection stakeholders are a key part of this transition, where new interactions and relationships with customers are important in the move to new ways of operating the network and using smart solutions in place of traditional network investment.

“ Western Power Distribution has been active through the year in the ENA’s Open Networks project for which I am Programme Director. Last year, Western Power Distribution comprehensively engaged with their stakeholders on their DSO Strategy and have brought the knowledge gained from this and their preparation for transition to DSO into the Open Networks project. ”

- Jason Brogden Open Networks Project Director, ENA



£125M

DSO transition plan published



Committing to

22

Outputs

DSO strategy and consultation

Our DSO strategy has provided stakeholders with insight into our transition plans and facilitated their feedback to ensure our strategy remains aligned with their expectations and requirements.

In June 2017 WPD became the first DNO to publish a fully costed DSO Strategy and Transition Plan. The strategy outlined our core priorities and actions required to ensure that we can meet the future energy demands of our customers by creating a more efficient, flexible smart energy system.

The strategy was an important step towards enhancing our engagement with stakeholders on DSO transition by communicating our plans but importantly also commencing a comprehensive consultation process. Along with the consultation questionnaire published together with the DSO strategy we also carried out a range of face to face engagement:

DSO strategy launch event

On 14th September 2017, WPD hosted a DSO Strategy launch event in Birmingham, attended by 120 stakeholders including academics, technology providers and major users. Stakeholders were able to hear WPD present our DSO strategy and to pose questions to our Management Team and a panel of independent industry experts which had been assembled to provide additional challenge to our planning.

DSO round-table sessions

In September 2017 WPD hosted a series of round-table discussions targeted at a broad range expert stakeholders in each of our four DSAs. Stakeholders included businesses, customer groups, local and national policy makers (including several MPs and the Shadow Energy Minister), universities and industry bodies.

The aim of these sessions was to engage these stakeholders, who might otherwise not have been inclined to provide written consultation responses or attend the launch event and have an informed discussion to ensure their views were captured to inform our plans. Each session was independently chaired by Regen (a community energy specialist group) and facilitated by WPD’s Operations Director, Network Strategy and Innovation Manager and Future Networks Manager, demonstrating our commitment to ensuring engagement is led by those directly responsible for delivering on the feedback.

Output: updating our DSO Strategy

Following analysis of the consultation responses and further refinement based on the feedback at the engagement events, WPD published an updated DSO strategy document in December 2017 ([here](#)).

The update reflected the views of a wide range of stakeholders who had told us that our DSO Transition Strategy laid a valuable foundation for the future of energy across all our DSAs.

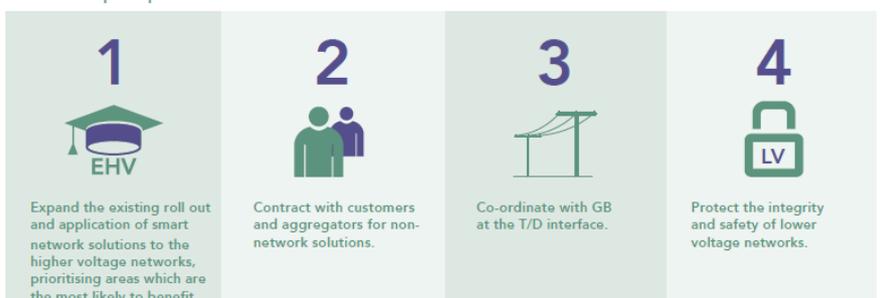
Changes made to the strategy as a consequence included:

- Closer collaboration with National Grid to deliver efficient whole system outcomes
- Expand implementation of smart interventions at all voltages not just EHV networks
- WPD will not invest in flexibility services where the market can provide this more economically. We will put in place enablers to stimulate flexibility, signposting our needs ahead of a technology-agnostic procurement process.

Our stakeholders also told us that we must deliver rapid transformation of our operations and services now, moving innovation into tangible outputs and keeping them engaged and able to shape our delivery at every step.

The work we have undertaken in our ICE workplan as well as the engagement we have delivered reflects these stakeholder priorities and is shaping our ICE activity in 2018/19.

A DSO four-point plan



Government engagement on DSO

In 2017/18 we expanded our proactive engagement with government, disseminating our DSO strategy, discussing network constraints and enabling input into our future plans.

WPD parliamentary reception and DSO 'teach-in'

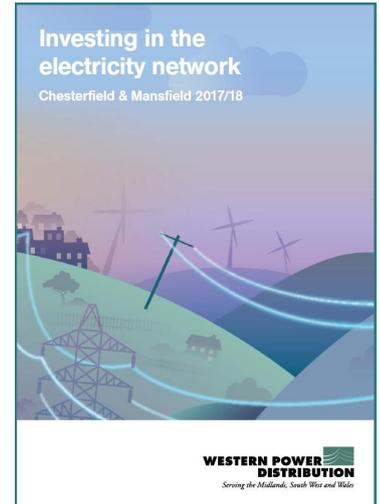
WPD hosted our 3rd annual parliamentary reception with a record 85 MPs and policy makers in January 2018. MPs met with WPD's CEO and Operational Managers to discuss our DSO strategy. We also held a DSO teach-in session at the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) to enable them to understand WPD's DSO strategy and discuss potential impacts on energy policy.

Local network investment workshops

In the East Midlands we piloted a series of workshops at our local depots accompanied by a booklet bespoke to each area, enabling local government stakeholders to meet the teams responsible for the network in their region and discuss WPD's investment plans in greater detail. The events were hosted by the WPD Distribution managers for the area, who presented on WPD's investment in the network, network constraints and the transition to DSO. Round-table discussion on these topics enabled debate and feedback to be captured. The feedback on the workshops was very positive and they will now be rolled out across WPD.

“Excellent workshop, really good to have this opportunity to engage with WPD and useful to learn about planned investment

- local investment workshop attendee feedback Mar. 2018”



Outputs

- ▶ Engagement with MPs and BEIS to share knowledge and increase understanding of WPD's DSO strategy and potential energy policy impacts
- ▶ New engagement with local government stakeholders established to increase knowledge and understanding of WPD's network investment and transition to DSO.

Local network investment workshops

100% 84%

Found the event interesting or very interesting

Would attend future workshops on this subject

Assessing the challenges of becoming a DSO

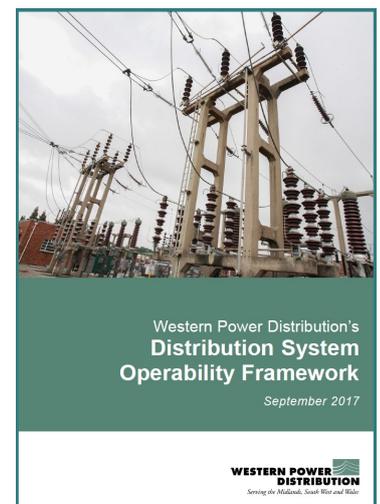
Raising the profile of the technical and commercial issues facing electrical networks in becoming a DSO enables us to engage our stakeholders, sharing our insights and seeking effective and economic solutions.

We produced the Distribution System Operability Framework (DSOF) as an extension of our strategic network investment forecasting activities and the need to understand how future demands on the network will be met in the transition to DSO.

The DSOF aims to highlight the technical and commercial challenges which need to be overcome in the transition to DSO and stimulate wider collaboration in the industry. By raising awareness of a range of issues which may impair our ability to operate and maintain networks efficiently whilst developing capacity for new connections, we are able to engage stakeholders at an early stage and collaborate to develop solutions.

We published the DSOF in September 2017 ([here](#)) and held DSOF roundtable sessions in January 2018 where we were able to provide stakeholders with an insight into our forecasting work, an overview of the DSOF and discussion in more detail on three DSOF topics: network monitoring, fault level management and flexibility.

Our next steps will be to review the articles in the DSOF periodically, publishing updates as the issues and potential solutions develop. We will also continue to publish new articles as we identify further emerging issues.



Outputs

- ▶ First DNO to publish a DSOF providing focal point for engagement on challenges in transition to DSO
- ▶ Call for evidence for third parties to propose collaboration with WPD to produce solutions to issued identified resulting in 9 projects

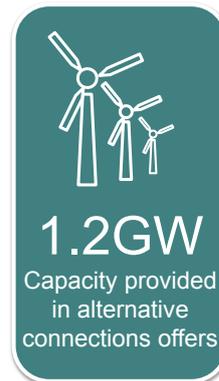
Workplan outcomes for DSO:

Providing alternative connections

To facilitate a growing volume of both demand and DG connections to our network quickly and efficiently, we need to provide new options for customers as an alternative to traditional reinforcement to remove constraints. We are creating a smarter more actively managed network and have developed new options for alternative demand and storage connections

Alternative connections provide options to customers to connect quicker and avoid costly reinforcement in areas of the network where capacity is limited or constrained. Our rollout of active network management (ANM) zones which use smart network solutions to manage the flow of energy in real time enables us to offer alternative connections in areas where capacity was constrained. Customers connecting under the ANM zone agree to some curtailment under certain network conditions whilst avoiding contribution to costly network reinforcement. Our schedule for the rollout of ANM zones is on target (published [here](#)), and as per our ICE initiative we have reviewed our plans and identified 8 new zones using stakeholder input for delivery from 2018 onward.

With the growth in applications for energy storage and feedback from stakeholders we identified the need to include an ICE initiative to develop alternative connections for demand and storage schemes. To provide this ability, we have developed the specification of our constraint panels to operate demand constraints and updated our policies, offer letters and agreements to facilitate these connections. We also reviewed and updated our guidance on allowable changes to applications and accepted offers, to provide clarity on where customers are looking to add storage to existing DG applications. These new arrangements provide for both timed and export limiting alternatives for demand and storage, and have been used successfully in an alternative demand connection in Lincoln. We are also exploring demand ANM connections with battery storage stakeholders as a further alternative flexible connection.



Outputs

- ▶ ANM scheme rollout on target with construction commenced on 3 zones and 8 new zones identified for 2018 onwards
- ▶ Arrangements in place for alternative demand and storage connections
- ▶ 174 alternative connection offers made to customers totalling 1.2GW of generation
- ▶ First alternative demand connection completed

Establishing flexibility services

We are providing stakeholders with information on flexibility services responding to feedback that this is a key priority for our stakeholders, who want to understand what opportunities will be available for them and that these should be easy to participate in.

As we move to a smarter and more active network in the transition to DSO we will provide customers with increased flexibility to access opportunities within the energy systems. Our connection stakeholders told us that understanding what flexibility will look like in the transition to DSO and what opportunities will be available is a priority. We have raised awareness of demand side response (DSR) and how this will interact with alternative connections through our 'ENTIRE' project (see [here](#)) and its flexible power campaign. The campaign included a dedicated website, social media accounts and a presence at stakeholder events.

The 'ENTIRE' project examines what flexibility services will mean for the network and has engaged stakeholders in trialling flexibility services in 14 constraint management zones with many DSR providers expressing an interest. We will keep our connection stakeholders updated as we communicate the progress and learnings from the project.

In our 2017/18 ICE workplan we set an initiative to develop a bid to trial a DSR forecasting system under the Network Innovation Competition and our EFFS (electricity flexibility and forecasting) project was successful in receiving funding. The aim is to be able to provide better forecasting of flexibility requirements and evaluation of flexibility services in order to communicate requirements and deliver the flexibility services which could speed up and reduce the cost of a connection.

Outputs

- ▶ Project 'ENTIRE' is providing awareness of DSR and its interaction with alternative connections
- ▶ New NIC project EFFS providing visibility and implementation of flexibility services for new and existing connections

Summary

Focus area: Availability of info, customer service, storage, community energy, DSO.

Market Segments: DG

Stakeholder focus:

Customers, generator owner / operators, community energy, developers, consultants

DG owner / operator forum

The DG owner operator forum (DGOO) has continued to develop in 2017/18 helping to deliver positive improvements in the information available to connections customers and continued to further build our relationships with this stakeholder group .

The DGOO was established in 2016 following feedback that stakeholders wanted more information in this area. The aim was to create a group of expert stakeholders in order to discuss issues in relation to network outages and constraints for MW-scale generators, establishing their requirements for improving our information provision and to inform WPD’s developments in this area to feed into our ICE initiatives.

In 2017/18 we held four DGOO meetings at our offices which are chaired by WPD’s Control Room Manager, Sean Sullivan and facilitated by Regen. The minutes of the meetings and the agreed actions are published on our website ([here](#)). The forum provides input into the developments required to complete our ICE workplan initiatives and to identify new initiatives throughout the year, for example following a request at the forum we included a new action 1.2.2: to provide visibility of known outages and constraints in a year ahead annual plan which has now been published on our Generation Portal.

Working in collaboration with DGOO stakeholders, WPD have been able to develop and deliver initiatives which have provided a step-change in the information provided to these customers and in its usefulness. The DGOO provide a forum for WPD to check back with stakeholders as developments are made to ensure they are honed to their requirements (e.g. the lost generation report in action 1.17) and separate working groups can be established where more time or detailed discussion is required such as with the discussion and debate around developing a consortium approach to outages (action 1.3).

With the DGOO, WPD has been able to continue to develop open and honest engagement which encourages positive solutions for our stakeholders. We are able to proactively share knowledge with DGOO stakeholders through presentations by WPD experts, building and developing long-term stakeholder relationships which will result in more robust and informed engagement and will be a strong foundation for some of the interactions which will be required as we transition to the role of DSO.

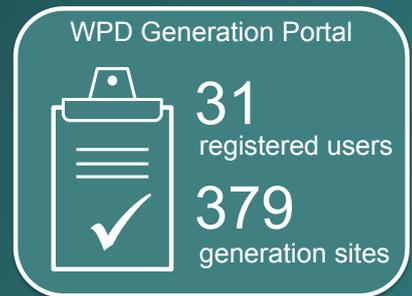


“ **Communication with WPD is excellent... our experience and the engagement we get is by far the best** ”
- DGOO member
feedback January 2018

DGOO outputs

Working in collaboration with the DGOO WPD has been able to deliver effective improvements planned in the ICE workplan:

- ▶ Expanded the WPD Generation Portal to include 11kV generation sites (in addition to 33, 66 and 132kV sites) via a facility for users to notify WPD to include updates to these sites.
- ▶ New 'getting started' guide created to assist users with the WPD Generation Portal functionality.
- ▶ Undertook knowledge sharing with group with WPD presenting on power factor and how it impacts on the distribution system as well as equipment maintenance schedules and our approach to reduce frequency of outages.
- ▶ Published a year ahead outage plan on the WPD Generation Portal providing visibility of all planned outages and updated as and when new provisional outages are submitted.
- ▶ Collaborated with DGOO to develop proposals to facilitate a consortium approach to outages whereby a group of customers may choose to fund alternative arrangements to reduce outage timescales and issued indicative costs for a number of consortium proposals. Whilst this hasn't been taken up by customers as yet, stakeholders remain interested so we will continue to offer in 2018/19.
- ▶ Developed a report with the DGOO to record and quantify the amount of generation lost in MWh due to NGET and WPD outages. Due to be published in 2018/19.
- ▶ Developed new functionality on WPD Generation Portal to provide information on historic outages including option for prospective new connection customers to enquire on historic outages for a specific network circuit to help them understand potential impacts on their proposed connection location.



Summary

Focus area: Availability of info, customer service, queues & capacity, DSO.

Market Segments: **DMD** **DG** **UMS**

Stakeholder focus:

Local government, local enterprise partnerships, developers, consultants

Engaging local authorities and local enterprise partnerships

WPD has enhanced our engagement with local authorities and local enterprise partnerships to ensure our engagement remains robust, comprehensive and pro-active.

In response to direct feedback from our Stakeholders at our annual workshops in January 2017 and feedback to Ofgem's ICE consultation in July 2017, WPD identified that we should further enhance our engagement with local government authorities (LGAs) and local enterprise partnerships (LEPs) with regards to information on network capacity and forecasting and long-term planning for connections growth. We appreciate that the existing capabilities and planned development of the electricity distribution network can directly impact the plans set out by LGAs and LEPs for future expansion. Areas of emerging technologies and innovation, investment strategies, capacity availability and network constraints are also important areas when considering long-term plans.

Engagement between WPD and our customers is essential for sharing this information, providing updates on new developments and seeking feedback on the services we provide. In addition to the business-as-usual engagement WPD undertakes with LGAs and LEPs through discussions with WPD local teams on specific plans, these stakeholders are included in the robust and comprehensive engagement programme we undertake with connection stakeholders. We are however always seeking to enhance and tailor this engagement as requirements evolve.

Reacting to the feedback from our engagement activity we undertook new ICE initiatives which were added to the initial workplan to deliver the enhancements which are set out below, further demonstrating that our engagement is a rolling program and our ICE workplan evolves through the year. In addition to the initiatives detailed below we also undertook a new engagement activity piloting a series of local investment workshops at our local depots providing increased opportunity for engagement and knowledge sharing (see page 18 for further details)

Expanding the focus of our strategic network investment long term forecasting

From stakeholder feedback we identified that our strategic network investment long term forecasting activity was too focused on Distributed Generation. We therefore developed our methodology to better assess demand growth and tailored the approach to ensure the appropriate stakeholders are effectively engaged to inform our future planning. The first output was to hold a separate dissemination event for demand stakeholders for the East Midlands strategic investment studies, where invitations sent out for the event included 63 LGA and LEP contacts. This led to the East Midlands study including a report with potential growth in demand and DG scenarios from 2016 to 2030 giving visibility of network capacity issues in advance of application and helping inform stakeholders' long term planning (the report can be found on our website [here](#)).

Improving awareness of information available

WPD senior managers had meetings or discussions with a number of senior representatives of LGAs and an LEP, feedback from these was that these stakeholders were not fully aware of the information and assistance WPD was able to offer or sometimes who they should contact to discuss their requirements.

To improve this we set up an initiative which became a new commitment in our 2017/18 ICE workplan. The initiative was to improve awareness amongst the LGAs and LEPs within WPD's DSAs of the information made available by WPD as well as the opportunities to engage with us on connections issues. Based on feedback, we had a particular focus on the information and engagement to assist these stakeholders with their long term planning requirements. Our approach was two-fold; firstly to create a single location to make the information easy to find and secondly to ensure stakeholders were made aware.

As such we created a new landing page on the WPD website to specifically cater for these stakeholders and bring together the range of information we make available in one place. On this webpage we also provide the ability to request a Senior Manger point of contact and also to make a request to have a discussion with WPD about any strategic planning requirements they have in their area.

We then wrote to all LGA leaders and LEPs within each of our DSAs from the WPD Network Service Manager responsible for each area to inform these stakeholders of the information and engagement methods we make available to assist them with the development and infrastructure planning.



268
Letters sent to LGA & LEPs explaining WPD's services

Outputs

Listening to our stakeholders and expanding our ICE initiatives has delivered positive outputs:

- ▶ 268 letters sent to LGA and LEP contacts to explain the information we make available and the engagement opportunities to help with long-term planning requirements
- ▶ New landing page on WPD website specifically for LGA and LEP stakeholders to gather together the suite of network information to assist with current and long term planning
- ▶ New option for LGA and LEPs to request a meeting with local WPD senior management or planning teams to discuss their specific long-term planning requirements
- ▶ Strategic network investment study forecast methodology updated to better capture demand stakeholder information including LGA and LEP growth plans. Demand-specific event held to disseminate results of strategic network investment study forecasting to 2030.
- ▶ Local investments workshops piloted at local depots for local government and developer representatives to discuss growth and investments plans

Summary	
Focus area: Community energy, DSO.	Market Segments: DG
Stakeholder focus: Customers, community groups, landowners, local government, developers, consultants	

Community energy groups and communities

We continue to evolve the engagement and information we provide to community energy groups and local communities to provide the support they need as the transition to future energy networks progresses and to make sure that our future plans are fully informed.

Since the emergence of community energy (CE) groups, WPD has worked proactively to engage this important group of stakeholders. We recognise that the needs and experience of CE stakeholders are different to those of commercial DG developers and therefore our engagement in this area has a strong focus on building knowledge and making a range of information available which assists both those starting out and more experienced CE stakeholders. However to get this right it is important that we listen to these stakeholders to understand their requirements and suitably tailor our engagement, we therefore focus on face-to-face engagement but also cater for those stakeholders who might not have time available to attend events.

With the shift in available government tariffs and less opportunities to connect to the network without reinforcement, we have seen a change in the interest of CE stakeholder to want to understand more about how alternative connections, storage and flexibility can provide them solutions and opportunities to benefit their communities. There has also been a strong interest in getting involved in WPD's innovation trials. Responding to their requirements, we have produced a range of new resources to assist CE stakeholders with better understanding these flexible smart solutions and our engagement events have focussed on increasing knowledge in this area. We have set up a specific webpage for CE so that all of these information resources are easy for stakeholders to access such as new guidance documents and the library of short information videos which has expanded with a new video on energy storage.

Ensuring that we maintain our robust engagement with CE stakeholders as their knowledge and interest increases with their evolving requirements is extremely important in keeping our plans fully informed and is an example of how we will need to undertake a broad range of engagement as we shift to the role of DSO, making sure all stakeholders can access the opportunities it creates.

Engagement activity

Conscious of CE stakeholders knowledge and requirements we undertake a broad range of engagement but understand face-to-face engagement is key in continuing to build relationships and knowledge. We have undertaken 16 events and bilateral meetings this year either hosted by WPD, in collaboration with Regen or with the ENA, engaging 542 stakeholders.

It is important that stakeholders feel they benefit from the time they spend in engagement with us and that we build long-term relationships.

Responding to the requirement to increase knowledge in future networks and DSO transition with a desire to be involved in these developments, we have increased the focus in these areas and provided more interactivity. We have increased the use of case studies, 'ask the panel' sessions including external speakers and site visits.

Output: Community energy feast

In December 2017 we worked with Regen to undertake a new engagement approach with our CE stakeholders - a site visit followed by discussion over an informal dinner.

A group of 36 CE stakeholders were invited to visit Castle Drogo hydropower and biomass projects to learn more about these renewable energy systems with WPD. After the site visit there was a festive dinner where stakeholders had opportunity to discuss with WPD's Innovation Engineer innovative community energy project ideas and make new contacts with fellow CE representatives.

The feedback for the event was extremely positive and the participants liked the chance to see the projects first hand and find out what the latest developments are in this area direct from a WPD expert.



Output: Community energy podcasts

We produced a series of four podcasts with Regen for CE stakeholders with the aim to share knowledge on a range of topics from practical examples of schemes in development as well as discussing how the future of energy is developing and how CE stakeholders can be involved.

Summary of podcasts:

1. How CE groups engage people in discussion about energy
2. How South Dartmoor Community are reaching people who need support and guidance on energy
3. How Brendon Energy has developed and their future plans
4. Ambition Lawrence Weston CE group : storage, private wire and solar projects.



4

Community energy podcasts produced

Outputs

- ▶ Created a CE webpage on the WPD website including case studies to share learning, guides, videos, events and FAQs with over 2800 hits in the first year
- ▶ Produced 4 CE podcasts which have been listened to 27 times in the first month
- ▶ Produced a short animated video on energy storage viewed 658 times in the first 9 months
- ▶ Produced new guidance on: Community-based network innovation after working with Centre for Sustainable Energy to produce a report "21 Lessons for DNOs on network innovation projects with community involvement".
- ▶ Collaborated on new guidance on: ENA rough guide to engaging communities in energy network innovation,

Summary

Focus area:
legals & consents

Market Segments: DMD DG UMS

Stakeholder focus:
customers, developers, consultants, ICPs, IDNOs, landowners, law firms

Improving the process of obtaining legal permissions and consents

Undertaking engagement on the legals and consents processes for connections is important in educating stakeholders and understanding from their feedback where we can identify further improvements in an area which remains a stakeholder priority.

The area of obtaining legal permissions and consents for connections schemes is a priority for our connection stakeholders. Our stakeholders are keen to better understand the processes and have more transparency of what stage a transaction is at, to help make better assessments on the possible impact on their schemes. We understand that these processes can often have a significant impact on connection timescales, particularly where third parties who have no stake in the success of a scheme, are pivotal in securing the rights to enable the connection's timely construction. We are therefore looking at how processes can be made more efficient and customers kept better informed on progress for their schemes.

Our engagement on this area is dual purpose; to understand stakeholder requirements and to improve knowledge on the processes and transactions to facilitate better collaboration on achieving quicker completion of legal transactions.

Over 2017/18 we engaged with stakeholders at a number of events such as the CCSG, CIC workshop, CIG and DG workshop. Through topic-specific breakout sessions led by our Consents and Wayleaves Manager at these events, we were able to disseminate the work we are undertaking under the ICE workplan and seek feedback, as well as identifying requirements for additional improvement priorities.

An example of this engagement was the development of improved guidance outlining when WPD require an easement or wayleave. Stakeholders fed back that they wanted guidance on what WPD's preferred approach was for HV and EHV works. We reviewed our guidance and worked with 3 stakeholders who act as consultants to a number of ICP and IDNOs, to develop a matrix which sets out WPD's approach, resulting in positive feedback customers.



A new collaborative approach to deliver quicker transactions

WPD have introduced a new approach to the legal process which enhances lawyer-to-lawyer interactions with a focus on success for a common customer. The Collaborative Partnership Protocol has been implemented to cut down timescales for transactions and getting the customer connected.

When analysing the performance monitoring data on the timescales for legal transactions handled by our external lawyers on connections schemes, WPD found that significant delays are incurred as a result of the turn-around times of our customers' lawyers. In order to make a step change in reducing timescales for our customers' lawyers. In order to make a step change in reducing timescales for our customers' lawyers we took an innovative new approach. Working with our external lawyers we developed a new 'Collaborative Partnership Protocol' (CPP), changing the approach and breaking the traditional lawyers' 'them and us' mind-set. We believe emphasising the importance of co-working to achieve shared outcomes will have a transformational effect.

The CPP was implemented in October 2017 and we have presented it to our stakeholders at engagement events such as our CCSG and our CIC Workshop and the feedback has been very positive on the innovative approach we have taken.

Outputs

- ▶ New protocol implemented sharing commitment between WPD's lawyers and customer lawyers to speed up the legal process
- ▶ Positive feedback from customers on the innovative, non-traditional approach we have taken
- ▶ Early results following introduction of the new protocol are encouraging and we will continue to monitor progress.

Collaborative Partnership Protocol summary:

- 1. Adopt a collaborative working approach**
Emphasis on co-working and adopting a 'help and assist' attitude towards a common goal
- 2. Focus on the connection target**
Ensure customer's lawyers are aware of the connection target date at the start of the transaction
- 3. 50 days to completion target**
Use this timescale as a framework for monitoring and managing the transaction with customers' lawyers
- 4. Chase intelligently and creatively**
Using a common sense pragmatic approach, breaking traditional protocol of written chasers
- 5. Improved procedures and standard document**
Drive continuous improvement through a suite of guidance and standard documents which are continually reviewed and revised as improvements are identified
- 6. Dispense with cost undertakings from our customers**
Trust that costs will be paid and remove the delay caused before starting the legal process.
- 7. KPI measures and comparative performance**
Measure key points in the transactions comparing ours and our customers' lawyers performance to identify any further improvements

Summary

Focus area:
Availability of information

Market Segments: **DMD** **DG** **UMS**

Stakeholder focus:
customers, generators, developers, community groups, ICPs, IDNOs, landowners, local government, local enterprise partnerships, consultants

Improving information on capacity and constraints

We are providing customers with access to increasing amounts of information with more regular updates enabling customers to make better assessments and informed decisions on their connection schemes. Our engagement ensures that we understand how we can best deliver this information and identify what more we can provide.

When developing the 2017/18 workplan our stakeholders had told us that access to information on network capacity and constraints including providing better information on the Statements of Work (SoW) process with National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) remained a top priority. They told us that the network capacity map we had developed was good, but the clear request was for 'more information please' as well as being clear that the information needs to be reliable, up-to-date and useful. We included initiatives in the workplan to develop this information provision further working with stakeholders to ensure the end results delivered their requirements and that WPD would be leading the way in this area.

We set up a small steering group of 3 stakeholders to feedback on new developments to the WPD network capacity map. The ensuing discussion helped us to identify what additional information should be made available and options for displaying it. The feedback from this group was incorporated into the capacity map development.

At our CCSG and DGOO we also held specific sessions presenting the capacity map, and at the CCSG, members were able to test a prototype of the updated map functionality, feeding back and further informing its development.

The WPD DG workshop provided another opportunity to present our plans with a specific session and roundtable discussion on capacity and constraint information where stakeholders reaffirmed their desire for more information and our plans to develop this.

Using our engagement activity to refine the requirements and working closely with stakeholders to test what has been developed and making further refinements has facilitated the development of a successful range of improvements, delivering on stakeholder requirements. This engagement has also established relationships which can benefit future developments in an area which will require continuous improvement and will be a key component when transitioning to DSO where customer requirements for network information will be a high priority.

Providing customers with improved SoW information

We are improving the information and guidance available to customers for schemes with SoW involvement, as well as ensuring information is provided promptly.

Following the improvements developed to the SoW processes in 2016/17, our stakeholder feedback identified further requirements. Our customers wanted better upfront guidance and more timely updates on the impacts that SoW could have on their schemes. They also said that our teams should have more knowledge of the processes to provide a consistent service.

We developed and published a new SoW guidance document on our website ([here](#)) featuring key information regarding the process for the NGET 'Appendix G trial', the costs and timescales involved and a flowchart setting out the process and who does what.

A link to the guide is sent to customers as part of the initial information we send following an application for a DG connection over 1MW along with more specific information on the SoW situation at the section of the network they are connecting to.

We also implemented an internal target to issue letters to customers providing the outcome of the SoW process within 7 weeks of acceptance of their formal offer, ensuring a consistent and timely update.

To ensure that our teams are able to have consistent and knowledgeable discussions with customers regarding the SoW and transmission network impacts on their connections, we have delivered training to all planners involved with generation connections and the SoW process.

We will continue to seek feedback from customers on this area to identify where we can make further revisions to processes and improvements to the information we provide.

Outputs

- ▶ New guidance document providing customers with information on the SoW processes.
- ▶ More timely information provided to customers engaged in the SoW processes.
- ▶ WPD staff trained to provide better knowledge and ownership of SoW and transmission issues when discussing with customers.



Statement of Works
Guidance Document

An enhanced capacity map providing more information

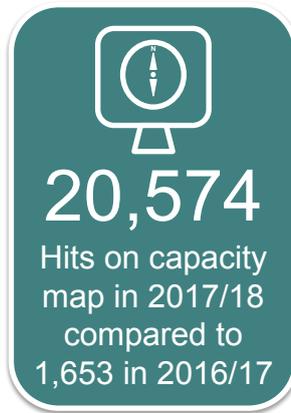
WPD have enhanced the online network capacity map to provide customers with more information to help them make better assessments and decisions ahead of formal applications.

The online network capacity map ([here](#)) has been substantially updated to make it more user friendly so that information can be easily accessed and to provide a significant increase in the amount of information available.

The update provided a new front-end user interface giving the option of working through questions to narrow down the search based on their specific requirements. Alternatively users can jump straight into the map and access the information using search and filter functions.

Other additional functionality includes the ability to view the map-based search results in a tabular format which can also be exported, as well as the function to view the geographical service area of a substation to assist in identifying the location of network capacity.

The amount of information provided at each substation on the map has significantly increased and has also been expanded to include demand information rather than only generation.



Capacity map information:

Following information is accessible for primary and BSP substations (GSPs have a reduced version of this table) :

- ▶ **Substation details**
Name, type, number, voltage
- ▶ **Demand capacity**
Firm capacity, peak demand, headroom
- ▶ **Generation capacity**
Reverse power capability, DG connected, accepted not connected, offered, headroom, constraints, planned reinforcement
- ▶ **Fault levels**
Headroom, make and brake ratings and level, limitation
- ▶ **Statement of works**
NGET information and requirements
- ▶ **Generation connection requirements**
POC connection type and cost, average reinforcement cost, indicative timescale
- ▶ **Active network management zone**
Availability of ANM connection

Outputs

- ▶ New frontend interface to assist users with locating required information
- ▶ Significant amount of new information available detailing capacity and constraint information at Primary, BSP and GSP substations
- ▶ New information on demand capacity provided helping demand and storage customers (see right)
- ▶ New function displaying geographical area supplied by a substation, helping location of capacity
- ▶ New option to view map search results in tabular format with option to export this data.

Name	Type	Demand Headroom	Reverse Power Headroom	Latitude	Longitude
Abington 33/11kv	Primary	8.75	11.81	52.2475	-0.6765
Alford 33/11kv	Primary	2.21	3.17	53.2545	0.1888
Allenton 33 11kv S Stn	Primary	16.34	22.81	52.8939	-1.4531
Ambergate 33/11kv	Primary	15.54	10.41	53.0628	-1.4824
Anderson Lane 33/11kv	Primary	8.63	11.17	53.2425	-0.5393
Annesley (Kirkby) 11kv S Stn	Primary	9.43	7.25	53.0884	-1.2451
Ansty 33 11kv S Stn	Primary	11.72	7.87	52.4287	-1.4011
Apollo 33/11kv	Primary	6.72	11.78	52.638	-1.7102
Arley 33/11kv	Primary	4.29	4.74	52.5018	-1.5756
Arnold 33/11kv	Primary	6.12	3.10	53.0076	-1.1242

Initiatives requiring further development

A number of initiatives in our ICE workplans are targeted to extend over more than one ICE period and some require additional development to ensure that the implemented improvement delivers the desired benefit to stakeholders.

Our aim with ICE is to ensure WPD is the leading DNO for connections services. Our approach is not to go for 'box-ticking' actions and set a workplan with a limited range of initiatives which can be easily implemented. Whilst there are 'quick-wins' identified and included, our ICE workplan is developed to ensure it has a range of initiatives which have a significant positive impact on the connections services our stakeholders receive. Because of this our initiatives are often stretching both in the scope of improvements and in the timescale we set ourselves, which are often aspirational due to the need for third party involvement not fully under our control.

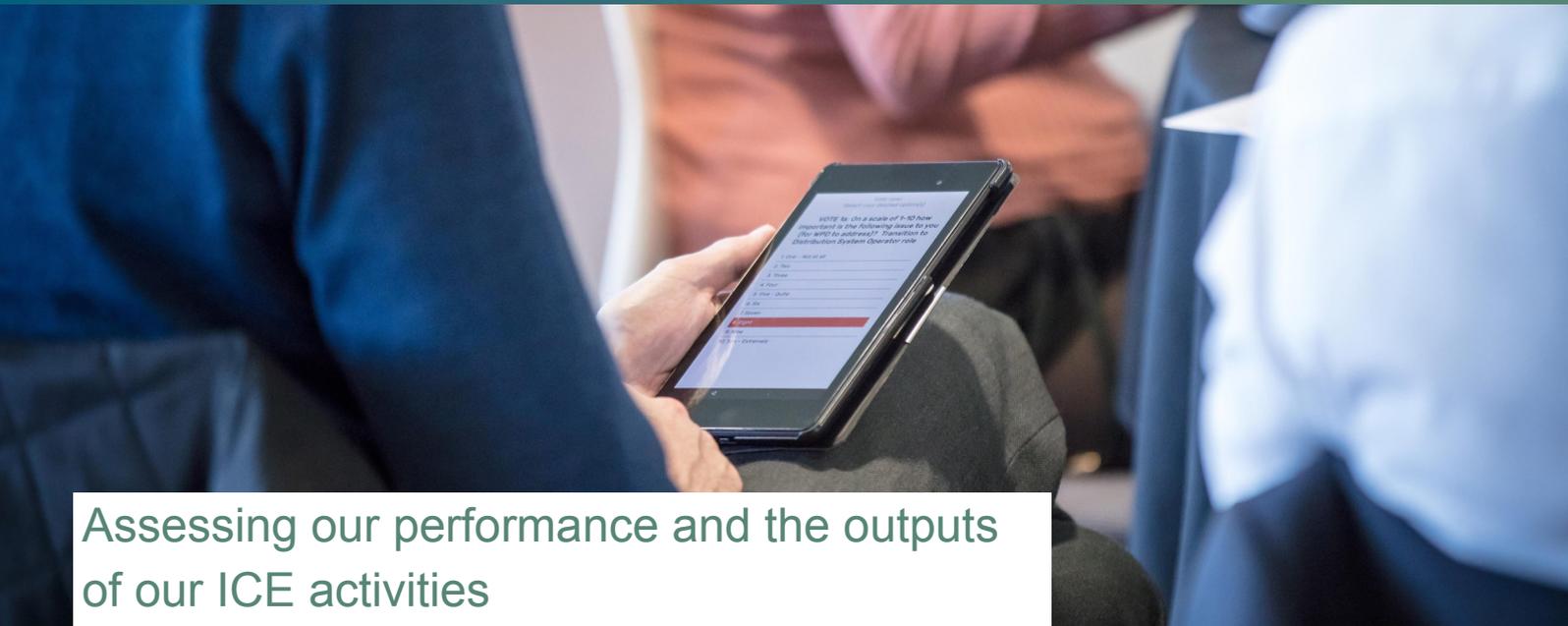
When developing initiatives for the ICE workplan we will include some where the timescales extend into the a subsequent ICE workplan period where we believe the development requires it to achieve the positive outcomes. To ensure that our stakeholders have the transparency and reassurance that their feedback leads to action from WPD, where we identify new initiatives during the year from our ongoing programme of engagement, we include initiatives in our ICE workplan which often have target dates which extend into the next workplan period rather than wait to include them in next year's ICE workplan.

In some cases the initiatives require further development to ensure that we achieve the desired improvement our stakeholders require and where extending the target date to make additional changes is preferential to delivering a lesser improvement which falls short of what could be achieved with a little more time. In other cases there can be delays outside of our control where third parties are involved and target dates need to be pushed back.

Summarised below are the ongoing initiatives which we will be continuing to develop into 2018/19:

- ▶ **Consortium arrangements for outages:** our stakeholders asked us to develop arrangements to facilitate DG customers affected by a planned network outage to collaborate to fund alternative working arrangements to WPD's standard approach to alter the impact on the 'consortium' members' generation operations. Whilst we have developed the arrangements and put out proposals on outages, so far we have not had take-up from customers, but both us and our stakeholders believe that this is something worth pursuing and we are therefore extending this initiative into our 2018/19 ICE workplan to allow more time for a trial consortium to take place.
- ▶ **Standards for the provision of stability information:** a small group of stakeholders who require this information for their DG schemes requested that we have voluntary standards on its provision. We have continued to work with those that we are currently dealing with to provide the information required and within their timescales, however due to the low numbers involved we have not yet been able to recommend standard timescales. We have therefore extended the target timescale into 2018/19 to allow for a larger volume and be able to review the timescales achieved and feedback from customers and publish target timescales based on this.
- ▶ **Review WPD's rules on allowable changes to connections applications and accepted schemes based on the output of the national working group:** this initiative was to assess the output from the national Distributed Energy Resources (DER) Steering Group's (formerly DG DNO Steering Group) consultation and review of the best practice for allowable changes. We set a target date of Q1 2018 based on the anticipated times for the group's output and our implementation of any required changes. However the group's review of the consultation has not completed in time for us to achieve this target and we have therefore revised the timescale into 2018/19.
- ▶ **Review how network capacity is offered on new connection and infrastructure schemes, as well as the management of capacity in ongoing schemes following acceptance of a connection or infrastructure offer:** we set ourselves a stretching target of implementing changes in line with the DCUSA working group on change proposal (DCP) 294 "Capacity Management following acceptance of Connection Offer" and as identified by our own review of the arrangements surrounding capacity allocation and reservation. We issued a consultation which closed in February 2018 which resulted in over 20 responses from a broad range of stakeholders. Responses were varied with some in support of the proposals we had put forward and some raising concerns on the impact they may have on their activity. Due to the spectrum of responses we did not have a clear stakeholder consensus to proceed, also DCP 294 had not concluded. We therefore plan to review and potentially issue further consultation to ensure any changes we make are balanced and beneficial to customers.
- ▶ **Develop a trial to facilitate the connection of DG customers where the £200 / kW High Cost Cap (HCC) would otherwise be prohibitive to an individual DG connection progressing:** in order to facilitate a trial which would allow DG customers to have the HCC disapplied where multiple customers' aggregated capacity was in excess of the threshold, we require a derogation from the Common Connection Charging Methodology. Following their consultation and subsequent additional questions, we are currently in discussion with Ofgem so that they can determine whether further consultation is required before deciding on the derogation. Although there is no immediate requirement for any existing customer's schemes there is benefit in a trial and we have extended this initiative further into 2018/19.





Assessing our performance and the outputs of our ICE activities

Measuring the outputs of the ICE initiatives we deliver provides an indication of the benefits delivered to our customers and helps to identify further improvements.

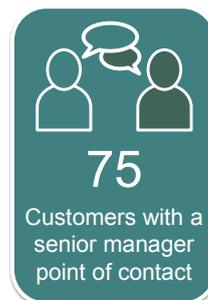
In our 2017/18 ICE workplan we committed to a comprehensive set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) with measures for each initiative, to evaluate performance throughout the year and determine whether improvements made through the completion of actions within our ICE workplan deliver positive outcomes.

In addition, we had 9 overarching KPI's which assess important aspects of our connections service and provide an indication of improvement as an overall result of the delivery of the ICE workplan, for example our stakeholder survey's and the time taken to complete a connection.

We achieved or exceeded 24 of the stretching targets we set ourselves in the measured KPIs. In our Major Customer survey, customer satisfaction increased to 8.65 out of 10 (compared to 8.51 in 2016/17). For our DG customer survey we have improved the timeliness of the survey so that customers more recently accessing our services are contacted, giving a more accurate up-to-date measure of customers' experience. We have seen an increase in satisfaction of DG customers to our highest ever score with overall satisfaction increasing to 8.83 (compared to 8.74 in 2016/17).

In some of the measures we have fallen just short of the stretching targets we set ourselves. However examples include where due to the influence of third parties on the outcome, the targets we chose to aim for were aspirational because of this aspect. For example our aim to reduce time to complete legals on a connection scheme by 20% was missed despite the improvements made by WPD and our external lawyers outperforming their service level agreements, but an increase in the time taken by customers' own lawyers has affected the overall timescales. However the new collaborative partnership protocol (CPP, see page 23) should start make a positive impact on these timescales with customer lawyers.

A full KPI pack explaining the outcomes at the end of 2017/18 for each measure can be found in Appendix 2. Our outputs and measures have provided WPD and our stakeholders the ability to assess the impacts our ICE initiatives are having. The overall performance and results in our KPIs evidence that the improvements delivered through the workplan actions are having positive effects on the connections services we provide.



Communicating our performance to stakeholders

It is important that our stakeholders are able to track our performance against our ICE outputs and measures throughout the year and not just at the submission of our ICE reports.

In order to provide this transparency we commit to publishing quarterly reviews of our year to date performance with this Looking Back report containing our 4th and final update. Each update has been published on our website, with stakeholders registered for email updates receiving an email to notify that the update is available. In addition, we have shared the updates through emails directly to members of our CCSG.

Ofgem Incentive on Connections Engagement 2018

Section 3: WPD ICE looking forward report

WPD ICE looking forward report for 2018/19

Our 2018/19 ICE Workplan is focussed on delivering genuine improvements to the services we provide our stakeholders. Continuing to adapt our stakeholder engagement to new challenges and further extending its reach, will ensure we keep our customers at the centre of plans.

In 2018/19 WPD will once again undertake a comprehensive programme of engagement activity and a workplan of initiatives encompassed under the ICE incentive, enabling our connections stakeholders to inform our plans and for us to deliver improvements to our connections services.

Our stakeholder engagement strategy, detailed in section 1 of this report, underpins our ICE activity, ensuring that we can fully identify stakeholder requirements, share knowledge and collaborate on developing plans and improvements.

The engagement activity we have undertaken in the past year has been used to develop the 2018/19 ICE Workplan using the feedback of our stakeholders to identify the key areas they want us to focus on as priorities. We have checked back with them to ensure we have identified the right priorities and created a workplan with initiatives which will provide the foundation of our connections service improvements and the expansion of our engagement.

The ICE priorities we have focussed on cover a wide range of areas affecting all Relevant Market Segments and their stakeholders. The substantial change required by the transition to DSO and the impact it will have on our connection stakeholders and the services we provide them remains a key area of focus. Our DSO transition strategy encompasses all aspects of the functions that a DSO will be required to undertake, our ICE engagement programme and Workplan provide the aspects of this strategy which will deliver the vital interaction with connection stakeholders to determine of future plans and the initiatives which will deliver the new services which are required.

Our engagement is continuous and enduring, we will continue to use a full range of engagement methods throughout the year, tailored to our stakeholders and extending our reach. Our embedded and long established engagement activity, which has developed long-term stakeholder relationships, will allow us to engage in more detail and deliver a better informed more robust challenge to our plans. Our ICE activity encompasses all of our connections activity and is not limited to engagement and initiatives benefiting only the segments which the incentive applies.

This section marks the starting point for our ICE activities in 2018/19 setting out the initiatives and engagement activities we have planned. As we work to deliver our ICE workplan and engage with our stakeholders we will identify new areas requiring our action and our workplan will evolve as we add these to ensure that we continue to focus on the areas most important to them.



Our engagement activity for 2018/19

Our extensive stakeholder engagement programme provides the feedback which drives our ICE activity, ensuring our improvement initiatives are developed with stakeholder input to deliver successful outputs and that engagement leads to positive action. The broad range and depth of our engagement is key to ensuring our future plans are fully informed by our stakeholders and that they continue to directly influence the way we operate.

Our engagement strategy (detailed in Section 1 of this report) is fully embedded into how we make decisions and inform our plans. The approach we take ensures that those tasked with acting on stakeholder engagement hear it directly and our long-term engagement activity has built a strong foundation of stakeholder relationships which are able to provide us robust challenge and detailed feedback. Groups such as our Connection Customer Steering Group, Competition in Connections Group and our DG Owner Operator Forum provide enduring engagement where detailed discussion and debate informs the development of our initiatives and the priorities to be addressed by our future plans.

In 2018/19 we will continue to focus on working in collaboration with our stakeholders and industry colleagues to develop the most effective solutions and improvements. The structure which underpins our ICE initiatives ensures that we engage stakeholders throughout the development of an initiative not just at the beginning and after implementation. This allows us to fine-tune developments identifying further improvements and providing better assessment of the impact the initiative has after implementation with stakeholders who are better informed.

We value face-to-face engagement and have a full programme of activities through the year, with a range of events covering all areas of our connections activity. In addition to the traditional events, we will continue to use customer survey's, consultations, webinars and social media to provide a robust range of engagement.

It is important that we are able to reach stakeholders who may not be able to attend traditional engagement events due to location, time constraints or lack of awareness. We therefore continue to expand the scope of our connections engagement utilising a full range of methods tailored to stakeholders' requirements. Activities commenced last year such as our Community Energy podcasts, provide a new avenue to engage stakeholders in more depth on specific topics and we will be continuing this method this year with a new podcast on Use of System charges.

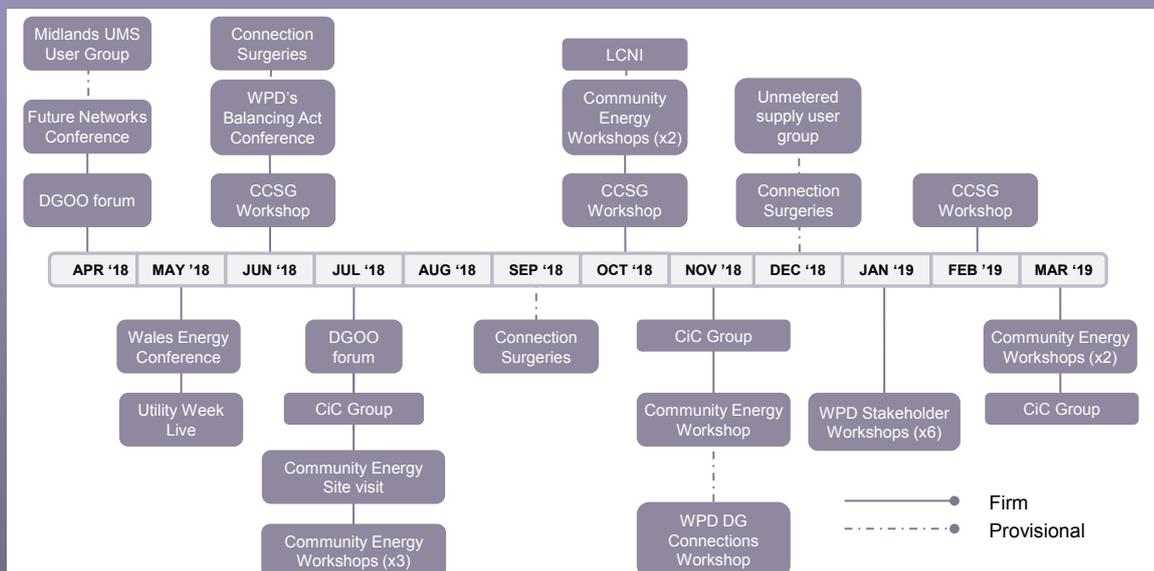
Our engagement on the transition to DSO will continue to develop this year as we focus on delivering our DSO strategy, where it is vital that our stakeholders are provided the information to enable them to inform the directions we take.

On the next page we set out some the engagement activities we currently have planned, summarising the activities and numbers of stakeholders we aim to reach.



A wide range of engagement events throughout the year

We have an extensive range of engagement activity planned throughout 2018/19. Some of the key activities we have planned are set out in the timetable opposite. As we progress through the year the timetable will expand as new events are planned and engagement requirements arise.



Planned engagement activity in 2018/19

The table below sets out a selection of the engagement activity we currently have planned with connections stakeholders.

For each activity the table gives a brief description, the number of stakeholders we expect to engage with this activity through the year (reach) and the market sector the stakeholders broadly represented: unmetered supplies (UMS), demand connections (DMD), distributed generation (DG) and where we will engage on the DSO transition (DSO). Each activity is either hosted by WPD or WPD will be presenting.

Surveys

Activity	Description	Anticipated reach	UMS	DMD	DG	DSO
Major Customer Survey	A WPD commissioned monthly customer satisfaction survey of connections customers covering the market segments under the ICE scope. The style of the survey remains in line with that conducted under the Ofgem Broad Measure Survey.	2,000	●	●	●	
DG Survey	An WPD commissioned customer satisfaction survey of Distributed Generation connections customers. The style of the survey remains in line with that conducted under the Ofgem Broad Measure Survey.	400			●	

Steering Groups

Activity	Description	Anticipated reach	UMS	DMD	DG	DSO
CCSG	Panel of experts across the connections market to inform, influence and feedback on WPD connections plans and activities. The outputs from this group also feed into our overarching customer panel.	45	●	●	●	●
Customer panel	Customer panel meetings help to inform WPD's strategy and action plans for a variety of areas.	45	●	●	●	●
UMS User Groups	Meetings held for Local Authorities in the Midlands, South West and South Wales, allowing the LA's to discuss connection issues and feedback on performance.	50	●			
WPD CiC Group	The CiC group brings together representatives from Independent Connection Providers and Independent Distribution Network Operators to influence and feedback on WPD connections plans and activities relating to the competitive connection processes and identify areas for improving processes.	15	●	●	●	
WPD DG Owner Operator Forum	Four meetings are planned throughout 2018/19. The forum enables WPD to gain an understanding of DG owner/operator needs to develop actions to improve the services we provide.	60			●	●

Engagement events

Activity	Description	Anticipated reach	UMS	DMD	DG	DSO
WPD Stakeholder Workshops	Workshops covering a wide range of topics including connections, held at various locations across all 4 WPD licenced areas.	230	●	●	●	●
Community Energy Events	8 WPD community energy workshops and a community energy site visit will be held throughout the year.	300			●	●
Connection Surgeries	Connection surgeries are held to facilitate customers and ICs having face-to-face discussions with one of our engineers about their connection requirements.	40	●	●	●	
WPD DG Connection Workshop	An annual workshop allowing DG connection stakeholders to understand and feedback on our connection services and improvement plans.	60			●	●
Low Carbon Networks & Innovation Conference	An industry event to be held in October 2018 to share information and feedback on innovation projects including innovative connection related projects.	1200	●	●	●	●
Future Networks Events	WPD is presenting at the 2018 Future Networks Conference with topics including creating network headroom and developing electric vehicle headroom.	250	●	●	●	●
WPDs Balancing Act Conference	WPD will be holding a conference including a presentation on Facilitating Neutral Markets: Signposting Distribution System Needs. Signposting will provide information on WPD's distribution system needs in areas which we expect to become constrained for demand in the near future.	175	●	●	●	●
Strategic Network Investment	We will continue our rolling programme to model future network scenarios and understand the strategic network investment requirements across the WPD regions. We will hold 2 stakeholder events and 2 webinars as we work on the South West, South Wales and East Midlands areas this year.	160		●	●	●

Building an effective workplan

Development of the workplan

Our ICE workplan sets the initiatives we are undertaking which will deliver the improvements in our connections services required by our customers. It is underpinned by our stakeholder engagement, providing transparency for customers so that they understand that we listen to their feedback and that we can be held to the commitments we make to them.

When developing our ICE workplan we start by analysing the feedback and issues raised through our stakeholder engagement programme and determine a set of priority areas where we should focus our improvements. We check back with stakeholders including our CCSG and CIGC to ensure that these priorities accurately reflect stakeholder views. This also gives us an opportunity to capture anything further which stakeholders identify for us.

We use these priorities to form the overarching areas of focus for the ICE workplan and a range of initiatives designed with the WPD senior managers responsible for their delivery.

The initiatives are intended to be stretching to deliver robust benefits for customers within specified target timescales. As well as setting target completion dates, we also ensure that we can measure the benefits delivered by these initiatives with specific KPIs and measures to assess their impact.

This cycle of engagement, prioritisation, action and feedback (see right) is continuous throughout the year. Our workplan will expand during the year as the development of initiatives progresses and as we identify further improvements from our stakeholders. We will keep our stakeholders informed of our progress against the workplan via the initiative-specific engagement during implementation as well as via regular publication of workplan updates.

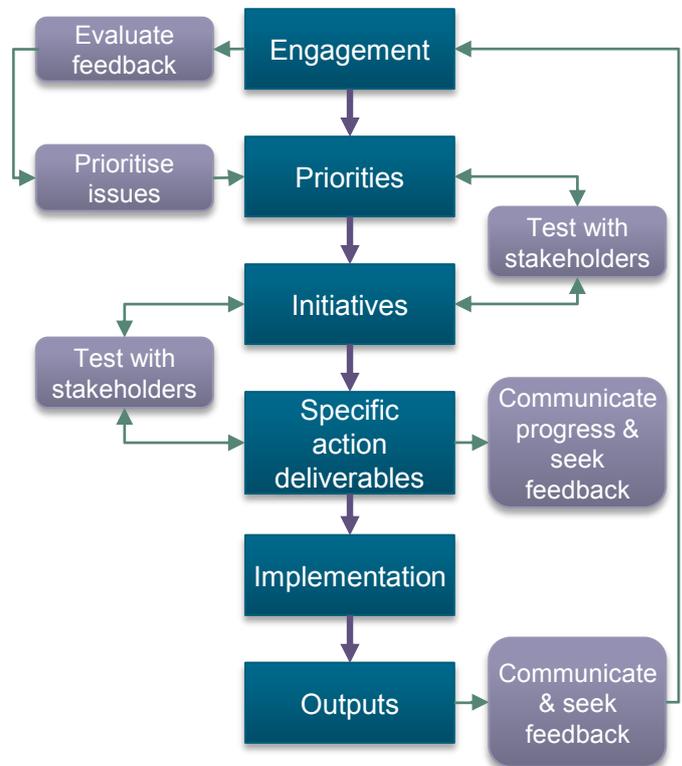
Structure of ICE initiatives

To ensure that WPD delivers an ICE workplan with initiatives meeting the requirements of our stakeholders, we use a standard structure of actions to undertake when delivering an improvement initiative. By ensuring our ICE initiatives meet this structure, it provides the necessary process and outputs for an effective outcome.

Using this approach with the structure of our initiatives, allows us to keep the workplan focussed on the objectives, instead of setting these out as specific sub-actions in the WPD ICE workplan. It will also provide a consistent structure for providing progress updates throughout the workplan period and upon completion of each initiative.

WPD's initiatives therefore need to be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (or 'SMART') so that it is clear to stakeholders what we are intending to achieve and for them to be able to easily assess whether we have delivered what was intended.

Where feasible, our initiatives include an element of stretch, in order to demonstrate that we are not only undertaking 'easy wins', this may require target dates which run over more than the current ICE year, or an indication that an element of the target output is aspirational rather than a fixed promise. ►



Standard structure of initiatives:

The steps below set out the standard structure of actions which we aim to undertake when delivering an ICE initiative:

- **Identify improvement(s):** assess the issue stakeholders have raised and identify where improvements could be made
- **Design the solutions:** create plan of actions which will deliver improvements
- **Check with stakeholders:** seek feedback on the solution to ensure we have understood and will meet the requirement
- **Amend where required:** update actions if required based on feedback
- **Develop improvements:** deliver the actions required
- **Test with stakeholders:** seek stakeholder input where possible for development and testing. Gain feedback on finished solution.
- **Implement:** deliver improvements and communicate to stakeholders
- **Seek stakeholder feedback:** ascertain whether we have met their requirements and identify any further improvements
- **Measure impact:** use feedback, performance data, survey's etc. to demonstrate the effectiveness and stakeholder's satisfaction.

Undertaking these steps enables WPD to demonstrate that we delivered improvements required by our stakeholders and describe the impact they have had with the support of our stakeholders. Whilst there may be initiatives which do not lend themselves to each of these steps, where this is the case we will be clear when providing updates and reporting on outturns what steps we have undertaken.

A clear and transparent workplan

2018/19 ICE Workplan

Our 2018/19 ICE workplan has been developed with stakeholders to deliver a range of initiatives addressing the priority areas we have identified.

This year's workplan has 48 initiatives which aim to deliver improvements to the services we provide and increase the scope of the engagement activity we undertake. Many of the initiatives build upon the service improvements made in previous plans, where stakeholders have fed back further requirements for improvements and continued progress in key areas. We aim to set ambitious improvement objectives and have set intentionally stretching initiatives, some require development over more than one plan period. A number of initiatives in this year's plan are continued from 2017/18 and some new initiatives extend into the next plan period.

We provide a summary below of the key themes of the initiatives in the 2018/19 ICE workplan against the ICE priorities we have established for this year (a full version of the plan can be found in Appendix 3).

ICE Priorities - the areas our stakeholders identify as most important

We refine our connections stakeholder engagement feedback into a set of priority areas with input from our CCSG. These priority areas help us to focus the development of our ICE workplan initiatives to address the issues most important to our stakeholders.

For the development of this year's workplan the focus areas have been refined to those set out below with a summary of the areas we have been asked to focus on:

► **Transition to DSO**

Continue to engage with stakeholders with information tailored to their knowledge and interest. Develop information signposting where flexibility services are required in the short and long term. Continue to work with other network and system operators to coordinate approach.

► **Availability of information**

Further improve information on outages & constraints increasing detail and scope, improve constraint & capacity information adding additional layers to existing services, provide assistance with understanding available information.

► **Network capacity allocation and reservation**

Engage stakeholders and review impacts of new policies and procedures for capacity allocation and reservation. Continue to engage on strategic network investment and forecasting.

► **Competition in connections**

Continue to engage CiC stakeholders in ongoing development of service improvements WPD have committed to deliver

In addition to the priorities set out above we also have overarching commitments which remain a focus throughout the development of connection service improvements:

► **Improving customer service** - which applies across the board with our ICE initiatives

► **Improving consistency** - this is a key consideration in the way we develop and implement initiatives

ICE workplan format

Following feedback on last year's workplan we have refined the structure and format of our ICE workplan to improve the accessibility for stakeholders and make it more straightforward to follow as it progresses throughout the year.

As last year's plan progressed through the year, the number of sub-actions to the initiatives increased significantly making it somewhat unwieldy for stakeholders to work through. Whilst they were keen on the level of detail provided it was felt that keeping a simpler and more focussed format for the plan this year would provide improved transparency and accessibility so that stakeholders can track progress more easily.

This year we have therefore distilled the workplan down to a set of clearly defined initiatives without the numerous sub-actions. Instead we will provide detail of the actions undertaken for each initiative when we publish quarterly progress updates and our report at the end of the year.

WPD's ICE workplan for 2018/19 is structured into seven areas of focus, providing the key themes for the individual initiatives which have been developed from the stakeholder feedback described alongside them in the plan. Each numbered initiative has a target date and corresponding measures required to ensure the outputs of the initiatives deliver successful outcomes for our stakeholders.

As with last year, we will publish quarterly updates where any new initiatives we add will be clearly identified along with status updates on existing initiatives. The 2018/19 ICE workplan can be found in **Appendix 3**.

Enabling stakeholders to actively shape our approach

The 2018/19 WPD ICE workplan provides a continued focus for our connections stakeholders on the transition to DSO and the opportunities this can provide.

The transition to the role of Distribution System Operator (DSO) is a priority for all our stakeholders and we have seen an increase in the importance through our engagement in the past year.

Our stakeholders have told us that they want to be involved in the planning and decisions required in the transition. They want WPD to make clear easy to understand information available to help them understand the opportunities and challenges that the transition will provide and what it means for them.

We were the first DNO to publish a fully costed DSO Strategy (see [here](#)) with timescales and clear deliverables, in 2018/19 our ICE workplan and engagement activity will continue to drive the developments in this area for our connection stakeholders.

We will continue to undertake focussed engagement on the issues involved and lead industry groups to collaborate on effective solutions. Our workplan sets out initiatives which will keep our stakeholders informed of our plans through the publication of a DSO forward looking plan. We will also engage on the ongoing developments such as the provision of information on flexibility requirements which will help customers understand the opportunities to provide services which will help to balance the network and possibly avoid reinforcement for new connections.

Whilst the engagement is essential to the successful transition, our stakeholders are keen for us to start to deliver concrete actions now, which facilitate the transition. Our ICE workplan includes initiatives to commence the procurement of flexibility services on the network which can be used as an alternative for traditional reinforcement.

Our ICE workplan and engagement programme will provide and keep our stakeholders at the centre of our plans and initiatives to transition to a smarter more flexible distribution network.

Engaging our stakeholders

Our overriding principle driving our transition strategy is to place engagement at the heart of each stage as we shift to the new functions and requirements of a DSO. We recognise that our broad range of stakeholders have differing requirements and levels of knowledge or interest in the issues involved in the transition to DSO. We therefore understand that we need to tailor our engagement to a range of audiences to ensure that we obtain the feedback to fully inform our plans and deliver for our customers.

In 2018/19 we will be undertaking a wide range of engagement activities on the topics of DSO, from detailed engineering discussion facilitated by our Distribution System Operability Framework to videos demonstrating to customers what the shift to DSO means for communities.

Our ICE workplan sets out initiatives to deliver these key engagement activities in addition to the annual programme of stakeholder engagement where we will use a wide range of established activities to further engage on DSO transition.



Measuring the impact of our ICE activities

Understanding the impact our ICE incentives have on the services we provide our customers is key to assessing whether we have successfully met stakeholders' requirements. Our KPIs and outputs are set to provide this information and focus on the feedback of the stakeholders effected by our improvements since they are best placed to tell us if we have met their needs.

In our 2018/19 workplan we continue the approach of committing to KPI's which are closely aligned with the workplan initiatives, with 53 KPIs across 7 focus areas. These are designed to track our performance and determine the impact of improvements which are delivered through the completion of the workplan initiatives.

In addition, we continue to retain the overarching KPIs which evidence overall improvements in the connection processes. These include achieving improved scores for customer surveys, remaining in the upper quartile amongst all DNOs for complaints performance and improved timescales for completing a connection. These measures help determine whether our range of improvements deliver positive impacts across our connection services and not just in the specific measure of an initiative.

The full list of 2018/19 KPIs has been incorporated into our workplan in Appendix 3, which sets out the required KPIs for each initiative and the associated targets.

For some initiatives we recognise that we cannot always set measurable targets for determining the impact of the improvements we have undertaken. In these instances, we have targeted ourselves to receive positive feedback from our stakeholders in response to the improvements we have made, and this is the best indicator by which we can determine our success.

These KPIs have been developed in consultation with our stakeholders and with the commitment of WPD senior management. The KPIs will be embedded in the way in which we manage improvements in our connection services.

Communicating our performance

We will continue to keep our customers informed of our performance throughout the year. We will publish a minimum of 4 ICE workplan updates which will be shared on our website and directly with key stakeholders such as members of the CCSG and the CiC group.

Following a review of the feedback received for previous updates, we will no longer issue a separate KPI pack. Going forward our performance towards the KPI's will be included within the commentary for each initiative on our workplan update. This will ensure that stakeholders have full visibility of both the delivery of the initiative and the associated performance in one location, making it easy to track progress and performance.



Incentive on Connection Engagement2018

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