

Briefing

February 2021: Your quarterly update and briefing

Investing in the green recovery

We are bringing forward around £15 million of investment into projects that will boost the North West's economy and contribute to the UK's efforts to drive a green recovery. As the region's power network, and a critical infrastructure provider, we have identified a longlist of potential projects.

We are now calling on those who live and work in our region to help prioritise the projects and suggest any others for consideration. You can see our longlist and find out more information here. Some schemes will focus on enabling decarbonisation and others on enabling specific anticipated infrastructure developments to aid economic recovery.

The consultation is open until Friday 19th March. Please do take a look and share your views. If you would prefer to set up a quick call to understand more or talk through any suggestions, please let us know by getting in touch via electricity@devoconnect.co.uk.

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Powering Up Recovery in the North West

To kickstart the debate on how to accelerate climate change ambitions and deliver a green and inclusive recovery and boost the net zero economic potential in Lancashire, Cumbria and Greater Manchester we are holding three high-level events with MPs, Peers and local government, business and industry leaders to help accelerate plans for a green recovery and meet Net Zero targets.

If you want to find out more and help us shape the debate on the green recovery, please get in touch or book your place here.

- **Lancashire 10:30 - 12:00 Monday 1st March** eventbrite.co.uk/e/139960480565
- **Cumbria 15:00 - 16:30 Thursday 11th March** eventbrite.co.uk/e/141154277243
- **Greater Manchester 10:30 - 12:00 Tuesday 23rd March** eventbrite.co.uk/e/141154991379



Green jobs: Power Network Engineer apprenticeship!

We are proud to announce that 17 Higher Level Apprentices have completed their three-year apprenticeship- the first in the electricity supply industry. The course was led by Energy and Utility Skills covering roles such as.

After completing the course, the apprentices have now been deployed into the business carrying out their respective roles from asset management engineers to operational delivery engineers.

Chris Havard, Electricity North West's apprentice programme manager, said:

"To become the first set of apprentices to complete the course in the country is a remarkable achievement and really is a testament to the hard work they have put in. It certainly hasn't been easy either, particularly with the coronavirus restrictions which certainly changed the way all apprentices had to work."

"Interviews had to take place remotely and the planning of observations on site proved to be challenging because of the current limitations. But I think that's a great reflection on everybody involved. We've a great apprenticeship programme at Electricity North West and we are going from strength to strength each year."

[Click here for further information and a video on our apprentices.](#)



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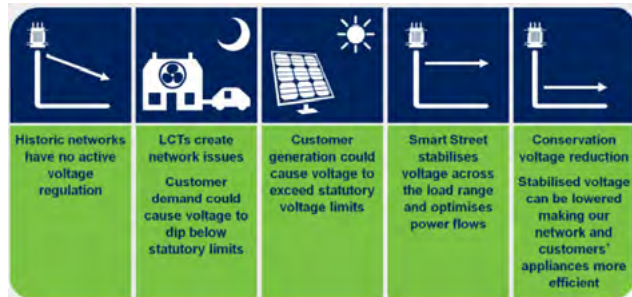
Improving the region's power network

Smart Street Success

Our ground-breaking Smart Street scheme aims to make homes and businesses more energy efficient by stabilising and then reducing the voltage supplied to properties by an imperceptible amount. Customers don't need to do anything to benefit from the savings as the work takes place on our network and in our substations. By actively controlling voltage at different times we can reduce the energy used, saving customers money on their bills and reducing carbon emissions.

After a successful 4-year trial we found a household's electricity consumption was cut by between 5 and 8% saving householders up to £60 a year on their electricity bills and cutting carbon emissions by between 7 and 10%.

Now, Stockport is the first area to have the technology rolled out more widely after Electricity North West installed a new transformer at the Alfreton Road distribution substation in Offerton.



We will be rolling out the technology to other areas in the region over the next two years.

[Click here for further information on Smart Street.](#)

Citizen's Advice Partnership delivers much needed support to vulnerable customers

Citizens Advice Manchester (CAM) have completed their first quarter delivering energy efficiency advice, support with switching, access to grants and managing utility bills and financial debts and signposting vulnerable customers for help to third party organisations, including foodbanks. The team have been operational for two months following an extensive training programme throughout October for their Energy Champions. Since going live on 1st November 2020, CAM have provided over 800 unique beneficiaries to nearly 200 clients. New initiatives will see a significant rise in the number of clients supported over the next quarter to meet demand.

[Click here for further information.](#)

Samlesbury Aerospace Enterprise Zone investment

We have begun work on a £7.5 million investment that will accelerate the progress being made at the Samlesbury Aerospace Enterprise Zone by providing vital new capacity on the network. The 50-hectare Samlesbury Aerospace Enterprise Zone will become a national centre of excellence for advanced engineering and manufacturing related companies. It is a strategically important employment site and vital to the economic recovery of Lancashire. This investment presents an opportunity to accelerate and shape economic growth and business productivity across Lancashire.

The project was confirmed last year following a collaboration agreement with Lancashire County Council. Our investment in the area includes creating a new 33,000-volt substation and laying more than 22km of underground cables connecting the site to the network and paving the way for further strategic development.



Peter Emery, Chief Executive of Electricity North West, said: "By starting work on schemes like this one in Samlesbury now, we are ensuring the network has enough capacity for the first steps of that transformation and will guarantee that the major new facilities already being built there will have all the power they need to drive clean growth."

County Councillor Geoff Driver CBE, Leader of Lancashire County Council said, "Samlesbury Aerospace Enterprise Zone is a great milestone for this strategically important employment site in Central Lancashire and supports Lancashire's broader economic recovery programme."

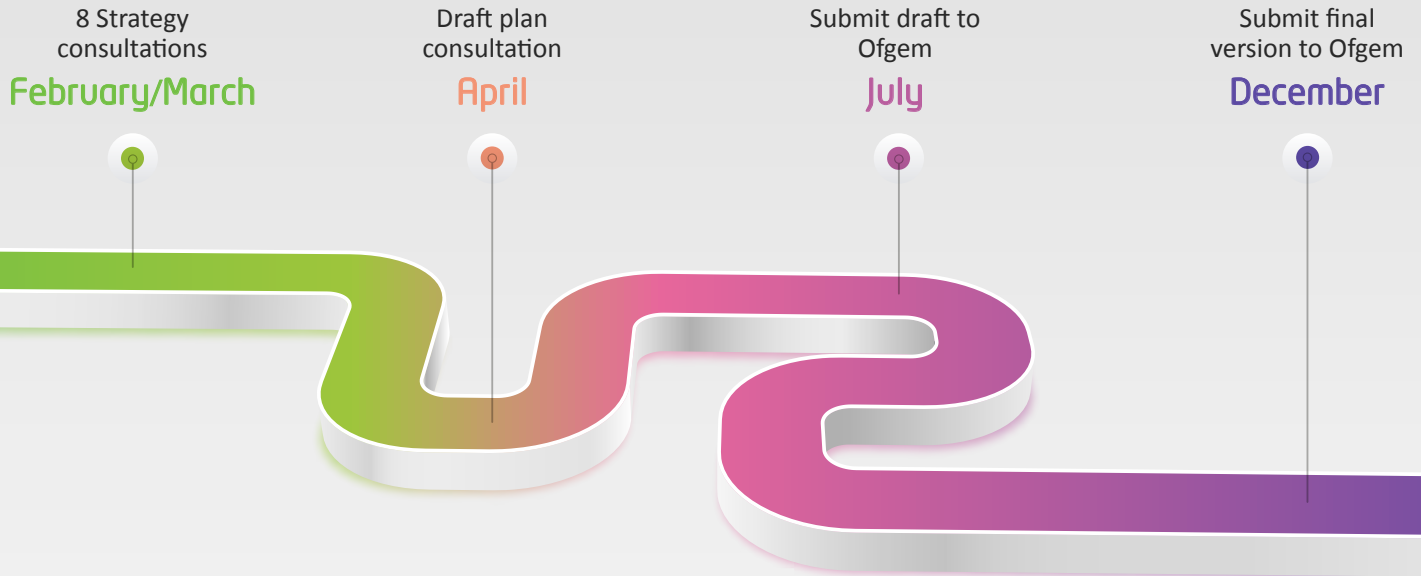
The investment is part of our Leading the North West to Zero Carbon plan, a £64 million scheme announced in 2019 to ensure those living and working in the region continue to enjoy one of the most reliable electricity networks in the UK while smoothly transitioning towards a low-carbon future.

[Click here for further information on our Samlesbury project.](#)

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Have your say on our future plans



For the past two years we have been engaging with our customers and stakeholders to develop our future business plans for 2023-2028. We've already heard from around 15,000 customers and stakeholders, and there's still time to have your say.

We're submitting our draft plan to Ofgem (our regulator) in July 2021 before submitting the final version in December 2021.

The plan will set out the investment we want to make in the North West, based on customers' and stakeholders' input. It comes at a critical stage as we accelerate the transition towards net zero across the North West, while recognising the impact of utility bills in the current circumstances.

We have some huge decisions to make about the trade-offs between investment in our service and the cost of those improvements. We want to hear from you and get your views on our future plans to get our future investment and services right.

We are currently consulting on eight key strategies that will form part of our Business plan and have been developed through significant customer and stakeholder engagement:

1. **Electricity Users in Vulnerable Circumstances Strategy**
2. **Environmental Action Plan**
3. **Electric Vehicles Strategy**
4. **Major Connections Strategy**
5. **Distribution System Operation Strategy**
6. **Innovation Strategy**
7. **Digital Strategy**
8. **Community and Local Energy Strategy**

The consultation is open until Friday 5th March. To view and comment on any of our draft strategies please visit our [engagement hub](#).

In April we will publish our draft business plan for consultation which you will be able to find and respond to on our engagement hub.

If you would prefer to set up a quick call to understand more or talk through any suggestions, please let us know by getting in touch via electricity@devoconnect.co.uk.

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Business plan testing update

In January we carried out 'acceptability testing' on our business plan, following last year's 'willingness-to-pay' survey. The willingness to pay survey focused on how much people were willing to pay for different survey levels, and the acceptability testing survey built on that by putting together an overall package of proposals to see if we'd got the balance right.

Based on industry benchmarking we wanted 80% of people surveyed to tell us that the plans were acceptable overall, as well as for the 41 individual proposals tested. The results show that 82% of respondents approve of the plans overall, at a +£9.80 increase to our part of electricity bills.

We tested the same proposals with stakeholder with 74 stakeholders filling in the survey and while we are still analysing the results, initial indications are that stakeholders also found the proposals acceptable. Stakeholders taking part in the survey include Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Lancashire County Council and Cumbria County Council among many others.

You will see our full proposals in our business plan published for consultation in April, but if you would like to know more in the meantime, please let us know via the contact details at the end of this briefing.

COP26 and decarbonisation pathways

At the Utility Week Awards in February Electricity North West's joint entry with gas network Cadent Gas in the net zero category was highly commended. Our entry focused on the work that we have been doing with Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) on setting out a realistic decarbonisation pathway to 2038. The recognition is pleasing given the huge amount of work that has gone into developing the pathway and the enormous amount of engagement that we have had to get us to this point. [You can see more on this work here.](#)

On Monday 22 February Electricity North West CEO, Peter Emery, took part in an online event titled 'The Road to COP26' alongside the [Net Zero North West](#) partnership, GMCA, Liverpool City Region and the respective mayors of each area. Pete spoke about our decarbonisation pathways work with Cadent as a best practice example of how we collaborate in the region. We have contributed to the Expression of Interest that has been submitted for a North West contingent at the COP26 and will continue to work with regional partners to ensure the whole of the North West is properly represented if we are successful in our application to attend.

Support for testing and vaccine programme

We have announced that any employee who is invited to have the vaccine can take time off work in company time, at short notice and on full pay.

ENW have continued to operate throughout the pandemic as an essential service to homes, businesses and organisations such as the NHS; offering rapid lateral flow testing to all colleagues who can't work from home to support the test and trace programme. All of our key workers can take the tests before they head to work or following a shift and have results in 30 minutes.

We hope that by providing access to testing, it will bring added peace of mind and reassurance for our key worker colleagues on the front line and further reassures all our customers of the steps we are taking to ensure their safety.

[Find out more >](#)

Want to find out more? Get in touch

If you would like more information on our plans and how we can help, please get in touch with the Electricity North West team:



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For more information on our future business plan engagement go to www.pluggingin.co.uk