



**GAS GOES  
GREEN**

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# **SUSTAINABILITY REPORT**

## **OUR COMMITMENTS 2021**

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**SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT  
GOALS**

**A JOINT COMMITMENT BY BRITAIN'S  
GAS NETWORKS TO THE UN  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

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association

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# LEADING THE ENERGY REVOLUTION

**As Britain stands on the cusp of a world-leading hydrogen revolution, our gas network companies are at the forefront of that change, responsible for owning and operating some £24bn of critical national energy infrastructure.**

With that fundamental responsibility in mind, it is right that we look not just at what those companies will deliver as part of that change, but how they deliver it, both today and in the future.

Our gas network operators may be private companies, but they are responsible for delivering a vital public service. That ethos is at the heart of everything they do, with a keen awareness that 23 million homes around the country rely on them to provide the energy they need for heating, hot water and cooking, often at the times when they need it the most.

As we transition away from carbon-emitting natural gas, those companies, through Energy Networks Association's Gas Goes Green programme, are mapping out the role that Britain's extensive gas network infrastructure can play in a decarbonised future, by replacing that gas with a greener hydrogen or biomethane mixture.

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide a set of guiding principles to help ensure that both the current and future work of gas networks is being conducted in a way that is aligned with a sustainable future. Through a variety of initiatives set out across the different Goals, in this report you can see just how they are doing that today, in a way that reflects their sense of wider public purpose in what they do, and how they will do that tomorrow, in preparing for a decarbonised future. Crucially, the evidence base for this work does not just come from the gas network companies themselves but also from many of the stakeholders they serve.

As we look to the future, the exciting role that gas networks can play in delivering a net zero economy is becoming increasingly clear. As we set out in this report, our members look forward to working closely with the customers we serve, the government and the wider energy industry to turn that ambition into reality.

**David Smith**, Chief Executive, Energy Networks Association





# A FORCE FOR GOOD

**In 2015, as Secretary of State for International Development, I represented the UK at the UN General Assembly when the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were formed.**

It represented a landmark moment in our global efforts to wipe out poverty, fight inequality and tackle climate over the next 15 years with 17 goals and 169 targets; and built on the success achieved by the Millennium Development Goals.

The SDGs successfully brought together governments, businesses and wider civil society to achieve these aims.

A strong example of this is the work of Britain's gas networks and Energy Networks Association, which have contributed to the SDGs in a variety of ways. This includes through the transition towards cleaner and greener energy to meet UK climate goals.

The issues of people and planet are not two separate agendas - they go hand in hand, and Net Zero and levelling up are two sides of the same coin.

It is hugely important that businesses responsible for delivering the energy transition - and shifting the gas supply towards cleaner, greener hydrogen - ensure what they're doing is in line with the SDGs.

This becomes especially important this year as the UK hosts COP26 in Glasgow. The conference represents a unique opportunity to show how UK businesses are working individually and together to advance so many aspects of sustainable development.

This report shows some impressive work from the gas networks, including Cadent and National Grid Gas' commitment to EmployAbility, to NGN signing up and committing to the Social Mobility Pledge, to SGN and Wales & West Utilities work towards inclusive growth and empowerment, and so much more.

The gas networks have clearly risen to the challenges of the SDGs - and taken communities within their respective networks on that journey with them - but there is always more to do.

Building on the successes of the SDGs, in February I launched a set of Levelling Up Goals, that set out for the first time what 'levelling up Britain' really means.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted socioeconomic and health inequalities clearer than ever before, and makes the levelling up agenda, and business leadership on it, more important than before.

From strong foundations in early years, successful school years, positive destinations post 16, to harnessing the energy transition - the Levelling Up Goals outline 14 areas in which companies can build on their commitments to levelling up Britain.

The next step for many businesses will be to demonstrate exactly how they will contribute to the levelling up agenda and building back better as we enter a COVID recovery.

**The Rt Hon Justine Greening**, Co-Founder & Chair of the Social Mobility Pledge



# ABOUT ENA

Energy Networks Association's members operate the wires and pipes which keep your energy flowing, carrying electricity and gas into your community and supporting our economy. The wires and pipes are the arteries of our economy, delivering energy to over 30 million homes and businesses across the UK and Ireland. To do this safely and reliably, the businesses which run the networks employ 45,000 people and have spent and invested over £60 billion in the last eight years.

## WHAT ARE THE ENERGY NETWORKS?

Energy network operators own and operate the wires and pipes that carry electricity and gas to your home. Sometimes you'll hear the networks being referred to as 'the grid'.

Transmission networks are the 'motorways' of the energy networks. They carry high-voltage electricity and high-pressure gas across the length and breadth of the country.

Distribution networks are the 'A-roads'. They carry gas and electricity into your homes. Electricity substations and gas pressure reducing stations convert energy so that it can be carried along the local distribution network. These local networks run at lower voltages and pressures, delivering electricity and gas safely into your community.



### CADENT

The UK's largest gas distribution network, Cadent manages a network of more than 80,000 miles of pipes, which transport gas to 11 million customers from Cumbria to North London and the Welsh Borders to East Anglia.



### SGN

SGN distributes gas to 14 million people in homes and businesses across Scotland and the south of England, including major cities like Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, Southampton, Oxford and London, with a developing network in Northern Ireland.



### NATIONAL GRID GAS

National Grid Gas is the sole UK gas transmission owner and operator and plays a vital part in the gas network. Just as every home in the UK needs gas supplied to its meter, so the gas distribution networks need gas supplied to them, along with electricity generators and industrial users who require a direct gas transmission system connection. National Grid Gas does that through its operation of 7,627km of pipeline and 23 compressor stations and terminals.



### NGN

Covering an area that stretches from northern Cumbria to the North East and much of Yorkshire, NGN serves 2.7 million customers, including everyone in cities like Newcastle, Sunderland, Leeds, York, Hull and Bradford.



### WALES & WEST UTILITIES

Wales & West Utilities supplies gas to 7.5 million people in Wales and south west England, serving rural communities in North Wales and Cornwall, and the busy cities of Cardiff and Bristol.

# THE UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

**In 2015, 193 world leaders agreed to 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Also known as the Global Goals or the SDGs, they are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030. To achieve them, every responsible business needs to contribute towards them.**

Acting responsibly sits at the heart of how ENA and the gas networks operate. It's a principle that informs everything we do, every day. That's why we are committing to the principles of the SDGs.

Across the gas networks, hundreds of individual initiatives delivered by thousands of people are playing their part in supporting many - if not most - of the SDGs. Ultimately, we aim to contribute to all of them, but this report focuses on the SDGs which, through a series of mapping activities carried out with employees, customers and other stakeholders, the ENA and our gas network members identified as being most relevant to our business activities.

This report shares examples that show our members working together for a common goal. They are examples that show that, from clean energy to responsible consumption, economic growth to climate action, Britain's gas networks are making a real difference to sustainability.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS





## 7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



# AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

## WORKING TOGETHER TO DELIVER AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

Around one third of UK greenhouse gas emissions come from heating homes, and approximately 85% of UK homes use natural gas for heating and cooking. While great strides have been made to decarbonise the power sector, we still need a solution to decarbonise heat. In collaboration with all the gas networks, ENA's Gas Goes Green initiative is a plan to reduce carbon emissions from Britain's homes, businesses and communities.

In this section, we explore Gas Goes Green and the other ways in which the networks are collaborating to make energy cleaner and affordable:



Connected biomethane with the potential to power  
**743,353 average homes**



**92,264**  
fuel poor connections made.

## GAS GOES GREEN: DELIVERING THE WORLD'S ZERO CARBON GAS GRID

The demand for natural gas in the UK will not disappear completely – it's a vital element in producing some forms of hydrogen fuel - but Gas Goes Green involves all five of Britain's gas network companies working together to replace the natural gas that 85% of homes rely upon with a mixture of hydrogen and biomethane.

### This will:

- Reduce carbon emissions from heating, cooking and transportation in the easiest and cheapest way possible
- Ensure 23m properties across the UK can access the energy they need, when they need it, in a clean, reliable and safe way
- Create new demand for clean technologies and green gas, stimulating new green industries, supply chains and jobs in communities across the country

**As part of Gas Goes Green, our gas networks are exploring several routes to decarbonisation. These include:**

## OUR COMMITMENTS

- **Transitioning to clean energy:**  
We will deliver reliable, clean energy to our customers.
- **Delivering affordable energy to our customers:**  
We are committed to helping reduce fuel poverty and to supporting our customers in accessing affordable energy.





# AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

## BRINGING HYDROGEN HOME

Many experts see hydrogen as an adaptable alternative to fossil fuels. When hydrogen is burned it produces no greenhouse gases. Hydrogen blended with natural gas has the potential to be delivered and used in the same way as natural gas, reducing carbon emissions. If a 20% hydrogen blend were rolled out across the country it could save around 6 million tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions every year, the equivalent of taking 2.5 million cars off the road.

Cadent and NGN have been working with Keele University on the HyDeploy project. Already the first phase of the project has brought a blend of hydrogen and natural gas to 100 homes and buildings on a private network at the university campus in a £7.5 million demonstration designed to mirror the conditions for bringing blended gas to a small town. Now, following OFGEM's award of a further £15 million of Network Innovation Competition (NIC) funding, two larger demonstrations (one on each of Cadent and NGN's networks) are set to launch in 2021. The results, which will involve more than 1,000 homes and businesses in total, will lead to the development of a full deployment plan for hydrogen blending across Britain's gas networks.

Cadent and NGN are also about to open the country's first public homes with household appliances fuelled entirely by hydrogen. The two semi-detached 'Hydrogen Homes' in Gateshead, funded by



both networks and the UK government's Hy4Heat Innovation programme, will be open to the public and offer a glimpse of how hydrogen has the potential to be used as a clean replacement to natural gas in the home.

Part of SGN's approach to decarbonisation is to prioritise 'green' hydrogen (that is, hydrogen created using renewable energy) wherever possible. SGN's H100 Fife project will be the first of its kind to deliver 100% hydrogen produced from offshore wind power to heat 300 homes. The system will be designed and built to ensure the same high safety and reliability standards expected from the current gas system.

An on-site storage unit will hold enough hydrogen to ensure supply won't be disrupted during even the coldest weather conditions. Once operational in 2027, the facility will feed 300 homes and place the residents of Levenmouth, on the east coast of Scotland, at the forefront of the clean energy revolution. Construction is due to begin in 2021.

Wales & West Utilities is currently working with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to include up to 1% hydrogen in the Swindon gas network supply. In the future, the facility will be able to increase its hydrogen blend and is capable of providing a 100% hydrogen supply.

## BUILDING HYDROGEN UNDERSTANDING

Before any hydrogen blend becomes a standard part of the gas supply we need to understand the impact of injecting hydrogen into the mix in terms of operation and safety. All networks are involved in ensuring supply safety, and as part of the Gas Goes Green programme, National Grid Gas has been exploring the physical capabilities of the national transmission system, considering how the system may need to be modified to carry hydrogen. The results have supported National Grid Gas' FutureGrid project (see Goal 13) and will help the other networks better understand the implications of a decarbonised energy system, and the impact of increased hydrogen on customers.







## AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

### RESEARCHING HYDROGEN AND HYBRIDS

**Hydrogen:** As a project partner in the Milford Haven: Energy Kingdom project, Wales & West Utilities is working with other organisations to develop diverse, local seed markets to support the transition from fossil fuels to hydrogen and renewables around Britain's biggest energy port. The funding will also enable development of a Smart Local Energy System to meet the heating and transportation needs of local communities, including local tourism to the area.

The project, one of several Wales & West Utilities is involved in design the decarbonisation of heavy industry, is now at the detailed design stage, exploring investible solutions for deployment of hydrogen in the local energy system. Next are demonstrations of a hydrogen-ready hybrid heating system in a commercial building and the use of hydrogen fuel cell cars with a combined electrolyser and hydrogen refueller.

**Hybrids:** Combining a gas boiler and an air source heat pump, hybrid systems can operate on green electricity when it is available, switching to an increasingly decarbonised gas supply when it is not. Smart control of hybrids allows investment to be optimised for least cost across buildings, networks, and energy supplies. Their flexibility to shift demand from gas to electricity and vice versa, helps them guarantee the lowest possible heating bills and lowest possible carbon emissions.

In conjunction with electricity network Western Power Distribution, Wales & West Utilities launched the Freedom project to better understand if hybrid heating systems are technically capable of heating homes and are affordable and attractive to customers. Through a trial carried out in homes in the Bridgend area, the project found that deploying hybrid heat pumps would result in swift emissions reductions from buildings. It demonstrated that domestic heat can be substantially decarbonised by deploying hybrid heat pumps to decarbonise homes and businesses, alongside hydrogen.

Wales & West Utilities is now working alongside electricity network UK Power Networks on the HyCompact project. The new hybrid units contain a gas boiler and an electric air source heat pump alongside smart control software in a single integrated unit. The system, fitted directly into customers' homes and hung on the wall in place of the existing conventional gas boiler, builds on the success of the Freedom Project, which trialled the use of hybrid heating systems with a standalone gas boiler and an external air-source heat pump. Taking on board customer feedback from that trial, HyCompact is using the latest advances in hybrid heating technology to test a next generation product.

### CONNECTING MORE BIOMETHANE TO THE NETWORK

Biomethane is a clean, sustainable energy source produced when organic material – such as food waste, manure, sewage or crops – is broken down through anaerobic digestion or thermal gasification. Once injected into the gas grid, biomethane can be used for heating and cooking in exactly the same way as natural gas and can also be used as a low carbon alternative fuel for transport.

All networks are committed to increasing the use of biomethane. Already, enough biomethane has been connected across the networks to power 743,353 average homes, with capacity set to increase further. One challenge that currently prevents the networks connecting biomethane plants in some areas is having the available entry capacity.

The Optinet project, led by Cadent with partners Wales & West Utilities, aims to overcome this challenge by using smart pressure control and within-grid compression to generate additional capacity in network areas with lower demand. If successful, the project could help 'unlock' capacity for green gas across all networks.





# AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

## FIGHTING FUEL POVERTY

### FUEL POOR NETWORK EXTENSION SCHEME (FPNES)

The Fuel Poor Network Extension Scheme (FPNES), first launched in 2014, is a mechanism that helps households connect to the gas networks. All gas distribution networks work alongside local authorities and health professionals to identify fuel poor homes in their areas, understand the factors that contribute to fuel poverty and, where practical, help to resolve those issues. By March 2021, the networks had made 92,264 such connections.



#### Each gas distribution network has supported the FPNES in a number of ways:

**Cadent uses data to target risk:** Cadent is using data to identify those most vulnerable within its areas. Its Social Indicator Mapping Tool highlights not only areas of fuel poverty, but also high risk carbon monoxide hotspots and the biggest enrolment gaps in the Priority Services Register (PSR). The tool has enabled Cadent to target fuel-poor areas with initiatives including its Connected for Warmth Scheme. In partnership with Affordable Warmth Solutions, the scheme installs first-time central heating into fuel poor and vulnerable homes. With its Social Indicator Mapping Tool a significant success, Cadent has shared it with partners including Leicestershire Police and UK Men's Sheds Association.



**Wales & West Utilities supports health and wellbeing:** Since 2009, Wales & West Utilities has supported those living in fuel poverty through its Warm Home Assistance Scheme, funding 15,000 connections via vouchers towards the cost of a new gas supply. In addition, the company is working with the community interest company's Warm Wales and Warm West on Healthy Homes Healthy People, a project that takes a person-based approach to improving health and wellbeing by creating a home which is safe, sound, warm and secure for all. More than 2,300 homes have benefited, delivering over £1.5 million in benefits.

**NGN lowers household running costs:** One scheme operated by NGN connected 648 properties, reduced household running costs by around £631 per year per household and reduced CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by more than 2 tonnes per household. Over the next 15 years the scheme will save a further 21,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>, and those householders will save around £6 million.

**SGN uses partnerships to drive progress:** SGN faced a particular challenge in meeting its FPNES commitments due to different devolved government policies and funding commitments. Having overachieved in its Scottish region, SGN shareholders provided a £10 million grant to enable similar progress in the south. SGN identified, approached and integrated services with a number of key partners already active in their communities to facilitate more than 3,000 connections.



## 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



# DECENT WORK & ECONOMIC GROWTH

Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

## WORKING TOGETHER TO DELIVER DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

The gas networks employ more than 17,000 people across Britain. Every day that workforce becomes more diverse and inclusive through a range of programmes and initiatives designed to ensure that everybody has an opportunity to make a difference and that barriers are removed. This section explores some of those initiatives.



**713** new apprentices across all networks since April 2013



**All Networks** prepare a gender pay gap report each year

## OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL

### GRID FOR GOOD

Grid for Good is a flagship energy industry programme led by National Grid to deliver a positive impact to socio-economically disadvantaged young people. Targeting 16-24 year olds, the programme works with charitable partners to provide skills for and opportunities in the energy industry to young people who may:

- › Be ex-offenders
- › Have low educational attainment
- › Be recently unemployed
- › Be from ethnically diverse backgrounds
- › Be facing extra socio-economic disadvantage

300 young people have been through the trial programme, supported by 2,000 hours of volunteer commitment by National Grid Gas colleagues. By 2030, the programme aims to have positively impacted 22,500 young people with 125,000 volunteering hours.

grid for good

## OUR COMMITMENTS

### › Equality stance

We are committed to equality, diversity and inclusion. We will continue to work towards ensuring all levels of our organisations better reflect the communities we serve. We will ensure bias is removed from our pay practices, and we will be transparent in the way we recruit and promote across diverse groups.

### › Providing opportunities for vulnerable communities:

We will deliver our services in a fair and affordable way, playing our part in ensuring no-one is left behind in the transition to clean energy whilst working to identify and support our most vulnerable customers.

*Embracing the challenges of meeting net zero targets can provide real job opportunities but will require investment in training and potentially changing the nature of some people's roles.*

**Frazer Scott** - CEO, Energy Action Scotland





## DECENT WORK & ECONOMIC GROWTH

Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

### NETWORKS FOCUS ON EMPLOYABILITY

The majority of people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) want to work, but fewer than 6% actually achieve paid employment. National Grid Gas and Cadent are helping to change this through their support for the EmployAbility initiative.

Both companies' Supported Internships Programmes are year-long personalised programmes designed to equip interns with the skills they need for employment through learning in the workplace.

Support extends to job coaching and guidance around non-workplace learning. Students can work towards relevant qualifications and study maths and English at an appropriate level too. Since its launch, National Grid Gas has had 100 interns complete the programme with 60% moving into employment, 10 times the national average. Cadent's success rate of 73% led to its award as 'Most Supportive Employer' by the National Autistic Society.



### THE LEVELLING UP OPPORTUNITY

NGN recognises that, if it is to deliver more for its current and future workforce and customers, it needs to embrace a range of perspectives, experiences and personalities. That's why, throughout 2020, NGN created an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strategy built on the vision that 'NGN values difference'. The company has committed to share data with other anchor institutions in Leeds to enable a better picture of EDI across businesses in the city.

As part of the commitment to ensuring equal opportunities for NGN's colleagues and the wider communities it supports, the company has recently committed to The Social Mobility Pledge which champions the values of purpose-led organisations committed to levelling the playing field in the UK. With some of the country's widest opportunity gaps ('cold spots') located within NGN's service area, the network has built on its many areas of best practice to develop an Opportunity Action Plan that will take its efforts to an even higher level of ambition. As just one example of action taken, NGN has removed the requirement for prospective apprentices to have a driving licence, as this can be a block to young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Developed in conjunction with the Rt Hon Justine Greening, founder of the Social Mobility Pledge, the

*Most gas networks are exploring renewable energy and emerging technologies [and] should continue to do so in supporting jobs and economic growth.*

**Kalpna Balakrishnam** - Specialist Advisor - Energy, Natural Resources Wales

plan identifies goals for the future and recognises NGN's extensive work in support of social mobility to date, noting that its "commitment to its community agenda should be particularly commended". One example of this is the development of the Community Partnering Fund, in partnership with Northern Powergrid. You can find more about this on page 27.







# DECENT WORK & ECONOMIC GROWTH

Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all



## TRAINING, DEVELOPMENT AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH

### PROMOTING INCLUSIVE GROWTH

Like all the gas networks, SGN is continuously working to deliver inclusive and sustainable economic growth and decent work for all. In addition to the gender pay gap reporting, apprenticeships and commitment to upskilling supported by all networks, its activities include:

- Supporting women in taking on new operational roles through the RISE development programme
- Mentoring school children and young people in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM)



### DEFINING 'RESPONSIBILITY'

In October 2020, National Grid launched its Responsible Business Charter. An articulation of what 'responsibility' means to National Grid, the charter sets out several commitments, one of which is ensuring its economic and social role in the community has the greatest possible positive impact. Another highlights the company's vision of developing an inclusive culture and a diverse workforce that is fully representative of the communities it serves.

#### **National Grid Gas will meet these commitments in a wide variety of ways, including:**

- Developing skills for the future, with a focus on lower income communities and providing access to STEM skills development for 45,000 people by 2030.
- Achieving 500,000 employee volunteering hours by 2030 to help equip the next and future generations to participate in the clean energy transition.
- Achieve 50% diversity in its Senior Leadership group by 2025 and 50% diversity in all new talent programmes by 2025.





# DECENT WORK & ECONOMIC GROWTH

Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

## CONNECTING COLLEAGUES, CUSTOMERS AND VALUES

People learn better from each other. So when Wales & West Utilities wanted to better connect colleagues with the company's values to improve the experience of its customers, it took an approach that brought a diverse group of people together to create an inclusive mix of views.

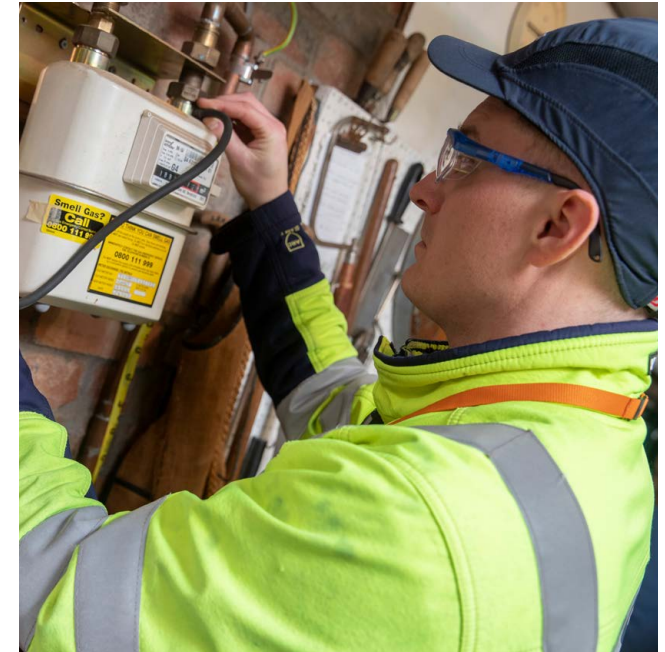
Piloted in 2019, the Energy & Utility Skills endorsed programme focuses on the role each individual plays in making the business a success. It encourages innovation, empowerment and taking personal responsibility to deliver better customer service, and there's a strong focus on well-being and looking out for vulnerable customers and colleagues.

### The programme has had a far reaching impact, resulting in projects including:

- Launching a Carers Passport, setting out what support carers can get and where they can get it from
- A well-being workshop conference for colleagues to shape the future of the organisation's wellbeing strategy, supporting both physical and mental health.

- Signing the Armed Forces Covenant, affirming the company's commitment to being a welcoming and inclusive employer of former military personnel.

The programme makes sure that all colleagues from operations to the office can demonstrate pride in themselves and their work, and have the skills they need to meet their customers' expectations today and in the future.



Wales & West Utilities Chief Executive Graham Edwards (c) and former military personnel at Wales & West Utilities





## INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation

### WORKING TOGETHER TO INNOVATE AND BUILD RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE

The gas distribution networks are required to minimise leaks in a range of ways, including through a well-established programme of work to replace metallic pipes with new plastic pipe.

**Between April 2013 and March 2020, the gas networks' efforts resulted in:**



**Nearly 4 million tCO<sub>2</sub>e**  
(tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions)  
saved by stopping leaks. That's equivalent  
to the carbon footprint of 1.2 million  
average UK homes.



**613**  
innovation projects improving the  
resilience, reliability and environmental  
performance of the network.

### INNOVATING A SAFER, CLEANER, MORE EFFICIENT APPROACH TO INFRASTRUCTURE

To better coordinate efforts around innovation, ENA's Network Innovation Strategies set out new areas of focus where all Britain's gas networks can share knowledge, avoid duplication and provide clear direction to the supply chain, decision-makers and the public about the sector's priorities. Projects include:

#### ADDING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) TO EXCAVATIONS

SGN's Robotics Roadworks & Excavation System (RRES) uses advanced robotics and AI to lower the cost and improve the efficiency, safety and environmental impact of utility excavations and activity.

Once operational, RRES's AI combined with 'soft touch' excavation methods will improve efficiency, reduce accidental damage to buried utilities, improve worker safety and reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by reducing the need for heavy construction vehicles on sites.

## OUR COMMITMENTS

### > Infrastructure updates:

We will continue to build, maintain and reinvest in our infrastructure, harnessing innovation to improve efficiency and safety while lowering our environmental impact.

### > Limitation of gas escapes:

We will continue to work to reduce gas escapes and the volume of gas lost during escapes by applying the latest innovations and/or by replacing existing pipework with more resilient alternatives.

A test site, including a mock roadway for sensor testing, is already complete and RRES's development continues.





## INDUSTRY, INNOVATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation

### CISBOT WALKS TO WORK

You'd never know it, but beneath the streets around Whitechapel, Sloan Square and Whitehall, Cadent has been putting a robot to work repairing and upgrading gas pipes. CISBOT works by remote control, 'crawling' along the inside of a gas main, sealing any leaks in the joints using a special sealant solution. On some of the busiest routes in London, CISBOT's ability to walk to its work area from a remote launch point is ensuring that road users and pedestrians can get on with their busy lives with disruption kept to a minimum.



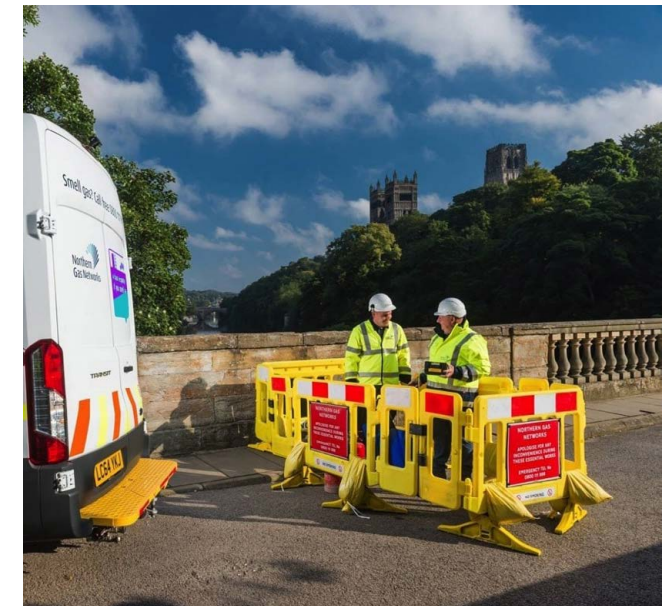
### DETECTING LEAKS IN REAL TIME

Beyond a daily regime of checks, leak detection and repair surveys at compressor stations and gas terminals are currently conducted once every four years. That means not every leak is detected early. But MoRFE (Monitoring of Real-time Fugitive Emissions) is a new detection system which finds leaks in real time. Now at the extended testing stage, National Grid Gas anticipates that, if given the green light, the system could help cut greenhouse gas emissions across all its 23 manned gas compressor and terminal sites.

### GAS NETWORKS SHARE UNDERGROUND UTILITY MAP

A challenge to the resilience and reliability of the networks faced by all infrastructure providers is damage to mains by third parties. Better shared understanding of assets is the key to avoiding these incidents so in 2019 the gas networks began working with Ordnance Survey, local authorities, water, electricity and telecommunications networks to develop a collaborative infrastructure map of underground assets.

The consortium developed an initial concept for a single digital map showing all underground utility assets. The potential benefits of this could be immense, ranging from improved safety to time and money savings for every organisation that digs underground. The concept was promoted as part of a national underground asset register to the Geospatial Commission, who agreed to fully fund the project at a cost of £3.9m.







## INDUSTRY, INNOVATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation

*UNSDG9 should be at the heart of what the gas networks do.*

**Stuart Bailey**, Director, Energy & Sustainability Consultancy



### NETWORKS COLLABORATE TO GUARD AGAINST GAS ESCAPES

Wales & West Utilities and Cadent have been working with Enduratec to develop the applications of its product, DURASEAL. SGN had already worked with Enduratec to validate the three-part pipe sealing system as a permanent fix for leaking metallic gas risers. Now, Wales & West Utilities and Cadent are collaborating to extend the application of DURASEAL to larger pipework.

The sealing system comprises a sealing compound around the leak, a self-amalgamating tape to keep the sealing compound in place, and an external composite shell for protection. A 'quick fix that lasts a lifetime', DURASEAL can be used anywhere, above or below ground on metallic and plastic pipelines. Wales & West Utilities is now trialling the system on its network, a process which has already helped to identify and develop more potential applications.

### LEAKS ARE IN THE BAG

Carrying out work on infrastructure always carries the risk of excavators or mini diggers causing accidental damage to pipes. The resulting loss of gas can impact customers, suppliers and the environment. But SGN has been prototyping an inflatable Stent Bag & High Volume Gas Escape Tool, developed under the Network Innovation Allowance (NIA) framework. The stent bag fills and seals damaged pipes from the inside, extending the critical time window for dealing with gas mains damage while protecting supply, minimising the amount of gas escaping into the environment, and reducing the cost of repairs. A further rollout is now planned.







# INDUSTRY, INNOVATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation

## SHAPING CONSIDERATE WORKING BEST PRACTICE

NGN has been part of the Considerate Constructor Scheme (CCS) since 2014. As a result, any site where NGN carries out pipe replacement is registered to the scheme, including sites too small or transient for formal auditing.

The commitment to CCS means that, wherever NGN is working to reduce gas leakage, it also assesses sites against industry best practice for safety, environment, appearance, respect for the community and colleague welfare.

As a CCS partner organisation, NGN is also actively involved in shaping CCS best practice, a role which has seen it pioneer innovative solutions to environmental issues such as noise and vibration monitoring, non-permanent utility markers, solar powered eco cabins and reusable spoil boards.



## 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



# RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

## WORKING TOGETHER TO DELIVER RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION

With a commitment to transitioning towards a circular economy, the networks are using less new (virgin) material in developing and maintaining their infrastructure, and reusing and recycling more.



**8+ million tonnes**  
of waste diverted from landfill



**5.5+ million tonnes**  
of recycled aggregate used

With gas holders needing to be dismantled, thousands of kilometres of old gas pipes needing to be replaced every year, and an ongoing programme of other repairs and upgrades, minimising waste has required innovation across a wide range of initiatives. Low-dig and no-dig techniques, vacuum excavation, contractor partnerships and inserting new plastic pipe into old metallic services have all helped to significantly reduce waste. At Wales & West Utilities, some of the reduction was achieved via an award-winning large diameter live mains insertion innovation project which reduced holes and the associated spoil sent to landfill.

These major improvements across all networks are also the result of a far-reaching programme which saw the companies campaign for more local recycling facilities and greater education and incentivisation of suppliers to work in a more sustainable manner.



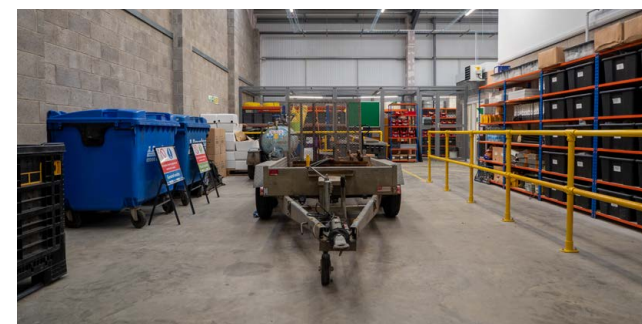
## OUR COMMITMENTS

### > Waste reduction:

We will continue to reduce waste and support sustainable consumption across our businesses and supply chains, working towards a truly 'less but better' circular economy where zero avoidable waste reaches landfill.

### > Reduce use of virgin construction materials:

We will meet targets and work to further reduce the import/use of virgin materials in our operations and across our supply chains.



## ZERO LANDFILL IN SIGHT

The networks are working hard to reduce the amount of waste they produce. From offices and depots to major infrastructure projects, every network is exploring ways to minimise waste and use recycled materials in favour of virgin aggregates.

*There are many local initiatives that have been supported by the networks to promote consumption reduction.*

**Frazer Scott** - CEO, Energy Action Scotland



# RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION & PRODUCTION

Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns



## SIGNALLING AN END TO SINGLE-USE PLASTICS

### SAVE EVIE'S WHALE CAMPAIGN

Evie O'Grady, the then seven-year-old daughter of a National Grid Gas employee, was so upset about the number of whales dying due to plastic pollution in our oceans that she drew a picture to illustrate the problem. Evie's drawing and her story became an inspiration, encouraging National Grid Gas and its employees to think about the environmental impact of single-use plastics.

In June 2019, National Grid Gas made a commitment to remove single-use plastics from sale at its UK offices by 2020. Piloted at its Warwick site, the campaign successfully eliminated the use of plastic straws and cutlery and prevented over 46,000 polystyrene containers and over 22,000 plastic containers from going into general waste annually. Now rolled out across the UK, Evie's campaign has improved recycling rates, cut costs, eliminated two million pieces of single-use plastic from the workplace, and earned Evie a Chairman's Award.

## A FISHY ALTERNATIVE TO PLASTIC

Tough, transparent packaging films are critical in protecting the integrity of many of the essential components used by the gas networks. NGN, as an example, uses 380,000 of them every year. Traditionally, however, those films are manufactured from low density polyethylene (LDPE) which can take decades to decompose in the environment. That's why nine UK energy and utility networks including Cadent, NGN, SGN and Wales & West Utilities have pledged their support for a study to develop biodegradable packaging materials that will meet the required standards, perform as well as (or better than) current packaging and significantly improve environmental impact.

Developed by Hive and Marinatex, one plastic alternative uses fish waste from sustainable marine feedstocks. NGN will be working with product developers to develop, test and prototype new types of packaging in the future.





# 13 CLIMATE ACTION



## CLIMATE ACTION

Take urgent action to combat climate change

### WORKING TOGETHER TO TAKE CLIMATE ACTION

We've already seen that all the gas networks and ENA are collaborating to deliver an ambitious pathway to net zero via Gas Goes Green. Here, we explore more examples of how the networks are decarbonising the gas supply and adapting the way they operate to help fight climate change.



#### All Networks

report on climate change adaptation



#### All Networks

have net zero targets



Carbon footprint measured by all gas distribution networks since **2013**



**2,695:** number of zero emission & hybrid vehicles in network fleets by 2026

### A NET ZERO FUTURE DELIVERING NET ZERO

Working with The Carbon Trust, and as part of its commitment to Gas Goes Green initiative (see page 7) SGN has agreed the ambitious goal of producing net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045. Reaching that goal means reducing emissions from SGN's occupied buildings and sites by installing on-site renewables and new building management systems for more efficient energy usage. The company will explore how to replace its commercial fleet with low/no emissions alternatives and is extending collaboration with its supply chain to influence contractors' emissions. It will also continue to reduce leakage through its Iron Mains Replacement Programme, which has already contributed to SGN's 3.5% average annual reduction in its total carbon footprint.

Cadent has also been working with the Carbon Trust in setting its science-based targets for reducing scope 1 & 2 greenhouse gas emissions by 43% by 2036. In addition, the network has signed up to the 'Race to Zero', a commitment to achieve net zero by 2050 and limiting temperature rise to 1.5°C.

## OUR COMMITMENTS

### > Net zero carbon:

We are committed to and are working towards the UK's goal of being carbon net zero by 2050 and will accelerate progress wherever possible.

### > Decarbonisation of fleets:

We will transition to low carbon vehicles in our own fleets and help drive the decarbonisation of freight and heavy transport.

### > Supply chain emissions:

We will engage 80% of our suppliers (by spend) to drive sustainability improvements in the supply chain

*The UK gas networks' role in the transition to net zero emissions is critically important, as we seek to scale up the use of net zero energy, especially for domestic and non-domestic heating.*

**George Tarvit**, Sustainable Scotland Network





# CLIMATE ACTION

Take urgent action to combat climate change

## SHARING EXPERTISE

A secure and resilient zero-carbon energy system needs to be designed and delivered in an integrated way, recognising the links between industry, buildings, transport and power generation rather than treating them in silos. This integration enables the networks to plan investments to meet carbon budgets all the way to 2050 at the lowest possible cost and in a way which minimises disruption. One way this is made possible is by Wales & West Utilities' 2050 Energy Pathfinder, a model that all the gas networks are using to help design the energy system of the future across Britain.



The company has also launched a project to develop a simplified Pathfinder toolkit to share its knowledge with local authorities. The tools and materials will help the authorities better understand the energy system and the role they can play in helping to achieve net zero, and support community planning.



## A ROADMAP TO NET ZERO

National Grid set a target of reducing its emissions by 80% by 2050, and 45% by 2020, from a 1990 baseline. Having far exceeded its 2020 target with a reduction of 70%, the company set out a roadmap to navigate the next steps of the journey. The three-step plan focuses on the organisation (direct emissions), its value chain (indirect emissions) and the role it plays in connecting renewable and low carbon energy.

## PROVIDING A COMMON PERSPECTIVE

Like all gas networks, Cadent knows delivering net zero can't be achieved solely through its efforts. That's why the company is leading the development of industry-wide transition plans that involve national organisations such as ENA, regional/local authorities and suppliers to the industry.

Working with its partners, Cadent aims to provide a common perspective to government and regulators to help everyone plan their energy transition.



## MAPPING THE CHANGING CLIMATE

Wales & West Utilities and its data and flood modelling partners have launched the UK's first national flood map. The map incorporates current and future predictive flood scenarios for the 2020s, 2050s and 2080s, accounting for the potential effects of climate change.

Delivered via a new Climate Change Adaptation Reporting Service, the data, which includes future riverbed and bank erosion potential, river and surface water flood depths and sea level rise zones, provides landowners and other stakeholders with the ability to understand future climate change risks to property, utilities, transport networks and bridges. They can then use the information to create plans to adapt in a phased, responsible and appropriate manner.

NGN and Cadent, together with Egnida and other partners, have co-developed a bespoke tool to quickly identify and visualise the factors affecting vulnerable customers. The tool recognises themes and patterns across millions of data sets down to postcode level, helping NGN and Cadent understand the potential impact of any activity on customers. The tool factors in a wide range of vulnerabilities including flooding, and is helping the networks plan more effectively while ensuring customers get the right support.





# CLIMATE ACTION

Take urgent action to combat climate change

## PUTTING HYDROGEN TO THE TEST

### HYNET

HyNet North West is an integrated hydrogen/carbon capture utilisation and storage project which will decarbonise heavy industry in the Cheshire, Liverpool and Manchester regions and provide hydrogen to decarbonise domestic heat, heavy transport and flexible power generation. Originally conceived by Cadent and Progressive Energy Ltd and funded by Ofgem's Network Innovation Allowance (NIA), the project saw most of its key elements become a reality in 2020.

The UK's first low carbon hydrogen plant at Essar Oil UK's Stanlow refinery in Ellesmere Port is a £7.5m project that will produce 3TWh of low-carbon and low-cost hydrogen and capture over 95% of the carbon used in the process.

HyNet has also trialled the hydrogen fuelling of Unilever's Port Sunlight manufacturing site and Pilkington's Greengate Works glass-making plant in St Helens - a world first.



### FUTURE GRID

We know hydrogen could be an alternative to natural gas, but there are several knowledge gaps that need addressing to safely apply hydrogen to heating. FutureGrid, one of National Grid Gas's many net zero initiatives, is an ambitious programme to build a representative whole-network which will be used to trial and test hydrogen at blends of up to 100%.

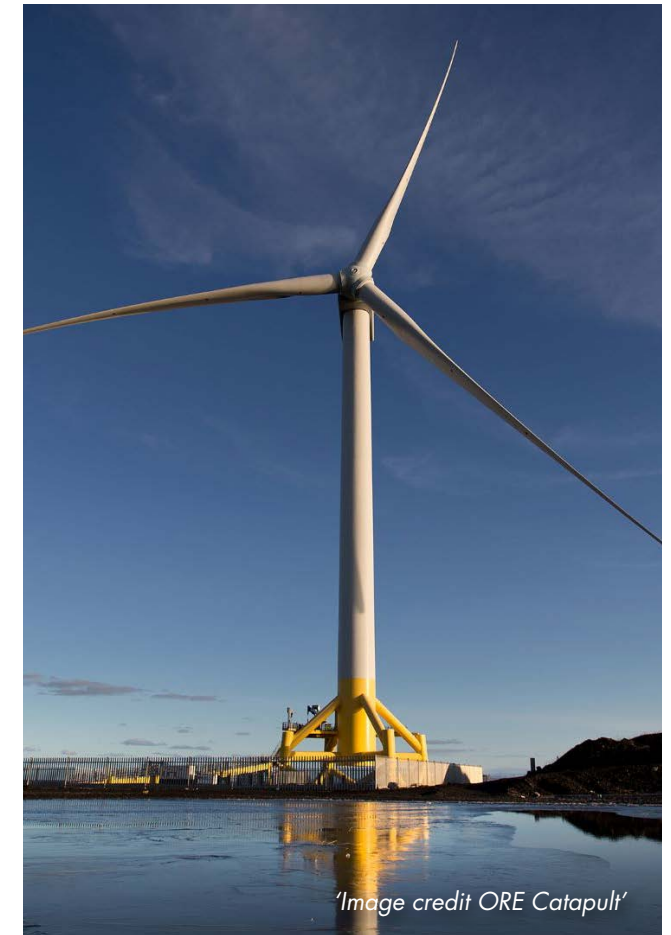
As the facility will remain separate from the main National Transmission System, testing will be in a safe and entirely controlled environment. Construction begins in 2021, with testing due to commence in 2022. Ofgem's Network Innovation Competition will provide £9.07m of funding with the remaining amount coming from project partners including NGN.

## HYDROGEN AT HOME

SGN's H100 Fife project will be the first of its kind to produce and supply 100% green hydrogen for domestic heating **See p8**

The HyDeploy project will see Cadent and NGN bring a blend of hydrogen and natural gas to more than 1,000 homes and businesses **See p8**

Wales & West Utilities is trialling new hydrogen and hybrid systems to substantially decarbonise local energy systems. **See p9**



'Image credit ORE Catapult'



# CLIMATE ACTION

Take urgent action to combat climate change

## VANS, HGVS AND CARS DECARBONISED

All gas networks are reviewing their fleets with a view to reducing their reliance on fossil fuels. Together, they aim to be running 2,318 electric or hybrid vehicles by 2026 and progress towards that target is already well underway.

BioCNG (compressed biomethane) is rapidly becoming the fuel of choice for HGV fleets as it cuts carbon and other harmful emissions, as well as costs. Cadent has connected bioCNG refuelling facilities to its gas network and has invested in a fleet of nine biomethane trucks, which will significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions and help improve air quality. The trucks are cheaper to run too, generating savings of around 38 per cent compared to diesel.



Cadent is also putting five hydrogen-fuelled response cars through their paces on its North London network. The cars offer a range of almost 400 miles and emit nothing but water. There are no dedicated hydrogen fuel cell electric vans operating in the UK today so Cadent has chosen the Nissan e-NV200 as the platform on which it can develop its early learning and experience as it works towards decarbonising its gas emergency response fleet.

The company has also announced that its company car scheme now only offers zero emission vehicles.

Wales & West Utilities will achieve a zero emissions fleet by 2035, and is installing electric charging points in its offices and depots to support colleagues to transition away from petrol and diesel for their personal vehicles.

NGN, which is already working towards a target of 50% of its fleet ULEV or hybrid by 2026, and Wales & West Utilities are collaborating in a UK Energy Innovation Centre-sponsored programme to identify the potential in adopting hydrogen fuel cell electric vehicles (FCEV) in the future. They're also working together to estimate the necessary refuelling capacities and investigate suitable locations for shared-use hydrogen refuelling infrastructure. So far, the project has shown significant potential for both battery electric and fuel cell electric vehicles in the commercial fleet.

National Grid Gas pledges to be operating a 100% electric fleet by 2030 for its light-duty vehicles and to pursue the replacement of its medium and heavy-duty vehicles with zero carbon alternatives.

SGN aims to transition its commercial fleet to 50% ULEV vehicles, where possible, by 2026. The company is also encouraging uptake of low or no-emissions company cars by gradually reducing maximum permitted emissions (CO<sub>2</sub>/km).





# OTHER AREAS OF FOCUS

The gas networks may have identified the previous SDGs as being of greatest relevance to their organisations, but their work impacts virtually every goal. Here, we explore their support for several more SDGs.

## SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable



**6,000** young people engaged with the activities and stories on the Safety Seymour site.

## WORKING TOGETHER TO CREATE SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

So much of what the gas networks do is about supporting local communities. Every network has well-established community funds, volunteer programmes and matched funding. You'll find individual examples of community support throughout this report and below. And one collaborative project is helping to raise awareness of carbon monoxide with the help of a bear named Seymour.

### COMMUNITY GRANT PROGRAMME

National Grid's programme is aimed at community organisations and charities in areas where their work is impacting on local people through its operations and site activities. With grants of up to £20,000, the programme funds projects that provide social, economic or environmental benefits to communities. Since its launch in December 2015, grants have been awarded to a host of village halls, cricket clubs, play parks, first responder groups and many more. The total amount awarded in grants to date stands at £1,943,968.

### SAFETY SEYMOUR

Safety Seymour is a collaboration by all the gas distribution networks and Bonanza Creative to teach children and their families about the dangers of carbon monoxide in the home, how to spot it and what to do about it.

The campaign, initiated by Cadent, has seen almost 6,000 young people engage with the activities and stories on the Safety Seymour site.

In 2019, Jaydee-Lee Dummett, then 7, from Fochriw in South Wales, won Child of Courage at the Pride of Britain Awards, after saving her family's life by raising the alarm when she recognised signs of carbon monoxide poisoning. Three weeks after a Safety Seymour session delivered by Wales & West Utilities, she knew the steps to take to stay gas safe.

### GRANT MATCHING AND VOLUNTEERING

Every year, Cadent's employees raise huge amounts for charity and the company matches the amount raised by up to £400 per employee per year. This scheme is widely used by colleagues and in 2019/20 over £194,352 of donations were received from employees.

As the pandemic bit, however, Cadent saw COVID restrictions cause donations and fundraising opportunities to fall. In response, the network stepped up its charitable efforts, working with multiple charities to identify new ideas for fundraising. The company committed to increase matched giving for all fundraising in the three months leading to Christmas. For every £1 raised, Cadent committed £4. For the most innovative ideas, matched funding was multiplied by five or even ten times.

Between October and December 2020, Cadent's multiplied matched giving totalled £73,700, an 809% increase on the year before, benefiting 49 charities including Cadent's corporate charity partner, Alzheimer's Society.

In addition to its charitable work, an employee volunteering programme in association with Volunteering Matters identifies opportunities in the local community that Cadent employees can take part in. In 2019/20 125 staff gave 788 hours which directly benefited 41,087 people.

Throughout the pandemic, Cadent's volunteering efforts stepped up too. The company offered all employees two days' paid leave every month to volunteer. The initiative, originally intended to support communities during the first lockdown, proved so popular that it has become a permanent arrangement.

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



# OTHER AREAS OF FOCUS



## LIFE ON LAND

Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.



**2,921,201** square metres of land remediated between April 2013 and March 2021

## SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE LAND REMEDIATION

The UK has over 400,000 hectares of contaminated land, much of it a legacy of the Industrial Revolution. That's roughly the equivalent of 300,000 football pitches. Land remediation is the process of restoring land to its former or natural safe state and all networks are collectively involved in innovative work – much of it award-winning – that has to date seen nearly 3 million square metres of land made safe.

One representative example of the innovation happening across the UK involves the remediation of Redheugh Holder Station demolition. NGN used solar powered pumps to remove more than 6,000 litres of toxic coal tar from a Victorian underground tank. Through the use of only solar power, NGN saved £28,000 and approximately 66 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> compared to using traditional generators.

To date, the networks have remediated 2,921,201 square meters of land.

## GETTING THE SUSTAINABILITY BUZZ

SGN has been working with a local school to increase awareness of the decline in bee populations across the UK and globally. At SGN's Glasgow office, Temple Holder Gas Station and at Trinity High School, Rutherglen, the company has installed a total of 11 new beehives to gain baseline data to understand more about local biodiversity and where it should focus improvements and spend next.

Following a high profile launch with naturalist Chris Packham, the project has certainly been received enthusiastically by SGN staff and pupils. Some staff have trained as beekeepers. Two groups of students are working towards a nationally accredited course in beekeeping, sponsored by SGN. And many of the school's younger pupils have said the only reason they attend school is because they like beekeeping!

## IMPROVING AIR QUALITY AND BIODIVERSITY

Through its Homes for Nature initiative, NGN is taking positive steps to help wildlife and biodiversity flourish on its infrastructure sites. Working with maintenance contractors and local groups, the company is designing and installing site-specific measures to encourage biodiversity, such as creating wildlife habitats from felled vegetation and installing bat and bird boxes. At one site, NGN has even installed a nest camera to allow a local bird watching club to observe peregrine falcons nesting on gas holders. Improvements are already in place at 50 of NGN's sites with a commitment to improve 200 more by 2026.

In 2020, NGN launched a project which will see 40,000 trees planted in urban areas to improve local air quality. As part of a five year partnership agreement with the Community Forest Trust, the gas network is providing £400,000 of funding to cover the cost of the trees and the new position of a dedicated project manager to design and deliver the tree planting across the White Rose Forest and HEYwoods initiatives in NGN's region. The project, which launched in early 2021, will also involve working with local authorities and organisations to secure land for future planting schemes.



# A SUSTAINABLE PANDEMIC RESPONSE



Throughout the pandemic, all our energy networks have been working hard to support customers through the most challenging of times, while ensuring their people are supported too.

## AN IMMEDIATE RESPONSE. A LONG TERM VIEW

Every network rose to the challenge of coronavirus. Staff volunteered thousands of hours to support their communities. Donations were made, funding was raised and iPads were delivered. Yet we know that the pandemic will continue to affect our communities – perhaps for years to come. That's why, through well-being champions, altering funding mechanisms and more, we aim to ensure ours is not just a short term response.

The following examples are just a small selection to represent the breadth of that response, from the 'business as usual' to the 'above and beyond'. You can check each organisation's pandemic response using the following links: [ENA](#) / [Cadent](#) / [National Grid](#) / [NGN](#) / [SGN](#) / [Wales & West Utilities](#)

## SUPPORTING MENTAL HEALTH DURING THE PANDEMIC

The pandemic placed new and intense pressure on mental health. In response, National Grid Gas's HR team developed materials and learning resources to help managers support their teams, including e-workouts and brief TED talks.

Covering topics ranging from knowing yourself and building resilience to motivating and sustaining performance remotely, the sessions were backed by training around good mental health practice. All managers and their teams were invited to take part in mental health first-aid days. And a one-day Managing My Mental Well-being course enabled people to explore tools and techniques to better manage mental well-being and health.

*This example supports Goal 3: Good Health And Well-Being*

## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP FUND

In partnership with Northern Powergrid, NGN has established the Community Partnering Fund which provides funding for community initiatives including pandemic support, support for local enterprise, and a Vulnerability Strategy which aims to identify and improve lives and life outcomes at grassroots levels within communities.

Funded projects to date have included providing hundreds of hours of tuition in English for Speakers of Other Languages for 90 children and 30 adults, promoting STEM through art in a local school, and bringing IT (and the related skills development) in-house, a move which has seen an initial team of 8 grow to 60.

*This example supports Goals 8, 10 and 11*

# A SUSTAINABLE PANDEMIC RESPONSE

## HELPING CUSTOMERS AND COLLEAGUES STAY SAFE, WARM AND WELL

Wales & West Utilities launched the Safe and Warm Fund during the coronavirus pandemic. Targeted at those on the front line, the fund has awarded £50,000 of support to 21 charities and other organisations supporting more than 13,000 of the most vulnerable people in communities across Wales and south west England.

Conscious of the toll the pandemic is taking on the mental health and well-being of colleagues, the company has initiated a series of virtual well-being cafés, which focused on the needs of the individual. Well-being champions are providing an additional



layer of support and the network is building well-being information, advice and support into its communications.

*These examples support several SDGs, including Goal 2: Zero Hunger and Goal 3: Good Health And Well-Being*

## KNIGHTS IN HI-VIS ARMOUR

Cadent's First Call Operatives adapted to the new approaches that were introduced in line with government guidance and continued their vital work of repairing and maintaining the network and responding to any emergency calls related to suspected leaks. In its administrative teams, the Customer Support Centre adapted through a combination of working from home and working in offices that had been reorientated to respect social distancing requirements.

The network's teams were given the flexibility to use their time to volunteer themselves and their company vehicles to help deliver medical supplies and support food banks.



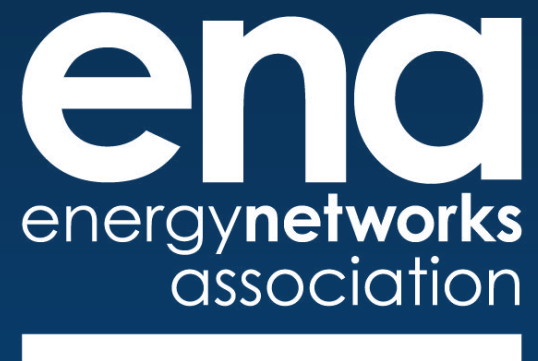
In February 2020, Cadent announced a 12-month action plan to promote mental well-being. As the effects of the pandemic became apparent, the plan proved extremely timely. As part of Cadent's Time to Change pledge, staff were encouraged to speak out about their own mental health issues and the company promoted lifestyle choices proven to help mental health thrive.

Mental health first aid training was also part of the plan but needed to adapt to the situation as it could no longer be delivered face to face. To date, more than 750 staff have received the training virtually.

*This example supports Goals 2, 3, 9 and 11*







**Energy Networks Association**

4 More London Riverside

London SE1 2AU

t +44 (0)20 7706 5100

w [www.energynetworks.org](http://www.energynetworks.org)

t [@EnergyNetworks](https://twitter.com/EnergyNetworks)

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