Network Innovation for Communities Breakout Session
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Regen
Engaging communities in network innovation

A centralised system

- Transmission Network
- Distribution Network

More decentralised system
What is energy network innovation?

- About achieving savings, security of supply, & environmental benefits
- Smart meters, installation of renewable energy and technological progress, such as storage and electric vehicles are driving innovation
- Updates and final reports on all projects are published on the Energy Networks Association: Smarter Networks Portal
  www.smarternetworks.org
- About using the system we have better and developing new solutions
Start by listening

“Start by listening”

“Why?”

“That’s not my problem”

“I don’t think that’s the problem”

“I have a better idea”

“What are you talking about?”

“The network is constrained so you need to use less electricity between 5-7pm”
Trusted intermediaries
Communication

- Communicate concisely and proactively
- Avoid jargon
- Use messages people are interested in
- Connect your message to other things people care about
- Use multiple communication channels
- Repeat messages in multiple formats
- Don’t assume people know what to do – help them learn
- Give feedback
Incentives

• Be generous
• Use positive reinforcement

Timing

• Engage early
• Good engagement takes time
Other important things to think about …

- One size does not fit all
- Co-design for ownership
- Manage expectations
- Test to save time
The Sunshine Tariff

- 380 enquiries > 89 households signed up > 61 participants (55 WREN)
- Huge marketing campaign – using a local trusted brand – WREN
- Monetary incentive is not enough on its own, it’s easier to engage people who are energy aware
- Technical & regulatory delays, 9 month engagement period > 3 months
- Switching took a lot longer than expected
- Changes in the market, a more competitive offer became available

Most common reason for customers not joining = financial
Open LV

There are about a million low-voltage (LV) electricity substations in UK

This project will

• share substation data with communities
• help communities use this data
• work with communities to develop an app (to help secure better grid connections for new renewables, or to understand local electricity consumption for carbon footprinting)

Use this link register your interest
How to get involved in energy network innovation

• Attend **events** with DNO’s – on their own or together …
  
  1 November London    7 November Newcastle

• Think about what you offer

• Network and develop partnerships, trials involve DNOs and licensed suppliers, smart tech businesses, developers, and communities.

• Most trials funded by the Network Innovation Allowance (NIA) or Network Innovation Competition (NIC), Innovate UK, The Energy Systems Catapult, or universities.
Further information

- **Films**
- **Report on the future of distribution networks**
- **Local Supply**
- **Engaging Communities in Energy Network Innovation**
- **Guide to connecting storage for communities**
- **Energy Storage - Towards a Commercial Model**
Thanks for listening

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Network innovation for communities
Northern Powergrid
24 June 2017
Northern Powergrid

• Regulated business
• Owned by Berkshire Hathaway Energy
• 2 licensed businesses
• 3.9 millions customers
• Typically invests £340m per annum
• …and £2m in innovation
Drivers for change in the energy system & our innovation priorities

- Customer Engagement
- Local and intermittent generation
- Electrification of heat & transport
- Digitisation

Maximise the value of smart meters
Develop digital services
Deploy smart grids
Address affordability
We recognise the value of Community Energy

- To the community
  - Massive social return on investment

- To the energy system: 2 live innovation projects with CE groups:
  - Activating Community Engagement
  - Distributed Storage and Solar Study

The challenges of working with communities

Recruitment
• Low brand awareness
• Making the geography coincide
• Finding the right motivator

Solution deployment
• Reliability of results
• Longevity of results
• Price competitiveness
• Scalability
Activating Community Engagement

A community project which rewards customers for being flexible with their energy usage

Testing gamification of residential DSR as a recruitment and long term engagement method
For an overview of all our activities in Community Energy, visit www.northernpowergrid.com/your-powergrid, and filter on ‘Community Energy’

Contact us on: Community.energy@northernpowergrid.com
Q&A