

# Unmetered Other



**Incentive on Connections Engagement  
Looking Forward and Looking Back Report**

**May 2020**

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# Welcome

Welcome to our Incentive on Connections Engagement (ICE) Report for Unmetered Other Stakeholders.

Electricity North West, as one of 14 Distribution Network Operators (DNOs) in Great Britain, provides an essential service to all our customers. We cover a region of diverse communities and landscape, from dense urban populations like Manchester, to remote rural locations across Cumbria.

Our connections business is delighted to be supporting growth and sustainability in the North West of England by enabling Unmetered Other connections to the electricity network. Stakeholder engagement is vital in how we run our business and ensures we can provide the best service possible. We are committed to building strong relationships with stakeholders across the region and delivering a service they expect, and we are proud that this one of our priorities.

This report contains three sections:

- **Our Engagement Strategy**
- **Looking Back Report**
- **Looking Forward Report**

The **Our Engagement Strategy** section describes how our engagement is applied with our Unmetered Other stakeholders. In the **Looking Back** section, we provide a detailed report on our engagement activities and the delivery of our commitments in 2019-20 and the **Looking Forward** section sets out our commitments for 2020-21.



## Foreword

I am delighted to introduce our Unmetered Other ICE report for 2020. This report reflects our approach towards supporting this market segment as the pace of growth in the North West continues.

Our workplans drive continuous improvement within our business and my priority remains to drive a first-class service for our connections stakeholders and customers. We work hard to understand the nuances of each market segment and this is reflected in the way we tailor our workplans for each stakeholder group.

We understand that the needs of our customers within this market are varied and differ from the needs of our other stakeholders and we continue to work hard to deliver for them.

Our focus has been to maintain an excellent service and build on existing and new relationships. We will continue to explore new ways of engaging with our Unmetered Other stakeholders in 2020-21.

Clearly COVID-19 will have some consequences on how we engage with our stakeholders, but we will endeavour to adopt new ways of working to ensure that the richness of engagement is not diminished.

I hope you enjoy reading this report, as always if you have any comments or feedback I'd love to hear them. Please contact me via the ICE team at [ICE@enwl.co.uk](mailto:ICE@enwl.co.uk).



**Mark Williamson**  
Energy Solutions Director

Photo: Mark Williamson, Energy Solutions Director (centre).



# 1 Our Engagement Strategy

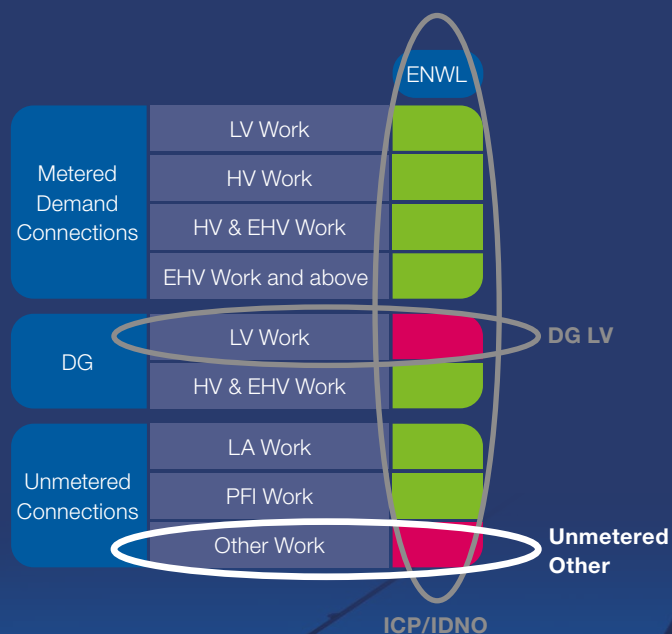
## 1.1 Background

Our Incentive on Connections Engagement reports focus on specific connections market segments, in line with Ofgem's 'competition tests' held between 2011 and 2013.

We were delighted to pass all but two of these competition tests, demonstrating our commitment to promoting competition in the North West and increasing choice for our customers. All Distribution Network Operators (DNOs) are required to develop and report on ICE workplans for all market segments that did not pass the competition tests.

In 2019, we published three workplans relating to different market segments. The Unmetered Other and Distributed Generation Low Voltage (DG LV) workplans consider the market segments where the competition test was not passed. The third considers improvements to our processes and assistance for third parties offering contestable work. This is different to the other two Workplans as it applies to services for all market segments, including those where we passed the competition test.

This document is the Incentive on Connections Engagement report for the Unmetered Other market segment.



## 1.2 The Unmetered Other market

Electricity North West is operating in a dynamic, rapidly changing environment which means that our role is evolving, and we need to ensure we're best placed to keep pace with change and meet that important challenge. We keep customers' lives running smoothly; we keep them connected with friends, family and the wider world; power their entertainment and enable them to work smarter and more flexibly. Our customers rely on us now more than ever.

The Unmetered Other market segment comprises all unmetered work that is carried out for customers other than local authorities or under a Private Finance Initiative. This work can be for developers on new housing sites, for advertising hoardings and for telecommunication and internet providers.

Although this is a relatively small compared to other market segments seeking connections from us, it represents a vital part of our local community. It helps ensure safety on our streets where streetlighting is provided, and internet connections enable flexible working and maintaining social activity.

In the North West, we have seen a consistent number of customers over the last three years in the Unmetered Other market segment.

The table below shows that a high proportion of customers only have connections that are valued under £2,000. The majority of our customers in this area are one-off connections with only a small number of returning customers, therefore this limits the opportunities for engagement and highlights the need for us to get it right first time. For our small number of regular customers, strong communication links have been forged with our delivery teams. This year, we have focussed on building these relationships at a local level, with the key contacts responsible for managing customers in their area. We aim to support the Unmetered Other market to deliver the best possible service to our customers.

Year	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
<b>Number of customers</b>	54	60	53
<b>Number of customers under £2k</b>	30	29	22
<b>Number of customers over £10k</b>	9	9	7

## 1.3 Engagement strategy and approach

### 1.3.1 Putting stakeholders at the heart of what we do

Our corporate Engagement Strategy is well embedded, enabling our internal teams to develop plans informed by input from our stakeholders and from external benchmarking. We have effectively managed changes to our processes and activities to drive successful outcomes. It is aligned to the AA1000 Stakeholder Engagement Standard, a best practice framework and informs the structure for the engagement activity we deliver. We also align to the updated AA1000 Assurance Standard which covers adherence to these Engagement Standards.

Our connections stakeholders are an important stakeholder group within Electricity North West and we apply the principles in our Engagement Strategy when engaging with our Unmetered Other connections stakeholders. This engagement helps us develop our business strategy, as well as enhancing our day to day activities. We continue to place stakeholders at the heart of what we do, enabling us to develop and implement plans to further enhance the services we provide. We engage with purpose, asking our stakeholders what they would like to talk about, and how this engagement should take place. We are guided by our stakeholder's feedback.

The stakeholder engagement principles provide our stakeholders and customers with a clear statement of what they can expect from us as they engage with us.



#### We're **SWITCHED ON**

Stakeholder engagement informs our business decision-making

We engage with connections stakeholders to capture the views of the customers and communities we serve



#### We're **ADAPTABLE**

We understand our stakeholders' preferences and engage with them in line with their preferred channel

We continually grow our understanding and adapt our business as a result of listening to the experiences of our stakeholders



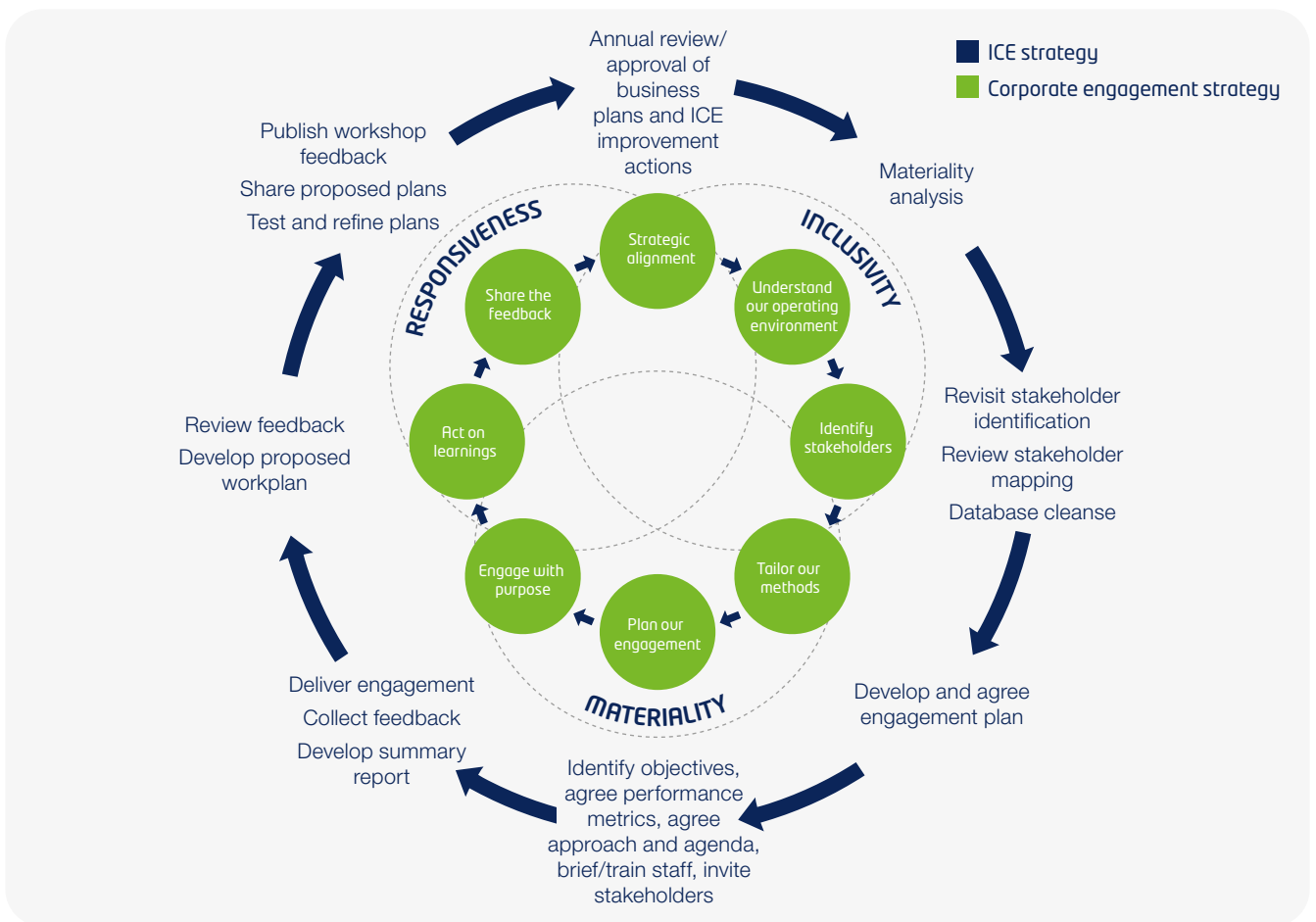
#### We take **PRIDE**

Our feedback to stakeholders is transparent on concerns raised, and they hold us to account

We act on our stakeholder feedback

### 1.3.2 Implementing our strategy in connections

Our Connections Engagement Strategy aligns with our corporate Stakeholder Engagement Strategy. We have integrated our stakeholder identification and analysis tools, engagement planning and feedback assessment across departments to ensure consistency and a robust approach.



We work hard to understand how industry-wide changes affect our stakeholders and how we can better tailor our services to adapt to changing needs. We have seen significant changes over the past year and recognise the value in regularly identifying stakeholders within the connections market. Our ambition is to engage with the widest possible range of stakeholders, however we recognise that not all their needs are equal, and we use stakeholder materiality methodology to inform and prioritise our engagement and our activity.



Our programme is topic led, driven by both our annual materiality assessment and the feedback arising out of our engagement activity. We know that nothing beats regular, face to face meetings. However, we also recognise our stakeholders' time is precious, and we need to ensure that they have opportunities to engage at their convenience. That's why in 2019-20, we have doubled the number of webinars delivered. We have also extended the availability and options for talking directly to our engineers in one-to-one surgery sessions. For the coming year,

we will continue to explore further options for engagement to improve our services, and to open up opportunities for our Unmetered Other stakeholders.

We recognise that engagement needs to be continuous and tailored according to short-term, medium and long-term stakeholder needs.

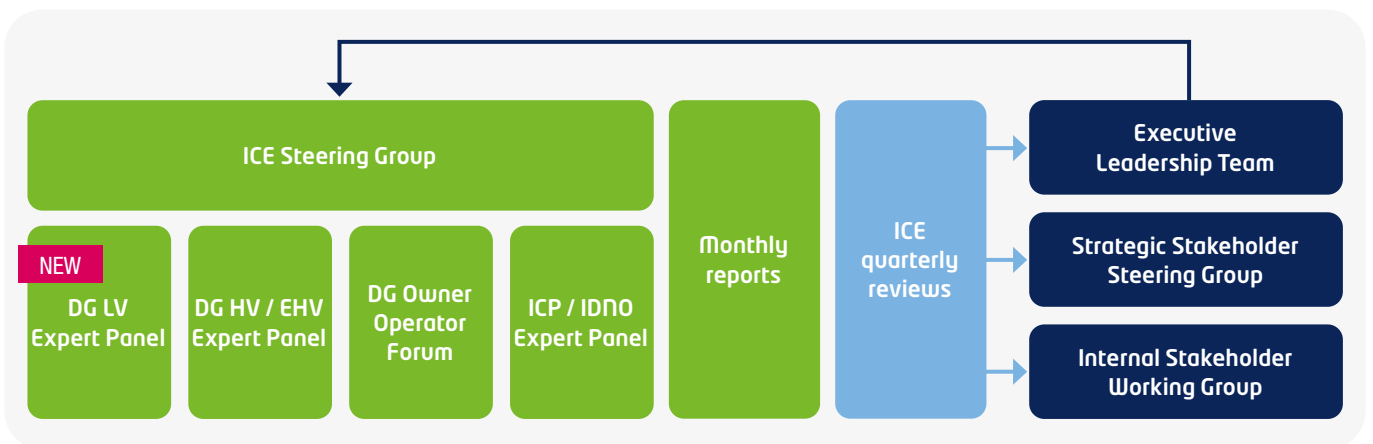
That's why we set clear objectives for improving engagement at all levels:



## 1.4 Engagement governance

We understand that to be truly effective, engagement needs to be fully aligned with and visible to the wider business. Feedback from across the whole business is evaluated and reviewed by a series of internal and external panels and is overseen by steering groups that ensure strategic direction and alignment with our business plan.

In Connections, progress against plans, operational feedback and risk is captured as part of business-as-usual monthly reporting to the Senior Leadership Team and the Executive Leadership Team and our board, therefore visible at all levels throughout the business. Our stakeholder engagement structure is shown below.



As part of our wider company engagement governance, we have a centralised register for our engagement with stakeholders, including those within the connections business. Engagement risks are reviewed by the Strategic Stakeholder Steering Group, this group discusses strategic mitigation techniques for implementation at a tactical level, amongst the working groups and operational teams.



## 1.5 Stakeholder identification and positioning

Our stakeholder profiling and mapping processes are robust and well-established and helps us to understand the basis of stakeholders' level of interest and influence across key topics. Our approach fully aligns with that of the overarching company stakeholder mapping methodology and allows us to understand the context of our connections stakeholders against the wider community.

We continually review and re-assess our stakeholder profiles and mapping to ensure that our stakeholder engagement continues to be planned appropriately for our target groups.

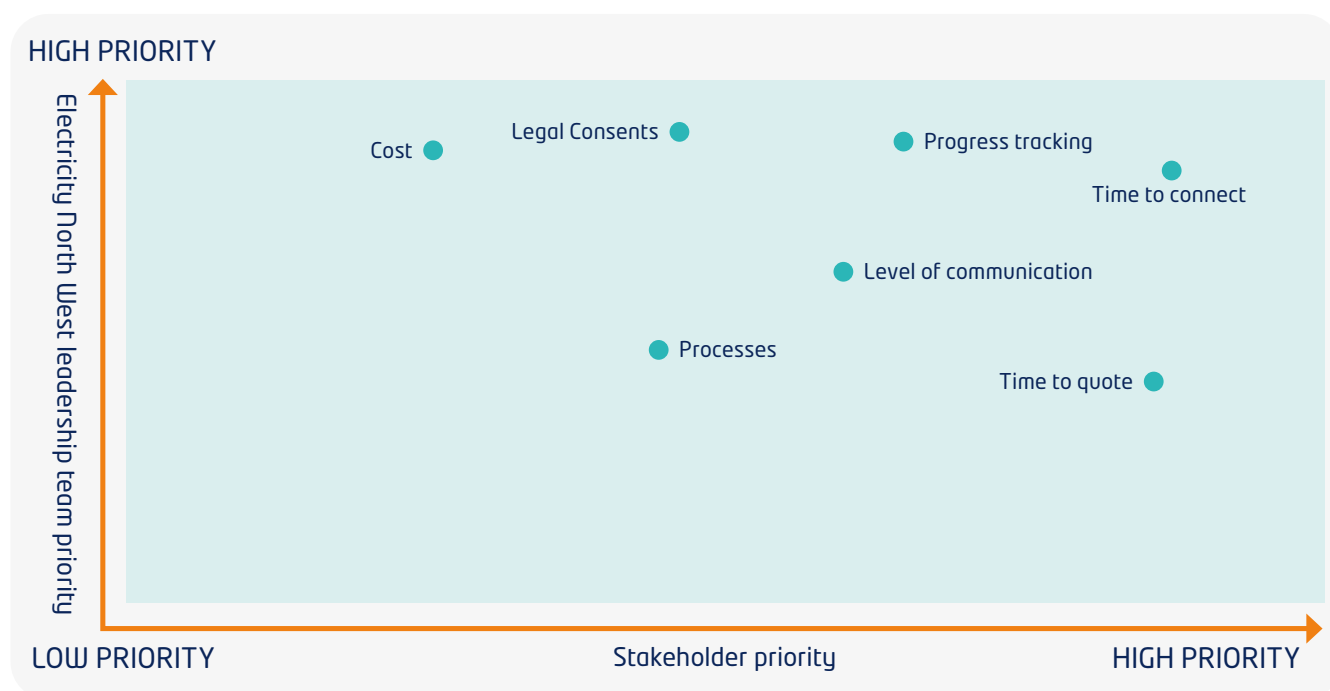
We identify and position our stakeholders by using our corporate Venn diagram as shown below. Stakeholders are positioned according to where we have an obligation to them, whether they are affected by our operations and their likelihood to influence our performance as an organisation.

We also review previous stakeholder feedback and engage with our stakeholders to identify key priorities and issues (materiality items), before mapping these in terms of importance to our connections' stakeholders.

Below is the stakeholder map for the Unmetered Other market segment which utilises the same principles applied across the wider business engagement strategy, ensuring consistency.



Materiality Map – Unmetered Other stakeholders



## 2 Looking Back report

We have well established day to day engagement with many of our Unmetered Other stakeholders across our area. This year we have increased accessibility to our teams by aligning ownership of our Unmetered Other work to our regional teams, allowing for more local knowledge to be available and the ability to build relationships within the locality of the stakeholders. Our ICE workplan is based on these relationships and stakeholder feedback. We have an open-door policy and provide multiple opportunities for stakeholders to contact us to discuss specific or general queries, in a format they feel comfortable with. These include webinars, surgeries and access to our experts in 1:1 meetings. We describe how we will build upon this and continue to grow our engagement activity in our Looking Forward report.



## 2.1 Summary performance

Commitment	Action	Target/Output/KPI	Target	Achieved	Status
<b>Target Time to Quote timescales for UMO</b>	We aim to outperform the regulatory standard by providing quotes on average in 19 working days (compared to guaranteed standard of 25 days)	We will continue to work to a 19 day average	Q4	Q4 (9 days)	✓
<b>Target Time to Connect timescales for UMO</b>	We aim to outperform the regulatory standard by completing connections on average in 22 working days (compared to guaranteed standard of 35 working days)	We will continue to work to 22 day average	Q4	Q4 (22 days)	✓
<b>We will improve access to Geographical Information Systems</b>	We will improve 3rd party access to Network Information on GIS	We will deliver improvements to 3rd party access on Network Information and GIS	Q4	May 2020	✓
<b>We will engage with our stakeholders on the impact of our Network Management System</b>	We will review the new process for pre-construction drawings (pre-builts) and communicate changes	Hold 2 webinars  85% of stakeholders rate events as "Useful" or "Very Useful"	Q4	Q4	✓
<b>Improve our processes for dealing with emergency street furniture jobs</b>	Review our processes and engage with stakeholders to identify improvements to our reconnection process following road traffic accidents	We will publish this online	Q4	Q4	✓
<b>We will work with stakeholders to identify ways that we can improve the notification of planned supply interruptions to key unmetered installations</b>	We will investigate ways by which we could include key unmetered installations into our processes for notification of planned supply interruptions	We will communicate any improvements we can make to stakeholders	Q4	Q4	✓
<b>We will continue to communicate with our stakeholders.</b>	Issue regular updates on ICE commitments and health & safety via newsletters to registered stakeholders.	Issue quarterly newsletters.	Q4	Q4	✓

## 2.2 Detailed performance

In this section we set out the detail of how we have delivered on our commitments this year and where stakeholders can find the outputs from our actions.

### Improve Time to Quote

We understand time to quote is important to our Unmetered Other customers. This year we committed to continue to improve our target time to quote, reducing our target to 19 working day on average, outperforming the guaranteed standard of 25 working days.

We are delighted to have achieved an average time to quote of 9 working days for our Unmetered Other customers.

### Improve Time to Connect

In 2019-20 we continued to focus on delivering our customer projects, by committing to achieve an average time to connect target of 22 working days for our Unmetered Other customers.

We are pleased to have achieved an average time to connect of 22 working days, outperforming the guaranteed standard of 35 working days. We will continue to focus on this area in 2020-21.

### We will engage with our stakeholders on the impact of our Network Management System

As part of our ongoing IT strategy, we are investing heavily to replace our network control systems with a new Network Management System (NMS). This is a major project running over a number of years and supports our transition to Distribution System Operation. This new system enables much greater control and provides real time network reconfiguration, allowing improved restoration times and enabling a wider range of flexible options on our network. The design of NMS requires the addition of new network and any network changes in advance to facilitate the real time configuration. This had the potential to impact our connection customers and was included in our ICE workplans to ensure any changes required were implemented sympathetically for our stakeholders.

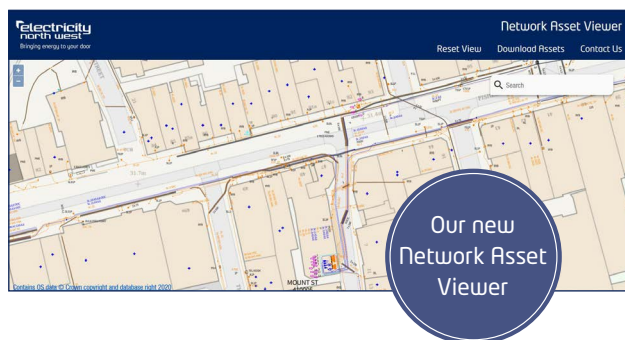
As the NMS project developed, we were able to establish that Unmetered Other customers would not be affected, and no additional information would be required. We were able to communicate this at our webinar in July where we provided an overview of the new system and explained that there would be no impact for this customer group. A second webinar was not held as there was no impact for these customers, but updates were also included in two of our quarterly newsletters.

## Improve access to Geographical Information Systems

Access to our Geographical Information System (GIS) helps our customers to develop their plans prior to placing a connection application with us. For our Unmetered Other stakeholders, this will help identify suitable locations for their street furniture and other assets. Access to both system information and our local experts helps our stakeholders follow options with confidence.

To improve access, we initiated a project to make our GIS system more accessible. This will allow viewer access for anyone and will not require the need to register, therefore streamlining this service. A further option available will be a downloadable file of our asset information for use within a stakeholder's own GIS system. This will make accessing our information much easier for all stakeholders, as well as enhancing the viewer capabilities.

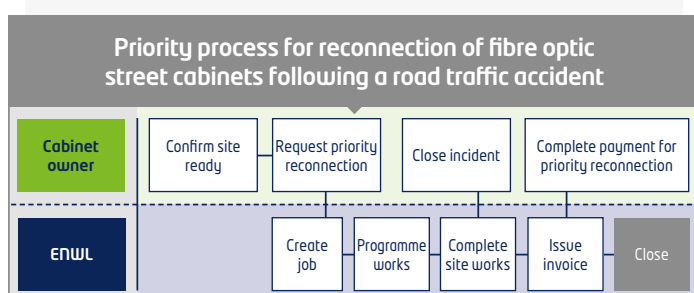
We had hoped to deliver this project by the end of March but some delays and then the onset of COVID-19 have had a knock-on effect with our developers having to overcome technical issues with home working. The delivery of the solution was therefore delayed to May 2020. Through our engagement events we have kept stakeholders updated as the project developed and were delighted to be able to involve some stakeholders in testing the new application. As the project has now been delivered, we have marked this commitment as having been met but late. We will be promoting the new functionality and providing training and guidance as part of our workplan in 2020-21.



## Improve our processes for dealing with emergency street furniture jobs

In our changing world, we all rely heavily on internet services, with service providers now expected to minimise any outage times. Following feedback, and to reflect the increased level of priority placed on these networks, the commitment was made to improve our processes for dealing with emergency street furniture jobs that affect this vital service for our communities. We have delivered a fast track response option for internet service providers as we recognise the importance of this service in our customer's lives.

Working with some of our key customers, we were able to develop and introduce a new option for reconnecting high priority fibre optic street cabinets following a knockdown. Fibre optic street cabinets are now an integral part of our national infrastructure and we have recognised the need to prioritise the reconnection of this equipment. The process below provides an operational response option for Telecom companies following damage to their fibre optic equipment.



This new option is now published on our website [here](#) and was promoted in our quarterly newsletter.

## Improve the notification of planned supply interruptions to key unmetered installations

Electricity North West has a well-established process to inform our customers of any planned supply outages, providing more than a week's notice to help our customers plan around these outages. It was highlighted in feedback that some of our notifications did not reach the appropriate team in the customers organisation to allow them to plan accordingly. This year, we committed to investigating ways we could include key unmetered installations into our processes for notification of planned supply interruptions to a central point of contact to ensure the right recipients received the notification.

We have worked with a number of our customers to obtain details of key customer installations. We have included these assets in our records, along with a central contact for all their key assets, trialling the process successfully, before rolling this out to a wider group of customers. This is now an established process in recording key customer asset information enabling us to ensure we are able to provide a similar level of notice prior to planned supply interruptions for unmetered assets as that provided for domestic and commercial properties. This development in our process allows our Unmetered Other customers to proactively manage the shutdown by installing battery backups in their equipment, therefore minimising disruption for their customers.

## We will continue to communicate with our stakeholders

We have continued to provide quarterly updates on our commitments and progress updates on individual actions via newsletters and through our website. We are delighted that 81% of the newsletters issued this year were read by stakeholders receiving these communications.

In addition to publishing all presentations and updates on our website, we have increased the number of webinars offered to stakeholders. These were recorded and published on our website to enable those unable to attend to catch up in their own time.

To guarantee that our ICE workplans and updates are reaching our connections audience, we have ensured that we have promoted ICE and our events on both the front page of the corporate website and via multiple newsletters. To capture a wider audience and promote ICE updates, we have utilised social media to advertise engagement events and share information with our stakeholders. We will continue to explore innovative ways of communicating with our stakeholders through to next year.

# 3 Looking Forward report

## 3.1 Introduction

In this Looking Forward report for 2020-21 we set out our commitments and activities for the coming year. We continuously strive to improve the services we provide for our Unmetered Other connections customers.

Our commitments are based on feedback we have received throughout the year from stakeholders with an interest in our connections services. Our engagement continues on a rolling basis and we encourage stakeholders to engage with us to help us continually update and adapt our workplans and direction as needed.





## 3.2 Our Engagement Strategy 2020-21

This year we will continue to examine how we apply our engagement strategy and approach to ensure it continues to be beneficial for our connections stakeholders. We will extend the range and number of opportunities for stakeholders to engage with us, both face to face and online.

We will increase the level of promotional material to highlight our updates and signpost our distribution list.

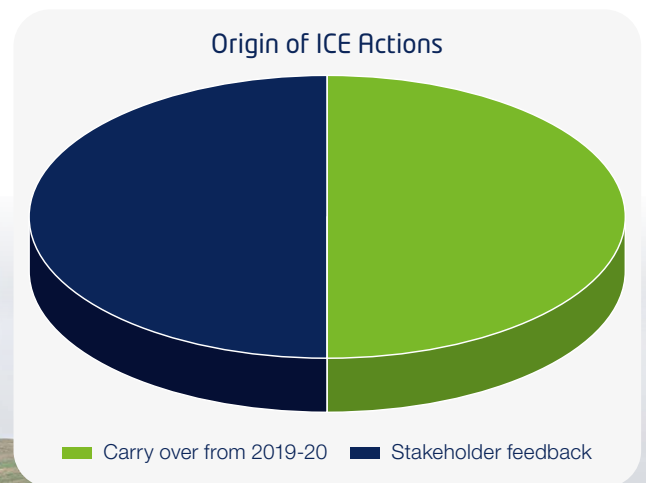
We will continue to build strong working relationships for day to day and project specific activities. Furthermore, we will review and enhance the opportunities for Unmetered Other stakeholders to engage with us by exploring the potential for regular feedback via webinars.

This year we will continue to further highlight our distribution list to ensure that we are engaging with a wide spectrum of Unmetered Other stakeholders to enable us to invite them to our online webinars, events or any other engagement activity of interest.

## 3.3 Developing our plans

We know it is crucial to involve our stakeholders in everything we do, not just in developing our plans, but throughout the year in our day to day interactions. Our workplan development is a gradual and continual process aligned with our engagement.

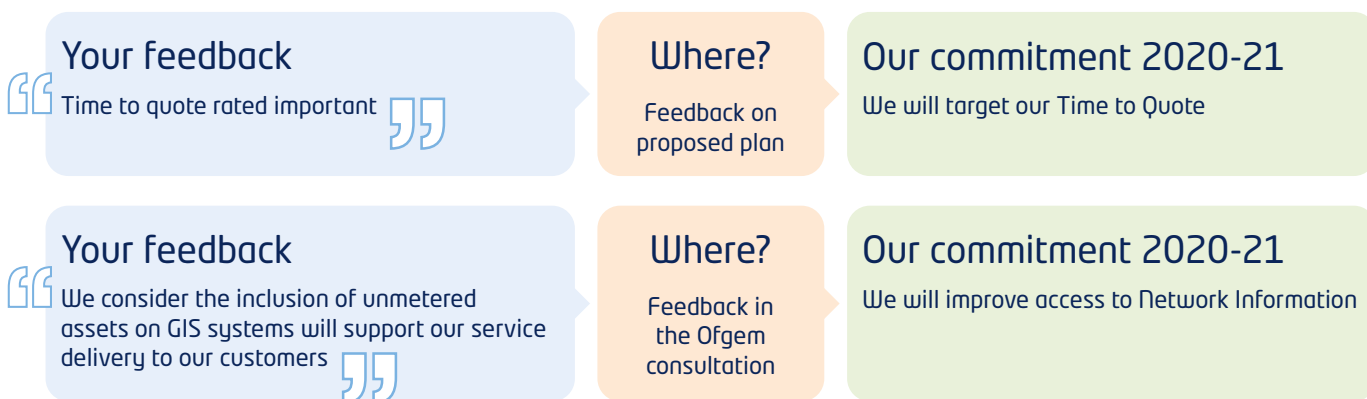
Our ICE workplan development process this year followed our approach from previous years. We sought and collected feedback, then developed ideas and produced a proposed plan, before going back to stakeholders again to review and refine before submitting our final workplan.



### 3.4 Looking Forward workplan

Commitment	KPI/Target	Delivery date
<b>We will target our Time to Quote</b>	We aim to outperform the regulatory standard by providing quotes on average in 19 working days (compared to the guaranteed standard of 25 working days)	Q4
<b>We will target our Time to Connect</b>	We aim to outperform the regulatory standard by completing connections on average in 22 working days (compared to the guaranteed standard of 35 working days)	Q4
<b>We will improve access to Network Information</b>	We will produce and publish training material for use of our new GIS functionality.	Q3
<b>We will share information and guidance on land consents process.</b>	We will continue to offer access to specialist experts via surgery sessions on request.	Q4
<b>We will review and enhance our engagement activities to ensure stakeholders have ample opportunities to engage with us.</b>	We will proactively seek to identify new members for our UMO distribution list.	Q2
	We will set up regular webinars to offer new opportunities to provide feedback and discuss UMO activities.	Q4
<b>We will continue to communicate with our stakeholders.</b>	We will continue to issue quarterly updates on ICE Commitments and Health and Safety via newsletters to registered stakeholders	Q4

### 3.5 You said, we will do



Feedback indicates time to quote and time to connect continue to be an important factor for our Unmetered Other stakeholders. We have therefore continued our aim to outperform our regulatory target for both these commitments.

Following sharing our proposed workplan for 2020-21 with stakeholders registered on our distribution list, we invited stakeholders to comment on our proposals. All feedback received was positive with stakeholders suggesting we are heading in the right direction with our engagement.

**All looks good, progressive and heading in the right direction to maintain engagement on UMO**

## 4 Closing statement

We take pride in being transparent in our engagement with connections stakeholders. This report demonstrates how we are switched on to the needs of our unmetered stakeholders, detailing the actions we have taken in order to achieve the commitments we made for 2019-20.

Our workplan for 2020-21 is based on feedback and follows a robust review process, showing how we are adaptable before finalising the commitments, actions and outputs. We work hard to ensure our workplan addresses the concerns and provides the greatest benefit to the unmetered sector in the North West.

We hope you have enjoyed reading our report and if you have any comments we would be delighted to hear your feedback. We look forward to building upon the improvements we have made and working with you in the year ahead.

If you would like to  
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