

NEWS RELEASE

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Power operator responds to future demand with new £5.5m trial

The region's power network operator, Electricity North West, is set to launch a new pioneering trial to help meet the future demand in electricity without the need to build costly new infrastructure.

The Respond trial, which has won £5.5m funding, including £4.5m from the government's energy regulator, Ofgem, will help make sure that customers in the North West continue to enjoy a reliable power supply to their homes and businesses and keep bills as low as possible.

Demand for electricity is set to grow significantly in the low carbon future as we start to use more solar panels, electric vehicles and heat pumps. Respond is a revolutionary solution which will help meet this extra demand and safeguard the electricity network for the future.

Steve Johnson, CEO of Electricity North West, said: "The Respond trial will allow us to explore new techniques to get more from our existing network. This will ensure customers across the North West continue to get the power they need without us having to invest in new expensive infrastructure resulting in lower costs for our customers."

It's estimated that the cost of upgrading the UK electricity network by building more infrastructure to meet future demand could be as much as £1.8 billion by 2025 in the North West alone and £15 billion across Great Britain – the equivalent of almost £600 for every household.

Electricity North West will work on the project with partners including ABB, Parsons Brinckerhoff, Schneider Electric, Impact Research, ENER-G and Combined Heat and Power Association.

Peter Jones, ABB's Technology Strategy Manager, said, "We look forward to working with the project partners on this important trial and the opportunity to demonstrate how cost effective technologies are able to help reduce the costs of electricity network operation. If successful, wider implementation of these technologies and systems has the potential to deliver significant value for customers in the North West and the rest of the UK."

ENDS

Editors Notes:

Electricity North West owns, operates and maintains the North West's electricity distribution network, connecting 2.4 million properties, and more than 5 million people in the region to the National Grid.

Partners

The 'Respond' trial is a joint scheme by Electricity North West and its partners, ABB, Parsons Brinckerhoff, ENER-G, Impact Research, Combined Heat and Power Association, Schneider Electric and United Utilities.

Interviews with Electricity North West spokespeople are also available on request from the Press Office.

For further press information, please contact: Nicole Kenny or Jonny Morgan on 0844 209 1957 or email PressOffice@enwl.co.uk

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