

GET CONNECTED

CONNECTIONS STAKEHOLDER UPDATE

I am pleased to be able to share with you some of the changes we have made to improve services for our connections customers.

By listening and acting on our stakeholders' feedback, we are making some important changes to our connections business which are delivering real benefits for our customers – making the process of getting a connection quicker and more efficient and ultimately helping more customers get connected to our network.

Our 2016/17 Incentive on Connections Engagement (ICE) plan is a great example of how we have been able to translate your ideas and suggestions into meaningful service improvement actions. In the following pages, you can read about the progress we are making on several of those actions and how we are helping more customers get connected through flexible arrangements, by proactively releasing network capacity and by providing upfront information to help customers identify potential connections sites.

I am extremely grateful to all of our customers and stakeholders that have provided constructive feedback to help us improve our connections service and I would encourage you to continue doing so in order to help us do even more in the future. I hope you find the contents of this newsletter interesting and informative and please do share any thoughts or suggestions you may have with us by emailing ICE@northernpowergrid.com

Andy MacLennan
Business Development Director
Northern Powergrid



ALSO IN THIS EDITION

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UNDERUTILISED CAPACITY UPDATE

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CONNECTIONS**PAGE 5**NEW POLICY ON EXPORT LIMITING
SCHEMES

YOU SAID WE DID

NEW

We have introduced several important new services and benefits for our connections customers. A snapshot of some of the improvements we have made can be found on pages 5 and 6 of this update.

**CONNECTIONS ENQUIRIES**
0800 011 3433

Mon-Fri: 8am - 8pm Sat: 9am - 5pm

CONTACT USAsk our experts a question about
any aspect of your connections
project.**'ASK THE EXPERT' ONLINE**Connections surgeries are an
opportunity to sit down with our
engineers and discuss current or
planned projects.**BOOK HERE**

PUTTING GENERATION AND DEMAND AVAILABILITY ON THE MAP

Our generation and demand heat maps help our customers to make informed decisions about their connections projects by giving them the information necessary to carry out their own initial assessment of available network capacity. We are proud of the enhancements we have made to our heat maps based on additional information our customers told us they needed to see.

Generation Availability Heat Map

Following customer feedback, we launched an improved version of our [generation availability map](#) earlier this year with a range of new and useful information. The generation heat map gives an indication of the potential opportunities to connect distributed generation (DG) to our network and it is now possible for our customers to see at a glance details relating to voltage constraints and reverse power flow capabilities, as well as projects which have been quoted but not yet accepted and projects that have been accepted but not yet connected.

Demand Availability Heat Map

Our DG customers told us that our generation heat map was a useful tool to help them identify potential connection sites and assess the viability of new projects. Our demand customers told us they wanted a similar resource so in March 2016, we became the first network operator to develop and launch an interactive [demand availability heat map](#).

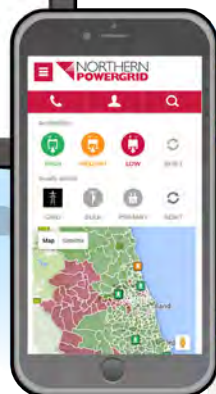
This heat map gives our customers visibility about the network's capability to connect large-scale developments to major substations. The information available to our customers now covers areas such as spare capacity value, transformer ratings and maximum and minimum demand criteria.



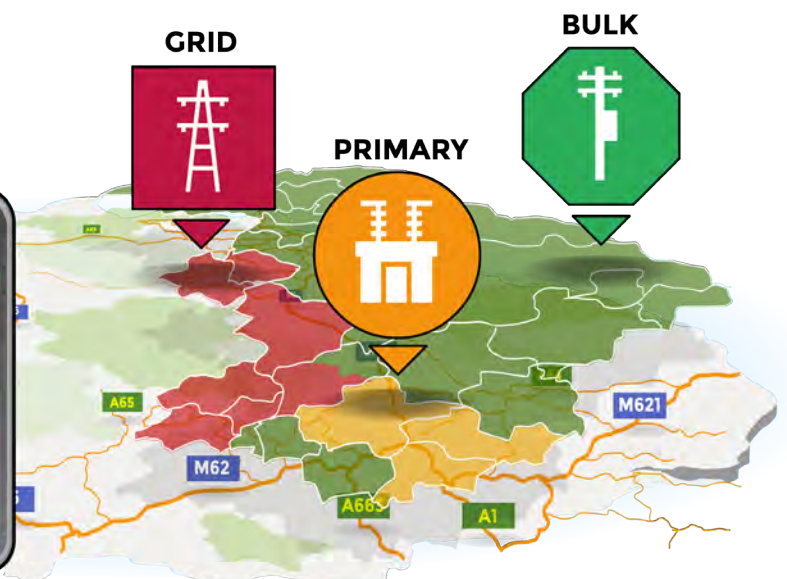
You told us that keeping the data on our heat maps up to date was critical. We acted on your feedback and committed to update our heat maps on a monthly basis.



DEMAND AVAILABILITY



GENERATION AVAILABILITY



Our heat maps are available online at www.northernpowergrid.com/getconnected and can be accessed via your computer, smart phone or tablet, ensuring the information you need is always at your fingertips.

A PROACTIVE APPROACH TO RELEASING UNDERUTILISED CAPACITY

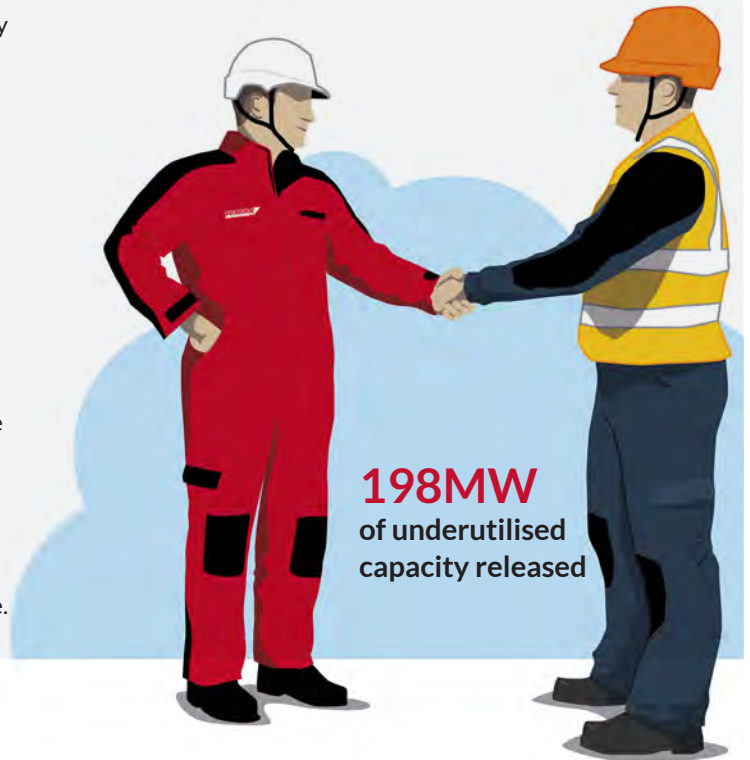
We are working hard to get more customers connected to our network, but to make even more progress we needed to adopt a more proactive approach to unlocking underutilised network capacity.

To put that into practice, we have been actively working with customers to identify slow-moving projects where reserved capacity is being held up. This could be because it has been reserved in existing connections agreements or contracted but not constructed connections.

By approaching each customer individually, we have been able to better understand and refine the capacity requirements of their specific projects, many of which had changed significantly since the initial connections request was made. We are proud to report that our efforts have seen 198MW of sterilised capacity released from slow-moving projects.

Such has been the success of this approach, we have now integrated the practice into our business as usual activity. We will also continue to play an active role in the DG-DNO steering group that is driving this forward as a national initiative as part of Ofgem's Quicker and More Efficient Connections (QMEC) initiative.

Make sure you look out for our next newsletter where we'll provide further updates on the unused capacity we have managed to release.



SHARE YOUR FEEDBACK WITH US AT OUR CUSTOMER FORUMS



DID YOU KNOW?

You can view and book all of Northern Powergrid's upcoming events and customer surgeries online here:

www.northernpowergrid.com/customer-events-and-surgeries

Our Connections Customer Forums take place twice a year and are a great opportunity for us to talk to our customers about the issues they are facing and how we can help.

The feedback we receive helps shape the improvements we make to our connections service. During our last forum we were able to share updates on our efforts to release spare network capacity, the new online resources and tools we have introduced, as well as more information on our smart grid innovation strategy. If you missed any of this, you can see the slides presented on the day [here](#).

Our next Connections Customer Forum is taking place on the **15 November 2016** and we would love to hear your thoughts on the improvements we have made as well as those you'd like us to continue to make. If you haven't already, we would encourage you to book your place by emailing:

connections.communications@northernpowergrid.com



Our next Connections Customer Forum takes place on 15 November 2016

PROMOTING COMPETITION AND CHOICE IN CONNECTIONS

When it comes to new network connections, Northern Powergrid is not the only company able to deliver the work. There are Independent Connections Providers (ICPs) who also provide connections services.

We are committed to improving our service to ICPs by maintaining an environment in which they can compete fairly for contestable works and where customers are free to compare prices and service levels before deciding which is the best option for them.

We have been working closely with ICPs in our region and as a result, last year we launched trials of metered disconnections and part-funded reinforcement. We developed all the technical and commercial principles and processes required to enable these works to be carried out and this year we have been able to identify some suitable sites upon which to conduct the trials.

We have completed a successful metered disconnections trial with an ICP partner and we will share the results with you in the near future. We are also looking to build on the progress we have made so far by working with an ICP to trial part-funded reinforcement. ICPs that are interested in collaborating on this pilot can contact: cinc.connections@northernpowergrid.com.



HAVE YOUR SAY



We work hard to continually improve the connections service we provide and your feedback is key to helping us do that.

We published our [Incentive on Connections Engagement \(ICE\) submission](#) earlier this year but the hard work did not stop there. We recognise there is always more we can do. Our service improvement plans are constantly evolving as we seek out, listen to and respond to the views of our stakeholders.

We have recently published our [mid-year update](#) and in response to feedback from our stakeholders we have added a further nine actions to our work plan for 2016/17.

Continued dialogue is crucial to fully ensure we are meeting the expectations of our customers. That is why we encourage you to make use of the many channels available to 'have your say' about our connections service.

If you have any comments on our ICE plan please email: ICE@northernpowergrid.com and we will get in touch to discuss your views as part of our on-going process of stakeholder engagement.

You can find out more about ICE and how we're improving our service for major connections customers at www.northernpowergrid.com/incentive-connections-engagement



YOU SAID

WE DID

We have introduced several important new services and benefits for our connections customers. Here are some examples of what we have done, in response to what you have told us.

ON EXPORT LIMITING SCHEMES

YOU:

Asked us to review our policy on export limiting schemes, telling us that by not permitting the use of these devices on our network, we were limiting your ability to offer renewable energy solutions.

WE:

Listened to your concerns and earlier this year we revised our policy on the use of export limiting schemes and will now permit them to be used on our network.

We have published some helpful [FAQs](#) on our website and the new policy is also available [online here](#).



ON ACTIVE NETWORK MANAGEMENT (ANM)

YOU:

Wanted us to provide more flexible connections and as a result of your feedback, we committed to develop and implement ANM connections offers.

WE:

Have more than 700MW of generation connected to our network through flexible arrangements and we are committed to developing offers that will help even more customers get connected.

Since 1 April 2016, customers applying for a connection to our network in Driffield have been offered an ANM connection and the opportunity to benefit from lower overall costs. We held a webinar for customers on how to apply for ANM connections which is available online [here](#), and have added a useful [FAQ](#) section to our website.

Customers wanting more information about our ANM roll out can contact: getconnected@northernpowergrid.com

ON ACCESS TO OUR RECORDS

YOU:

Asked us to provide access to our mains record information.

WE:

Created a new area on our website that explains the information available to customers and how to access it: www.northernpowergrid.com/getting-access-to-our-records

Customers requiring access to our mains records can login to our system remotely or at our offices. You can also request a disk which we will mail out.



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WE DID

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ON PHASED HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS

YOU:

Asked us if we could be more flexible with the charges associated with electrical connections for large housing developments.

WE:

Recognise that housing developments are often built over long periods of time and that developers do not want to tie up significant capital by paying up-front for all the required electrical connections. We have implemented a new process whereby developers can obtain a view for the quote for the entire work but only commit to the cost of the connection works that match the phases of their build schedule.

You can find out more here:

www.northernpowergrid.com/understanding-our-phased-housing-development-process

ON OUR INNOVATION STRATEGY

YOU:

Wanted to understand more about our long-term innovation strategy, particularly concerning energy storage, demand side response and active network management.

WE:

Ran a focused stakeholder session at our Connections Customer Forum in May where key members of the Northern Powergrid innovation team shared our smart grid vision and strategy. We'll be sharing more of this in the coming months and will keep all of our connections customers informed.



ON QUOTATION FEASIBILITY SERVICE

YOU:

Expressed an interest in a 'Quote Plus' style quotation feasibility service.

WE:

Designed and implemented a bespoke, multiple option feasibility service, trialling the process with key customers prior to its launch. We then introduced the service and wrote to customers to explain the new service and how they can benefit from it.