



Northern Powergrid

BEET local residents' panel –
wave one

Research report July 2024

Executive summary

Background

As part of the engagement with the local community about the Boston Spa Energy Efficiency Trial (BEET), which also involved a local residents’ survey and stakeholder in-depth interviews, a panel of 11 local residents was formed. These residents met in a local venue to discuss perceptions of the trial, what the key messages should be for local residents, and the best ways to engage and communicate with residents.

Results

Perceptions

Respondents were asked to answer two questions using a scale of one to five, where one is very negative and five is very positive. Perceptions towards Northern Powergrid and BEET improved during the session, with respondents feeling more positive about both once they had been given more information.

How do you feel about Northern Powergrid as a company?		How do you feel about BEET?	
Beginning of session	End of session	Beginning of session	End of session
3.75	4.64	4.27	4.95

Key messages

When ranking the key messages Northern Powergrid should provide in communications about BEET, cost benefits was ranked as the most important, followed by environmental benefits and background to the project. How the technology works and whether customers will need a smart meter were seen as least important.

Message	Rank
Cost benefits	1 st
Environmental benefits e.g. reduction of CO2 emissions	2 nd
Background to the project	3 rd
What do I need to do	4 th
What information will be collected about me/my energy usage	5 th
Where the project will take place	5 th
How the technology works	7 th
Whether I will need a smart meter	8 th

Communication

Respondents were asked about their communication needs before, during and after the trial, which are outlined below.

	What do you want to know	How would you like to be contacted	How would you be feeling	How often would you want to be contacted
Before the trial goes live	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Will it affect anything in my property -What to expect -Dates it will happen - Who to contact with any issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Text -Email -Community groups / notice boards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Mixed -Sceptical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Not too often -Information always available if required
Trial going live/underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Informed it is live -Notified when they will be updated on progress/ results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Same channels as initial contact -Dedicated place to go for updates e.g. forum / website 		
End of the trial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Results / success /findings of trial -Whether it will be Implemented elsewhere 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Same channels as throughout 		
After the trial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Whether the project has been continued/ rolled out elsewhere -Changes / improvements to the project -Future innovations 			

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**“Quality is never an
accident it is always the
result of intelligent
effort”**

Introduction

An overview of the project background, objectives and methodology.

Introduction

Project background

As part of the engagement with local residents about the Boston Spa Energy Efficiency Trial (BEET), a panel of 11 local residents was formed to enable discussion about specific topics at the beginning and end of the trial. This report outlines the findings of the first panel meeting.

Objectives

The key objective of this session was to understand:

- Whether the local community was aware of the project
- Do the local community understand the project
- What is the local sentiment towards the project
- How do the local community prefer to be communicated with before, during and after the pilot
- What does the ideal communication/engagement journey look like for similar innovation projects

Methodology

A 90-minute face to face focus group was conducted with panel members in Boston Spa, with 11 panel members attending. The focus group was also attended by Northern Powergrid representatives who were able to answer any queries or concerns the respondents had.

The session consisted of a series of discussions, information sharing, and ranking activities.





explain

**“The best vision is
insight”**




Results

An in-depth review of the findings of the research programme.

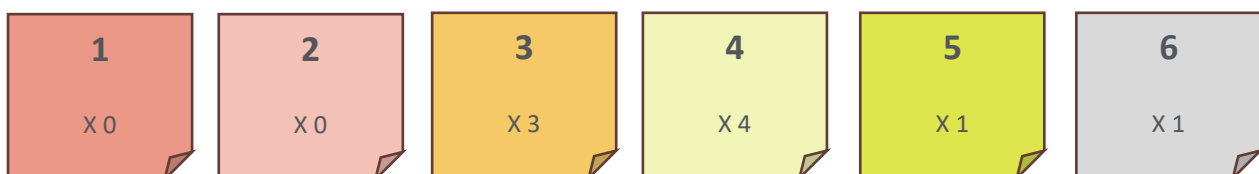
Results

Perception and awareness of Northern Powergrid


There was fairly good knowledge of Northern Powergrid within the group, with respondents having dealt with Northern Powergrid during power cuts, being aware of their role within the electricity network, and having work carried out by Northern Powergrid.

-  *"I think I contacted Northern Powergrid when there was a power cut and they kept me up to date as to when it was going to be restored and so on"*
-  *"They are in charge of the grid, aren't they? They are in charge of the network, that's how they are involved"*
-  *"I have a transformer next to my house and they were sorting out a hedge that is 12 foot tall and six foot wide and no fence, so, I had them in the last six months in the drive sorting out the hedge and the new fence, so I have been in conversation with them, quite a bit"*

Respondents took part in an activity where they used Post-it notes to vote on how they felt about Northern Powergrid as a company, rating from one to five where one is very negative and 5 is very positive and 6 is 'don't know'. Of the nine respondents who voted, none felt negatively towards Northern Powergrid, three were indifferent, five felt positively and one was unsure, leaving an average score of 3.75 out of 5.



Some of those who were feeling positive commented on the good service they had received during a power cut.

-  *"When I have had a power cut, I have been kept in control and people have let me know and to me that is really important, so that is it really....good service"*



One respondent who scored a three commented that although they were kept informed, they were unhappy with the number of power cuts they had experienced.

□ *“The only reason I was a three, but it wasn’t a four, yes, fully informed of everything in our area, we have had an enormous amount of power cuts and whether that is down to infrastructure or other problems, we haven’t heard any more on that about improving the services but we must have a good dozen to fifteen since the start of the year”*

There was strong agreement within the group that Northern Powergrid should be taking part in innovation projects like BEET, with one respondent commenting that their perception of Northern Powergrid meant they viewed BEET positively.

□ *“It puts it in a positive light because they are the best ones to do this, to get the power down to everywhere, I think it’s a good thing”*

Perception and awareness of BEET

Knowledge and awareness of BEET varied, with over half of the respondents said they didn’t know anything about the project before being invited to take part in the research.

□ *“I was saying I didn’t get [a leaflet], there is no reason why so I am in an awkward position but that would have been more interesting because when the [on-street recruiter] was doing the research outside the Cost Cutter, when he mentioned it, I was like, why don’t we know about this? Like in villages we depend on technology”*

Recollection of receiving a leaflet about the project also varied, and while some had received it, others were unsure, and some commented that they saw the leaflet but didn’t read it.


□ *“I think I did but I think I ignored it”*

□ *“I did remember seeing that, but it did go straight into the recycling”*



Those who had heard about the project had done so through receiving a leaflet, through word of mouth from people they know, through being part of an environmental group (Green Group), and via email.


 *"My wife is part of the green group, so she heard it from people"*


 *"It was just a cold email, but obviously I read it, and it was interesting to find out more, and that is it"*

 *"I got a leaflet"*


Respondents were then asked how what they had heard or read about the project had influenced their feelings towards the project, and responses were largely positive with comments about cost savings, environmental benefits, and wanting to know more about the project.

 *"I just thought, anything to save money, would be good"*

 *'Well, it's also saving on CO2, isn't it?... That is a key thing for me"*

 *"It made me talk about it to other people..., to know more about it, yeah"*

However there were some negative comments, such as the impact this could have on businesses who rely on power usage, and why the project had taken so long to implement, questioning the motives of Northern Powergrid.

 *"I was slightly suspicious, not suspicious, but I am thinking why is it taking this long to get the plan off the ground if the benefits were seen all the way back in 2009, with recommendations being made, why is it taking this long to get another project off the ground and why isn't it nation-wide, so the kind of makes me question the motivations of the Powergrid and have they been shamed into doing it or are they doing this to hit environmental targets or are they thinking about customers, are they trying to save them money, so there is a lot of questions reeled out like why here and why now"*

 *"That it's a good idea especially if it rolled out UK wide but the issue is then, how would it affect bigger companies who use a lot of power"*

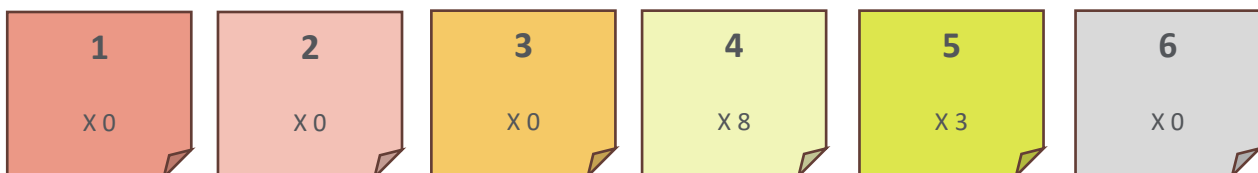
Several respondents had further questions they would like the answer to, such as whether other people have tried and failed to implement similar projects, and what the voltage was going to be, which sparked a conversation around whether this sort of technical information should be included in the



information leaflet. Some would like more detailed information on the leaflet, whereas for others it was felt too much information may put people off from reading the leaflet, therefore it was suggested a link to further information if required could be provided.

- *"...if you read through the leaflet and you instantly have questions, then the answers should be there in the first place, because all you are doing now is reading a leaflet and go that looks really good, but when you go deeper into it, you then notice that there is obviously some concerns there because you have questions and the people who put the leaflet together must know that we are going to be wanting to know about them"*
- *"I think it could put people off if there is too much initial information because most people don't read in depth the first thing they get, they just don't...so I think just a general overview with the idea that there would be more informational to follow, more detailed information to follow"*
- *"I was just going to say when you said before, maybe like a weblink to get more information"*

Respondents were then given a description of BEET, and asked to use their Post-it notes to vote on how they feel about it, again from one to five with one being very negative, 5 being very positive, and six being 'don't know'. All respondents voted positively about their feelings of BEET, scoring either four or five and an average score of 4.27.



When asked why they had given positive scores, respondents commented that they were happier now they had more information, it was common sense. And it would have a positive impact on bills and the environment.

- *"...from the information you have given, you know without going into it too deeply, it seems like if it is going to be rolled out, it is a no brainer"*
- *"It's good common sense to optimise things"*
- *"You use less power within those ranges and your bill at the end of the month is less, how can that not be a good thing and then obviously the impact on the climate as well so..."*



□ *“Yeah, the more information you know, then you are going to feel like you have a much larger opinion aren’t you, the more information you know”*

Key messages about BEET

Respondents were then split into groups of two or three and given a list of key messages that Northern Powergrid could share with customers when informing them about BEET and were asked to rank these in order of importance. They were also asked to add any additional ideas they had for key messages to be included.

From the key messages provided, cost benefit was ranked by far as the most important message, with four of the five groups ranking this in first place, and the other group ranking it in second. The environmental benefits to the project was seen as the second most important message, followed by the background to the project.

Message	Rank
Cost benefits	1 st
Environmental benefits e.g. reduction of CO2 emissions	2 nd
Background to the project	3 rd
What do I need to do	4 th
What information will be collected about me/my energy usage	5 th
Where the project will take place	5 th
How the technology works	7 th
Whether I will need a smart meter	8 th

Messaging around results and how the findings will be communicated was an additional message suggested by three of the groups, although this was ranked in position 9 or 10 by each group, therefore less important than the messages already suggested.

Another suggested message, identified in two groups, was evidence to support the project, and this was ranked as 5th and 9th in terms of importance.




There were two other additional suggestions: incentives (ranked 7th) and information about further development/improvement (ranked 11th).


Although two of the additional suggested messages were ranked higher, as these were only suggested and ranked by one or two of the groups, overall these were seen as less important than the messages proposed originally.


Respondents were then asked to discuss the reasons for their rankings. It was suggested that highlighting the cost benefit on the leaflet would make people pay attention, as they would then have a personal interest in the project.

 *“....maybe some people aren’t bothered about it but now is it going to save me money”*


 *“the caption, because you get a lot of leaflets through the door and most of them are to do with the voting and what else but if I had a leaflet and it was like, how to save money, I would think it needs to be more excitable, that first line needs to be what it markets, because if you look at, no offense to the person who made the leaflet, but when you look at it you go, oh there is something going on in the village, does it look exciting, no it doesn’t”*

When discussing the background to the project, respondents discussed how it was important to understand the story behind the project.

 *“I thought the story was quite good and hearing Keith’s feedback on the facts to help the story sell and people aren’t very interested in the fact, unless they are data driven themselves but the story behind projects, so it was good that the leaflet really pulled that out”*

 *“I think it is very important because everybody wants to know what is happening and what is the story behind it and whether we should believe it”*

One respondent also highlighted the importance of considering different communication methods, particularly for elderly communities who may not have access to the internet. Local information boards were suggested as key and accessible for all ages.

 *“In this village we have lots of different age groups but we both have the same habits like if you are going to the Coopland’s and you are stood there having your sandwich or you are going past the post office, people read those things in the windows, like I spent ten minutes in Cost Cutters just looking at leaflets, you know and I just think that is the way most of the information is come*



across in the village, regardless of age and like I think that is where I get most of my information from in this village”

Within the ‘what do I need to do’ message, it was suggested that alongside the information about not needing a smart meter, it should be made clear whether an engineer needed to come to the house at all.

□ *“Does an engineer need to come to my house? Because you asked about smart meters, but does anyone have to come and install anything? Are they going to come and check something or whatever”*

Another additional suggestion was to provide an incentive for customers who are part of the scheme, for example offering a reduction to bills or providing tangible evidence to show what the customer could save (or has saved over the course of the project).

□ *“...if you are offering people an incentive to get on board with the scheme, I think that would be a real sort of way to get people to listen and to get people to take that....to get the buy in from people.... something onto your energy bill to knock it off that, something like that rather than giving cash but you know something like that”*

□ *“I mean that is the problem isn’t it, how do you know that you have reduced your costs because you have got your bill and you still use the same power, they might have reduced the voltage which has reduced the power but you don’t know that, you could have saved £10, you might not know....So obviously there is a lot of information being gathered and processed by the smart meter, could individuals actually be shown their consumption, what it has been and what it would have been and then have been”*



Ways to contact and communicate with customers about the project

Respondents were then asked to think about their communication needs at different stages of an innovation project:



Before the trial goes live		
What do you want to know	How would you like to be contacted	How would you be feeling
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Will it affect anything in my property- What to expect- Dates it will happen- Who to contact with any issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Text- Email- Community groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Mixed- Sceptical


Before the trial goes live, respondents commented that they would like to know how they would be affected and any potential problems it could cause.

- “Will it affect anything I use in my house, that's the thing”
- “...if we get a low voltage and the EV charger trips out, and lot of electric cars now, and they can be affected if it's in the middle of the night and you don't know about it and you need your car the next day...you've got a low charge car”


Respondents also agreed that they would want to know when it was happening, and who to contact if they experience any problems due to the trial.


- “What to do if you get an adverse effect”




 *"If the lights go dim you know who to contact"*

Thinking about how they would like to be contacted prior to the trial, text and emails were suggested, however it was also recognised there were members of the community who couldn't be reached this way. To reach this audience it was suggested Northern Powergrid needed to be present within the community, finding out the best ways to get in touch with each community, such as local community groups or notice boards for example, or having a community representative who has the information going door to door of those who are more vulnerable.


 *"...they get more in-depth updates than anyone else and then they are knocking on everyone's doors and just say here's this update, you want to know more about it"*

 *"I think if it was somebody local, you wouldn't be nervous speaking to them"*


 *"There are lots of community groups like sports and Facebook groups and social clubs and that sort of thing, so you need to put feelers out and find what those are and how often they meet and who leads them"*

Another suggestion was to reach people through schools, by informing and involving children the information would then be passed on to parents.

 *"They should go to groups and be part of the groups, even things in schools"*

 *"It could be all schools in fact and talking to children in a way you know they'd be really interested"*

When thinking about how they would feel at this point, it was suggested that different people would have different feelings, as some people would be sceptical regardless of the project and information provided.


 *"It's going to be mixed, isn't it? You know you could tell them it's going to be the best thing since sliced bread and they're still going to be sceptical but that's just human nature"*




Trial going live / trial underway			
What do you want to know	How would you like to be contacted	How would you be feeling	How often would you want to be contacted
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Informed it is live - Notified when they will be updated on progress/ results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Same channels as initial contact - Dedicated place to go for updates e.g. forum / website 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not too often - Information always available if required


Thinking about what they would want to be communicated with once the trial had gone live, it was agreed that respondents would want assurance the project is underway and going well, and to be informed they would be contacted in a few months with an update on how it is going.

In terms of channels for communication, it was suggested that whichever channels customers were contacted via initially, should be used again.

 *“The channels they’ve used from the beginning need to carry on using those channels because people will say you told us via this method and then we’ve heard nothing more about it”*

It was also suggested that there could be a dedicated place for people to go to find out information, such as a forum or a website.

 *“And if they don't give us consistent communication, maybe a forum or something like that... like a dedicated place....just for queries and questions and answers”*

 *“Rather than use Facebook could we set up a webpage...people might not do social media...so, a website is better”*

Opinions on the frequency of communication varied, one respondent felt more communication would increase interest and engagement in the project, whereas others felt as long as the information was available, there didn’t need to be constant communication.



- “Well as long as the communication is there, it’s your choice”
- “It’s your choice but also constant communication can increase the enthusiasm of taking part”
- “I don’t think it should be constant”

A suggestion was made for there to be a visualisation tool for customers to see the energy savings being made.

- “Can they maybe do like a power saving kind of thing? Like with recycling where you do shredding and stuff, and they say you’ve saved this many trees. It encourages people to recycle rather than not because they don’t have to do anything, it’s just put the paper in the shredder rather than in a different bin that’s beside the normal bin...”

In terms of engagement, it was suggested that customers should have the opportunity to engage if they wanted to.

- “I think maybe the opportunity if you want to mosey along and see how it pans out....so they could ask questions”

End of the trial		
What do you want to know	How would you like to be contacted	How would you be feeling
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Results / success / findings of trial- Whether it will be implemented elsewhere	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Same channels as throughout	

At the end of the trial, respondents commented that they would like to know the results of the trial, what the findings were, and whether it had been a success.

- “Has it worked and if it did work what were the benefits”
- “What are the results?”



- “So, you're going to need that, this is how we did it here and this is how we’re going to do it there”
- “I'd like to know if it was successful, if it could continue or is the trial going to end and if they're going to scrap it and if it is going to continue will it be still as successful as during the trial period”

Engagement was thought to be more important at this stage, with customers given the chance to provide feedback on what they thought of the trial and how they had been affected.

- “I think at the end its important for people to give their feedback about what they felt like if there's going to be a chance to engage with them during that period at the end. Also it’s important for them to see how they feel about it and how everything has worked out”

After the trial		
What do you want to know	How would you like to be contacted	How would you be feeling
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Whether the project has been continued/rolled out elsewhere- Changes / improvements to the project- Future innovations		

After the trial, respondents felt they would like to receive ongoing communication about the progress of the innovation, whether the project has been continued and rolled out more widely, and whether there have been any changes or improvements made.

- “You’d need to know if its progressive”
- “So you really have to be consistent with the communication... I think it is a good idea to keep communicating”



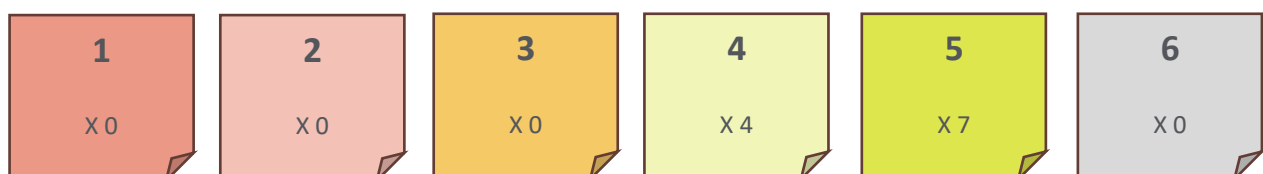
One respondent suggested they would like to know about any future innovations which have come about following this project.

□ *“There are other projects like community power generation using solar panels and wind farms and so on that rather than being owned by an individual householders they're owned by the community and I know they've done that done in Wakefield, but somewhere like that so owned by the community and the community benefits from the power that's generated by those facilities so maybe that could be an extension to this... Right we're now going to do this based on the success of that”*

All respondents agreed that they would have wanted to know about the trial in advance of it starting.

Revisiting key questions

At the end of the session, respondents were asked to revisit key questions that were asked at the start of the session. The first question was ‘how do you feel about Northern Powergrid as company?’ Perceptions had improved compared to the start of the session, with all respondents now feeling positive about Northern Powergrid as a company, with average score of 4.64 out of 5 compared to 3.75 at the beginning of the session.



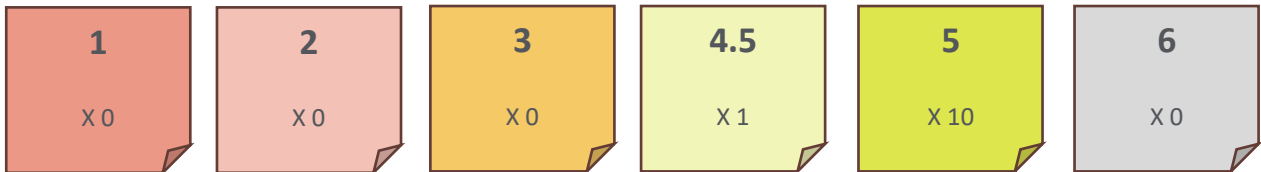
Reasons for the change in scores were centred around having more information about Northern Powergrid, learning about the positive changes they are making and innovation they are undertaking.

□ *“We know that it's not them that's caused the negativity and they're now doing something positive for us”*

□ *“The other grid companies haven't taken anything on, it's Northern Powergrid, so we're leading the way”*



Finally, respondents were asked again how they felt about BEET, and perceptions were extremely positive, with one person giving a score of 4.5 and the rest scoring five, with an average of 4.95 compared to 4.27 at the beginning of the session.



The respondent who scored a 4.5 felt they would need to be informed about the success of the trial, wanting to know exactly what was happening, whether that was good or bad, before they could score a 5.

□ *"....just to know that it's having an effect and it's having the desired effect.... just tell us"*





explain

**“Research should never
be just for knowledge – it
should be for progress”**

Conclusions

A holistic review of the actionable insights.

Conclusions

Knowledge of Northern Powergrid was fairly high within the group, with awareness of their role and previous experience of Northern Powergrid through power interruptions. Initial perceptions of Northern Powergrid were fairly good; no one felt negatively about them and over half felt positively, with the rest indifferent.

Knowledge and awareness of BEET varied across the group, as was recollection of receiving the leaflet. Some had received it, others were unsure, and others had seen the leaflet but didn't read it. Initial thoughts about BEET were largely positive, with particular focus on the cost and environmental benefits, however some respondents had queries about why the project had taken so long to implement, and whether other network operators had tried to implement similar projects.

Following a description of BEET, all respondents felt positively about the project, feeling their increase in knowledge had improved their perceptions, with comments again made about the financial and environmental impact.

When looking at the key messages provided by Northern Powergrid within communications about BEET, cost benefits was seen as the most important, followed by environmental benefits and background to the project. How the technology works and whether customers will need a smart meter were seen as least important. An additional suggestion was to provide evidence to support the project.

Thinking about communication at different stages of the project, it was suggested that the same methods needed to be used throughout, and whilst text and email would be effective methods for some, Northern Powergrid also needed to be present in the community to identify and understand the different channels that are used by customers who may not use digital methods, such as community groups or notice boards.

Respondents would like to be kept updated on the progress of the trial, and also once the trial had come to an end, they would like to know how successful it had been and the outcomes of it. It was suggested a platform could be provided for residents to visit if they had any queries or wanted to find out updates, rather than inundating residents with too much information on regular basis.

At the end of the session, the initial key questions about perceptions of Northern Powergrid and BEET were revisited, and perceptions of both had improved, with all respondents viewing Northern Powergrid and BEET positively.





**“Quality is not an act; it is
a habit”**

Appendices

Supporting documentation can be found in this section.

Appendices

Appendix one – discussion guide

Notes about this document

- This guide has been developed based on your research objectives, to help our moderators get the most from each qualitative conversation
- As such, it's designed to give our moderators guidelines around the structure, timing and content of their discussions
- However, we want to ensure that conversations feel natural and engaging for participants and thus allow conversations to flow and evolve as participants move through the conversations, within reason. We will ensure all key areas are covered, and will also explore new, interesting but relevant tangents if they arise
- Content won't necessarily be covered in the exact order it appears in this document, dependent on natural conversation flow
- Language will be adapted to suit the participants, as appropriate, determined by the moderator
- We find that the deepest insights often aren't found by asking direct questions, but by prompting and probing initial responses
- All moderators have been well briefed on the project context and objectives, so will be able to probe into topics that come up and ask additional questions to reveal other relevant tangents as and when appropriate, and delve beneath initial reactions

Focus group discussion guide

Introduction [5 minutes]

Thank you and welcome

Housekeeping

- Refreshments
- Location of the toilets
- Fire alarm procedure



MRS Code of Conduct:

- No right or wrong answers
- Right to anonymity
- Right to refuse
- Okay to audio record?

10:35 Discussion part 1: Perception and awareness of Northern Powergrid [10 minutes]

Let's start the session today by talking about Northern Powergrid.

[Slides introducing Northern Powergrid and their responsibilities]

Let's do a quick poll – use your post-it notes:

- Before you were invited to take part in this research, had you heard about Northern Powergrid?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Don't know
- If yes, what did you know about Northern Powergrid?

Let's do another quick poll

- How do you feel about Northern Powergrid?
 - Very negative
 - Quite negative
 - Indifferent
 - Quite positive
 - Very positive
 - Don't know

Could you explain why you voted that way? Why do you feel that way about Northern Powergrid?



- And when you think about Northern Powergrid delivering an innovation project like BEET, how do you feel about it?
- Does your perception of Northern Powergrid influence how you feel about BEET? Why/how?

10:45 Discussion part 2: Perception and awareness of BEET [15 minutes]

Before I share some information about BEET with you, I would like to understand what you know already about the trial. And don't worry if that's nothing or not much.

- Who had heard about BEET before being asked to take part in this research?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Don't know
- Tell me what you know about BEET.
 - How has this influenced how you feel about BEET?
 - How has this influenced any concerns you have about BEET?

Introduction to BEET [facilitator to read an introduction, as follows, and play the BEET video]

You are here today because you live in the trial area of BEET.

The Boston Spa Energy Efficiency Trial (BEET) is an innovation project that uses smart meter data from homes and businesses to automatically adjust and optimise network voltages, saving customers money and reducing their carbon emissions. It is taking place in and around Boston Spa and Wetherby from January 2024 to September 2025.

Northern Powergrid will use technology that's been specially developed for the trial called the BEET-Box to analyse aggregated smart meter data from homes and businesses in the trial area and safely turn the voltage delivered to people's properties up or down every 30 minutes – this is called voltage optimisation and lower voltages should mean lower energy use.



No action is needed– BEET will happen in the background and customers shouldn't notice any change to their energy supply. Customers won't need to have a smart meter to benefit from the trial, but more smart meters mean more data for the BEET-Box to analyse.

Reflecting on this information, how do you feel about BEET?

- Very negative
- Quite negative
- Indifferent
- Quite positive
- Very positive
- Don't know

Tell me about the first time you heard about BEET:

- How did you hear about it?
- What did you think?
- How did you feel about it?

Do you have any concerns about BEET? Why?

How does it feel to be part of a community that is involved in an innovation project?

11:00 Discussion part 3: Key messages about BEET [15 minutes]

[Participants to be provided with key message strips for a ranking exercise]

Working in twos, let's organise the key messages in order of priority for you. And, you'll notice there are some blank strips. With these, I would like you to add other messages that you think should be included – messages about the project that local people and businesses will want to know.

Key messages:

- Background to the project
- How the technology works



- Whether I will need a smart meter
 - What information will be collected about me/my energy usage
 - What do I need to do
 - Cost benefits
 - Environmental benefits e.g. reduction of CO2 emissions
 - Where the project will take place
-
- Please explain how you ranked the messages and why?
 - What's most important to you? Why?
 - What's least important to you? Why?

11:15 Discussion part 4: Ways to contact and communicate with customers about the project [30 minutes]

[Participants will be work together on paper to complete a customer journey matrix]

If BEET is a success, it could be rolled out nationally.

And if rolled out nationally, Northern Powergrid believes BEET could reduce household energy bills by up to £770m and save up to 1.1m tonnes of CO2 each year - that's the equivalent of taking 200,000 petrol and diesel cars off UK roads.

In this next part of the session, I want you to think about what would make an ideal customer journey for customers in trial areas that are going to be involved in an innovation project, like BEET, with Northern Powergrid. So you need to keep yourselves firmly in the shoes of the customer, and think about these different stages of the customer journey:

- Before the trial goes live
- Trial going live



- Trial underway
- End of the trial
- After the trial

And at each stage, we're going to think about:

- How would the customer be feeling at this stage?
- What are the key messages at this stage? What do you want/need to know?
- How would you want Northern Powergrid to communicate with you (send you info about the trial) – with what channels?
- How often would you want Northern Powergrid to communicate with you at this stage?
- How would you want to be engaged at this stage (actually involved in giving your feedback)?

Before the trial – would you want to know when the area is being considered or when the area has been selected as a trial area? How far in advance of going live would you want to be told about this?

11:45 Discussion part 5: Your involvement

You are here today, and the purpose of that is to be involved in shaping BEET and future innovation projects in terms of how the community is communicated with and engaged.

But I also want to ask you to reflect on how you would like to be involved, thinking about that ideal customer journey.

At which points of the journey would you want to be engaged? Such as, consulted, asked for feedback, asked to help shape what happens.

What would that engagement look like?

- What do you think you could contribute?
- How would this make a difference to the community and how they feel about the project?

11:55 Discussion part 6: Revisiting key questions [5 minutes]

Reflecting on the discussion we've had today...



How do you feel about Northern Powergrid?

- Very negative
- Quite negative
- Indifferent
- Quite positive
- Very positive
- Don't know

How do you feel about BEET?

- Very negative
- Quite negative
- Indifferent
- Quite positive
- Very positive
- Don't know

And finally, before you go, is there anything else you would like the opportunity to say?

12:00 Thanks and close





Author: Kat Allen

Report check: Rachel Gordon

Final sign off: Rachel Gordon