ENA Network Innovation Strategy

Online consultation summary report

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The network innovation strategies

Innovation is central to the ability of the energy networks to rise to the challenge of net zero. The Gas and Electricity Network Innovation Strategies play a key role in ensuring that network innovation is coordinated, focused on the key priorities for the energy system and delivers benefits to consumers.

The strategies were developed in conjunction with stakeholders and were first published in 2018. They are required to be updated every two years.

Regen has been commissioned by Energy Networks Association (ENA) to update the strategies for 2022, delivering one 'whole system' combined electricity and gas network innovation strategy.

The strategy needs to be accessible, relevant and provide the right information to enable third parties to engage with network innovation activities.

How was stakeholder engagement conducted?

The innovation strategy is shaped by an extensive and carefully designed programme of stakeholder engagement, so far comprising:

- Individual interviews with the networks and key stakeholders, such as Ofgem and Innovate UK
- An online consultation, which ran from 3rd - 17th December 2021
- A webinar (held on 7th December) to provide further information on the proposed content and to launch the online survey.

Future stakeholder engagement includes:

- Two online workshops (28th January and 2nd February 2022)
- Continued engagement with the networks.

This not only acts to inform the network strategy but also acts to increase participation in network innovation.

Online consultation

The objective of the online consultation was to obtain stakeholder feedback regarding innovation principles and themes to shape the first draft of the strategy.

The online consultation, which ran from 3rd – 17th December 2021, was compiled of three main sections:

1. Updated principles for 2022
2. Updated themes for 2022
3. Working with stakeholders (Innovation Measurement Framework (IMF) questions).

This report summarises the findings of the online consultation and includes recommendations based on the feedback received. These recommendations are to be tested in the second stage of stakeholder engagement.

November 2021: Individual interviews with networks

3rd December 2021: Online consultation launched

7th December 2021: Webinar launching online consultation

17th December 2021: Online consultation closed

28th January & 2nd February 2022: Online workshops

31st March 2022: Network Innovation Strategy published

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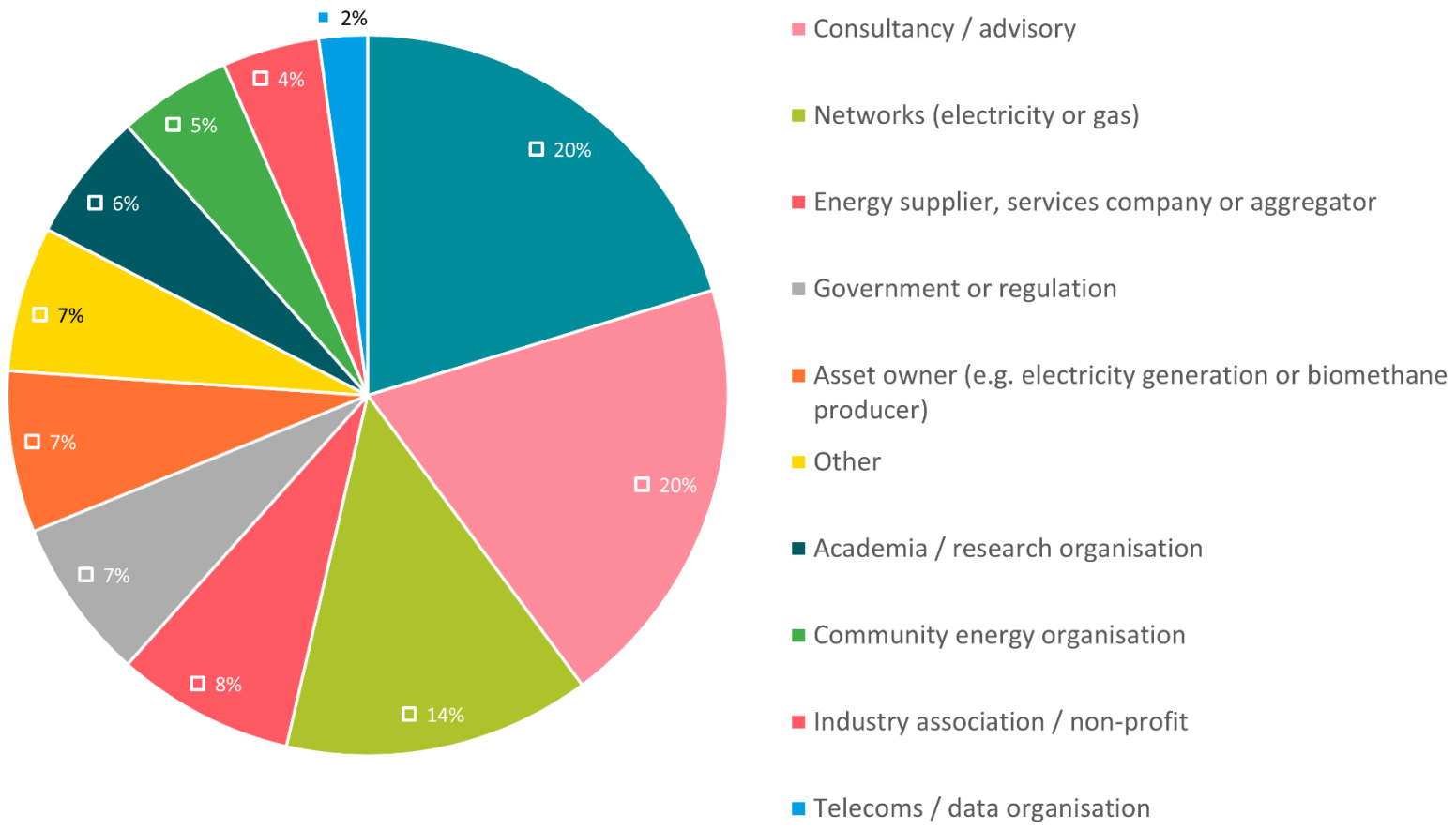
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

41% of respondents said they had not engaged with the previous Network Innovation Strategies.	Network companies to review and improve engagement activities related to innovation, using the suggestions in Appendix 2 as a starting point.
Of the respondents who had engaged with the previous strategies, 90% found them useful and accessible.	The 2022 strategy will follow a similar format to the 2020 strategies, with a focus on keeping the messaging concise and ensuring the documents are engaging and recognisable.
85% of respondents agreed with the overarching principles of innovation.	The 2022 strategy will keep the proposed underlying principles but incorporate feedback to better reflect stakeholders' opinions.
At least 80% of respondents agreed with each of the proposed innovation themes.	The 2022 strategy will keep the proposed innovation themes but incorporate feedback to make these clearer.
At least 81% of respondents agreed with the definitions of the proposed innovation themes.	Regen to rework the definitions of some themes where stakeholders raised questions or provided feedback.
62% of respondents stated that there were no missing themes that they would add. 53% had no additional principles to add.	Assess the suggested additional themes and principles, incorporating feedback into existing themes and principles where appropriate.

RESPONDENTS

- There were 138 respondents to the online consultation, which was open for two weeks between the 3rd – 17th December 2021.
- 'Technology company' and 'Consultancy/advisory' were the most represented sectors, with 28 and 27 respondents completing the survey, respectively.
- 'Technology company' included respondents from EV charging, retrofit and battery storage companies.
- When asked which sector respondents worked in, 7% selected "Other", which included the voluntary and charitable sector (3 respondents) and manufacturers/suppliers (4 respondents).
- 7% of respondents said they had not had any experience working with either the electricity or gas networks.
- More stakeholders had experience engaging with the electricity distribution networks (67%) than other networks.
- On average, more respondents had engaged with the electricity networks than the gas networks.
- 36% of respondents had experience engaging with the Electricity System Operator.

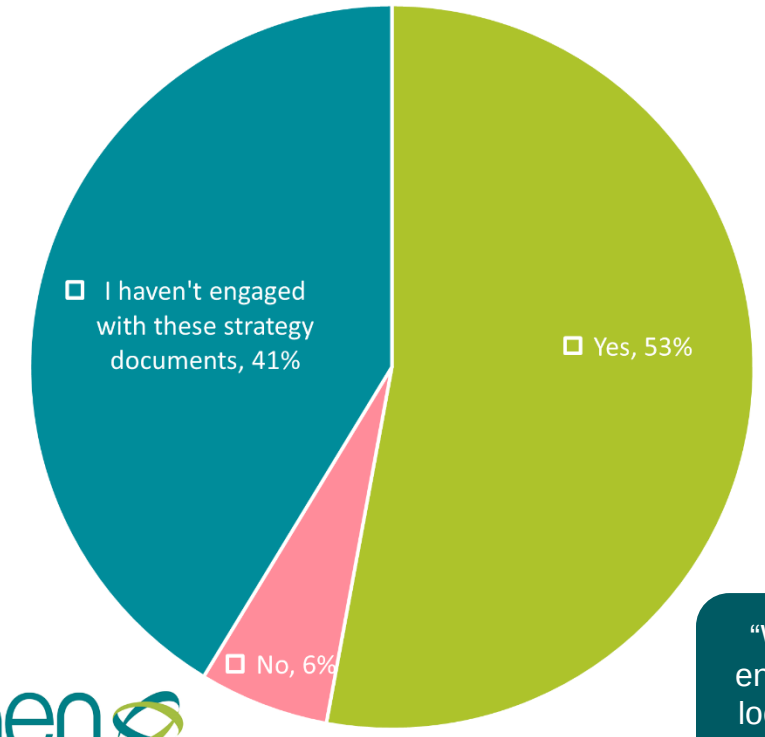


A full list of respondents can be viewed in Appendix 1.

ENGAGING WITH INNOVATION ACTIVITY

- Out of the 138 respondents, 57 (41%) said they had not engaged with the previous Network Innovation Strategies.
- Of the 81 respondents who had engaged with the previous Network Innovation Strategies, 73 (90%) said they found them useful and accessible.
- 72 respondents (52%) provided feedback on why they think the existing network innovation strategy documents are/are not useful and accessible.
- Respondents thought the documents were useful and accessible because:
  - The online format makes them easy to find, read and understand (19 responses)
  - They set out a clear framework for the networks (15 responses)
  - They are concise and comprehensive (7 responses)
- The main reasons respondents found the documents not useful or accessible were:
  - Not enough specifics, e.g. dates for implementation (5 responses)
  - A certain level of knowledge is needed to engage with them (3 responses)
  - Not shared/promoted enough (3 responses)
  - Not innovative enough (2 responses)

Do you feel the existing network innovation strategy documents are useful and accessible?



"Have a more joined-up approach with customer-facing energy suppliers to jointly show how the network is innovating. People do not interact with networks directly but through the supply companies"

What else could the networks do to engage companies and people in network innovation?

(the full list of responses can be viewed in Appendix 2)

"Work with community energy practitioners and local authorities to get a different perspective".

"Reach out more to engage relevant people. Regen contacted me about this so using networks like that more would be good."

Recommendations

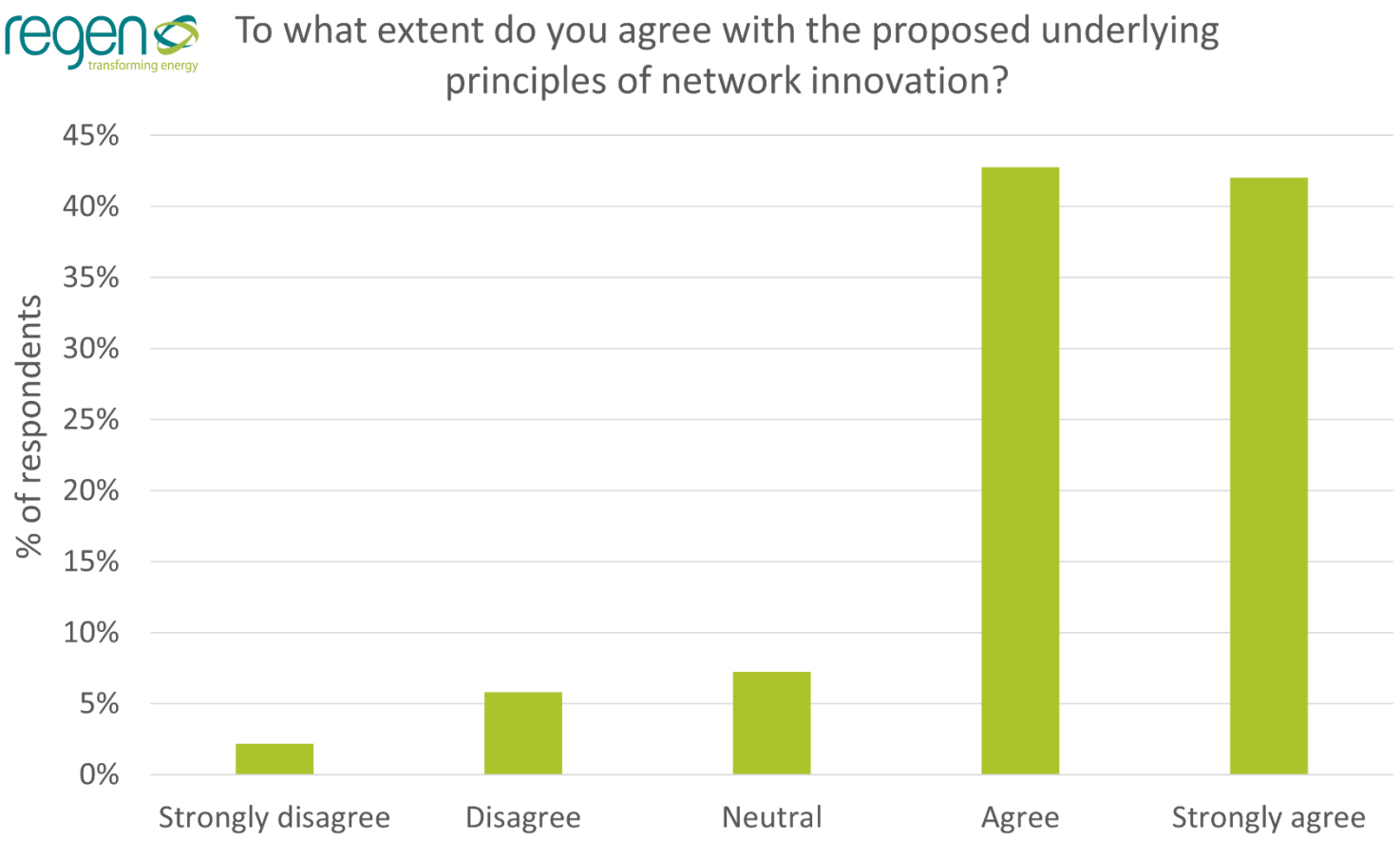
- Network companies to review and improve engagement activities related to innovation.
- Network companies to broaden the pool of stakeholders currently engaged by utilising other companies' networks.

UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES

Stakeholders were asked whether they agreed with the following underlying principles of innovation:

- Consumer benefit
- Collaboration and stakeholder engagement
- Data and knowledge sharing
- Implementation and deployment
- Innovation culture
- Carbon impact

- 85% of respondents supported the proposed underlying principles of network innovation.
- 104 respondents (75%) gave feedback on the proposed underlying principles.
- Feedback on the proposed principles and their definitions included:
  - Consumer benefit should acknowledge the wider community benefit innovation can have
  - The carbon impact principle should be broadened to encompass wider environmental impacts.
- 65 respondents (47%) thought there were underlying principles missing that should apply to network innovation activities, including:
  - Community participation/engagement (6 responses)
  - Biodiversity and ecological impact (5 responses)
  - Safety (4 responses)



Recommendations

- To keep the proposed underlying principles, as over 85% of respondents supported them.
- To incorporate feedback on what is missing around biodiversity and ecological impact, and community engagement into the existing principles of carbon impact and collaboration and stakeholder engagement.

PROPOSED CHANGES: PRINCIPLES

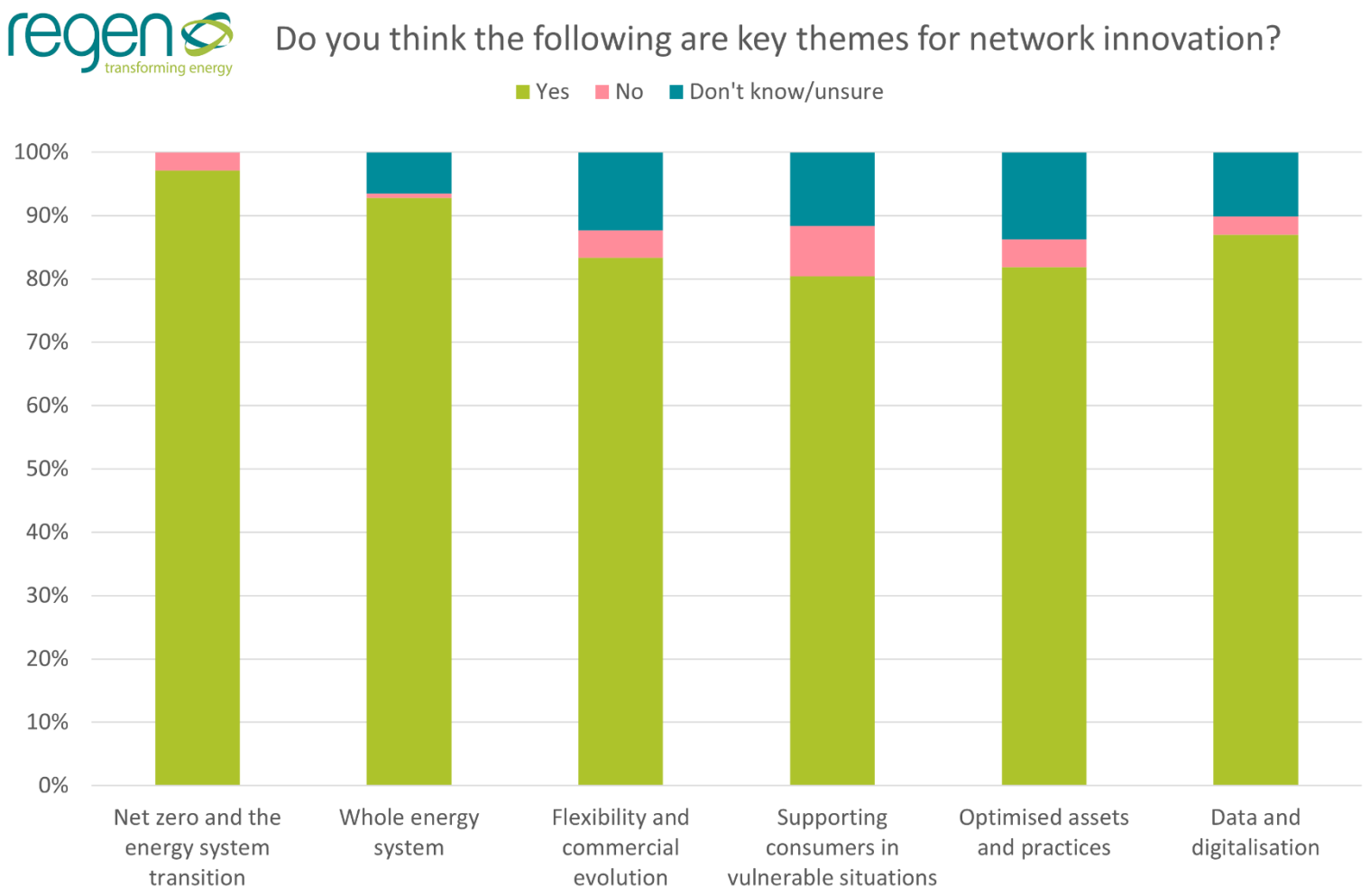
Current principles	Feedback	Proposed principles
Consumer benefit: Network innovation activity should ultimately provide benefits to all bill payers.	• Should seek to address fuel poverty • Benefit to all bill payers is not always possible • Should benefit the wider community	**Consumer benefit:** Network innovation activity should ultimately benefit consumers financially, supporting them in a just transition.
Carbon impact: Innovation projects should have a positive impact on the UK's net zero emissions target.	• Should be broadened to encompass wider environmental impacts	**Carbon impact:** Innovation projects should have a positive impact on the environment and the UK's net zero emissions target.
Collaboration and stakeholder engagement: Network innovation activity should provide shared learning and increase collaboration between networks companies, stakeholders and the wider industry.	• Community engagement should be included. Innovation won't happen without buy-in from those who will be affected most	**Collaboration and stakeholder engagement:** Network innovation activity should provide shared learning and increase collaboration between network companies and stakeholders.
Data and knowledge sharing: Data and knowledge should be shared with stakeholders in a transparent and accessible way.	N/A	**Data and knowledge sharing:** Data and knowledge should be shared with stakeholders in a transparent and accessible way.
Implementation and deployment: Viable initiatives should be implemented and deployed into business as usual.	• It should be made clear that successful projects will be transitioned to BAU	**Implementation and deployment:** Viable initiatives should be implemented and deployed into business as usual.
Innovation culture: Networks need to embrace an innovation culture throughout their businesses to better enable them to deliver transformative change.	• Not sure how "innovation culture" is measured • The new principle about networks embracing innovation culture is spot on	**Innovation culture:** Network companies should embrace an innovation culture throughout their businesses to better enable them to deliver transformative change.

PROPOSED THEMES

Stakeholders were asked whether they agreed with the following innovation themes:

- Net zero and the energy system transition
- Whole energy system
- Flexibility and commercial evolution
- Supporting consumers in vulnerable situations
- Optimised assets and practices
- Data and digitalisation

- The most popular theme was "net zero and the energy system transition", with 97% of respondents agreeing that this is a key theme for network innovation.
- 8% of stakeholders said they didn't think "supporting consumers in vulnerable situations" was a key theme for network innovation. While this theme had the most mixed responses (8% voting "No" and 12% "Don't know/unsure"); it was still voted a key theme for network innovation by 80% of the respondents.
- 52 respondents (38%) said there were additional network innovation themes that they would add. These included:
  - Community engagement (6 respondents)
  - Network resilience (3 respondents)
  - Regulation (3 respondents)



Recommendations

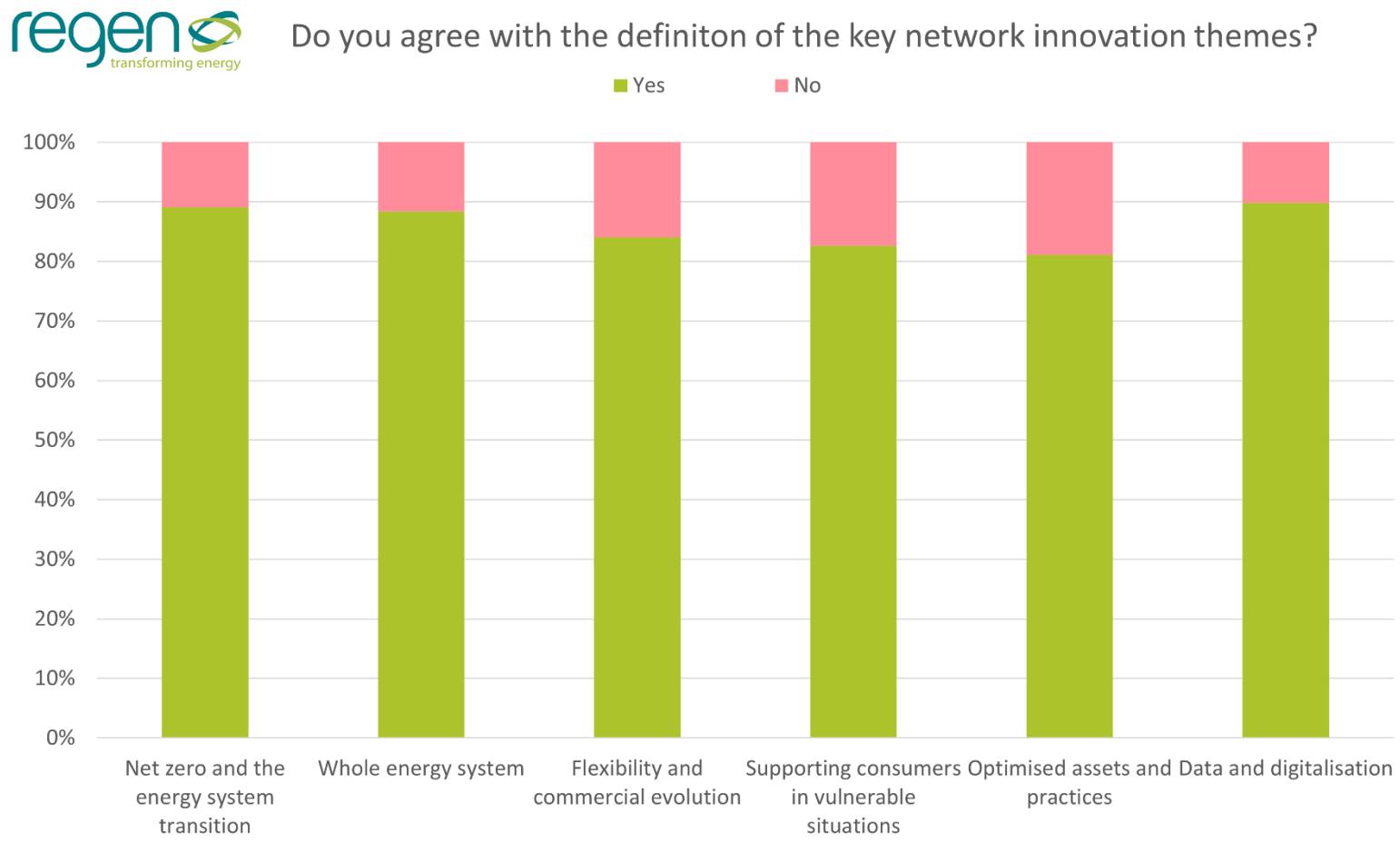
- There is strong support for the proposed network innovation themes.
- Themes where a large proportion of respondents voted "don't know/unsure", the title and definition of the theme have been reviewed to make them clearer.

PROPOSED THEMES: DEFINITIONS

Stakeholders were asked whether they agreed with the definitions of the following innovation themes:

- Net zero and the energy system transition
- Whole energy system
- Flexibility and commercial evolution
- Supporting consumers in vulnerable situations
- Optimised assets and practices
- Data and digitalisation

- At least 81% of respondents agreed with each of the proposed definitions of the key innovation themes.
- "Optimised assets and practices" had the most respondents disagreeing with the definition (19%), with 9 respondents stating that the definition of optimal was unclear.
- 13 respondents noted that the definition of "supporting consumers in vulnerable situations" was not clear enough and did not represent the complex factors that contribute to a consumer being in a vulnerable situation.
- "Data and digitalisation" had the most agreement from respondents (90%), with many respondents welcoming the inclusion of this theme for the 2022 network innovation strategy.



Recommendations

- Overall, there is strong agreement with the definitions for the proposed network innovation themes.
- The definitions have been reviewed to see how they can be made clearer and incorporate stakeholder feedback.
- The themes will also be described further in the final strategy, allowing us to keep the definitions short and concise.

THEME 1: NET ZERO AND THE ENERGY SYSTEM TRANSITION

97% of respondents thought that "net zero and the energy system transition" should be a key theme for network innovation.

- 89% of respondents agreed with the definition of the "net zero and the energy system transition" theme: *"Facilitating and accelerating the UK's transition to net zero greenhouse gas emissions"*.

- Four respondents disagreed with the inclusion of "net zero and the energy system transition" as a key theme for innovation.
  - These comprised one respondent from academia, one asset owner and two respondents from consultancies.
  - However, in general, over 88% of respondents from each sector agreed with its inclusion, with 97% of all respondents agreeing it is a key theme for network innovation.

- 76 respondents (55%) gave feedback on the "net zero and the energy system transition" theme. Comments included:
  - Innovation should focus on the overall lifecycle carbon footprint, and net zero should not be achieved by offsetting (14 responses)
  - This is an overarching objective and links to all the other themes (8 responses)
  - The wording in the definition is too passive (4 responses).

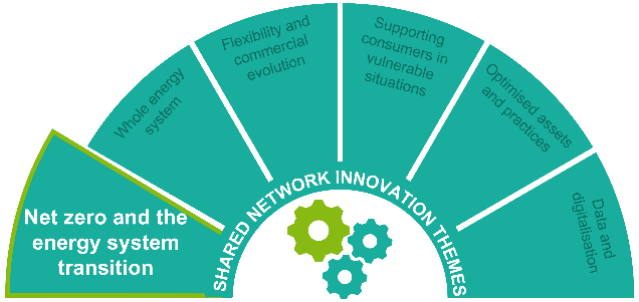
Recommendations

- It is clear that "net zero and the energy system transition" should be kept as a key theme for network innovation.
- Feedback about the use of the term "net zero" and its connotation with carbon offsetting will be reflected upon, although this is not the intended meaning of this term in this context.
- The wording of the definition has been discussed, particularly over the choice of verbs.

" Concerns around the use of Net Zero - as this is being attained by offsetting carbon emissions rather than aiming for zero emissions by the activities of the business or in this case the energy generation. Should instead be zero carbon. "

" Perhaps the use of the term "just transition" in the definition would make it clear that there is a recognition of the tension between net zero and social inequalities. "

" The core strategy of ENA should be to "use the energy networks to deliver a sustainable environment". "Facilitation" is too passive, the industry should be more ambitious. "



THEME 2: WHOLE ENERGY SYSTEM

93% of respondents thought that "whole energy system" should be a key theme for network innovation.

- 88% of respondents agreed with the definition of the "whole energy system" theme: *"Enabling joined-up and efficient approaches across the whole UK energy system and wider industry around planning, forecasting, design, construction, operation, maintenance and data".*

- One respondent disagreed with the inclusion of "whole energy system" as a key theme for network innovation, with nine respondents unsure about the theme. This included five respondents from consultancies.
  - In general, over 81% of respondents from each sector agreed with its inclusion.
  - Most comments highlighted that the definition was not clear enough.

- 68 respondents (49%) gave feedback on the "whole energy system" theme. Comments included:
  - Whole system should extend beyond the networks (13 responses)
  - The wording is too passive (5 responses)
  - The definition is unclear and the elements that feed into whole system should be defined (4 responses)

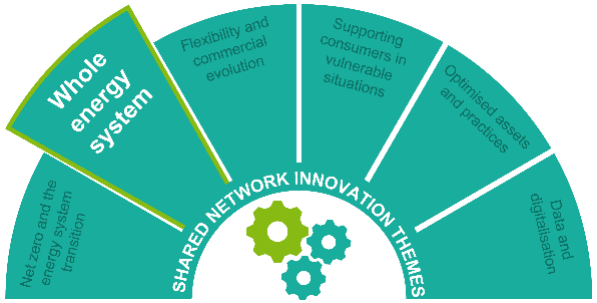
Recommendations

- It is clear that "whole energy system" should be kept as a key theme for network innovation.
- The wording of the definition has been discussed, particularly over the choice of verbs.
- It should be clear in the definition that whole energy system promotes joined-up collaboration between energy vectors and wider sectors.

" Greater effort and emphasis should be placed on ensuring whole energy system planning by network operators is properly aligned with Local Area Energy Planning. This is essential if we are to enable efficiencies and support local authorities to get to net zero. "

" The concept of 'whole system' is widely used yet needs further development to acknowledge the other actors and assets involved - the whole system is significantly beyond the networks. "

" This is a key theme which will need to embrace agility and adaptability to ensure whole energy system optimisation is able to embrace emergent challenges and opportunities which might not yet be anticipated. "



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THEME 3: FLEXIBILITY AND COMMERCIAL EVOLUTION

83% of respondents thought that "flexibility and commercial evolution" should be a key theme for network innovation.

- 84% of respondents agreed with the definition of the "flexibility and commercial evolution" theme: *"Developing and testing new market-based solutions to increase the flexibility and efficiency of the energy system and to accelerate the adoption of low carbon solutions"*.
- Six respondents did not agree with the inclusion of "flexibility and commercial evolution" as a key theme for network innovation, citing a lack of clarity in the terminology used.
- 17 respondents were unsure about the theme. This included six respondents from consultancies.
- 65 respondents (47%) gave feedback on the "flexibility and commercial evolution" theme. Comments included:
  - The terminology used is unclear (8 responses)
  - "Market-based solutions" limits activity to commercial only and excludes the role for communities (8 responses)
  - The definition implies a focus on profits (5 responses)

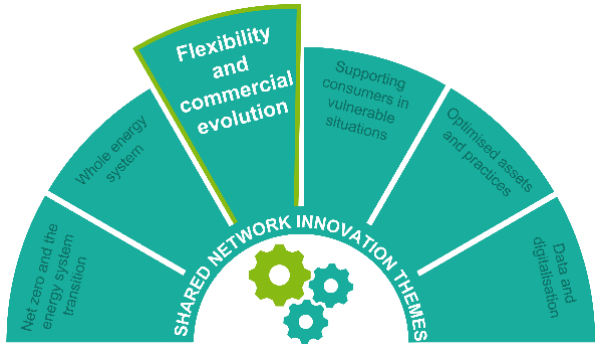
Recommendations

- It is clear that "flexibility and commercial evolution" should be kept as a key theme for network innovation; however, the wording of this theme was unclear to some stakeholders.
- The definition has been reviewed to ensure it is clear.
- Feedback from the consultation will be incorporated into the final strategy, with a focus on what the terminology means in the context of innovation.

" We very much support the increased emphasis on market-based solutions, as this will allow industry to adapt with the networks and enable new business models to provide tools for the energy transition. Networks should work with the system operator(s) to ensure wide and fair access to emerging flexibility markets and ensure the best value for consumers. "

" The current definition feels like flexibility for flexibility's sake - we should be developing, testing and embedding new flexible technologies and commercial arrangements in order to maintain and increase the efficiency and stability/resilience of the energy system. "

" This should focus on how this can be incorporated into the supply market and how existing data from settlement can be used. It should not be a stand-alone add on. "



THEME 4: SUPPORTING CONSUMERS IN VULNERABLE SITUATIONS

80% of respondents thought that "supporting consumers in vulnerable situations" should be a key theme for network innovation.

- 83% of respondents agreed with the definition of the "supporting consumers in vulnerable situations" theme: *"Exploring how best to support the needs of consumers in vulnerable situations today and in the future, ensuring that everyone can experience the benefits of the energy transition and any adverse effects of change are minimised"*.

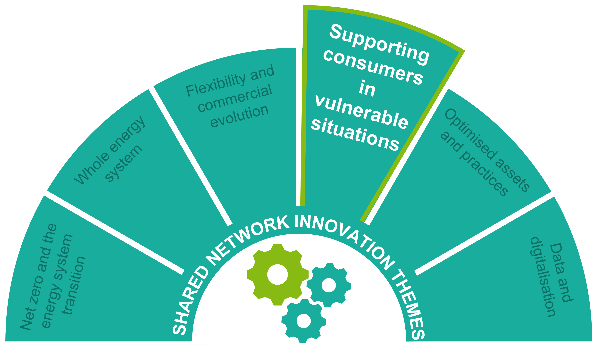
- 11 respondents did not agree with the inclusion of "supporting consumers in vulnerable situations" as a key theme for innovation, while 16 respondents were unsure.
  - Technology companies, in particular, were unsure about this theme, with 9 respondents voting "No" or "Don't know/unsure".
  - Many stakeholders raised that this is a topic for government and local authorities, rather than the networks (7 responses).

- 66 respondents (48%) gave feedback on the "supporting consumers in vulnerable situations" theme. Comments included:
  - The definition of vulnerable situations needs to be clearer (covering geographical, digital and socio-economic) (13 responses)
  - The wording is too passive (5 responses)

" The change in language is reflective of better understanding of vulnerability. Should also remember that vulnerability is a flexible thing - people move in and out of vulnerable situations depending on life events and the theme needs to reflect that this is not a static pool of people. "

" "Exploring" and "supporting" are too weak and should be more action-orientated. The definition should be broader to encompass economic, social and geographic vulnerability. "

" The wording currently says, "any adverse effects of change is minimised" whereas we really should be aiming for "working to prevent any adverse effects of change. "



Recommendations

- "Supporting consumers in vulnerable situations" will be kept as a key theme for network innovation, with the change in language since the last strategy being welcomed.
- We have focused on the definition for this theme, reflecting that "vulnerable situations" does not refer to a static pool of consumers.

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THEME 5: OPTIMISED ASSETS AND PRACTICES

82% of respondents thought that "optimised assets and practices" should be a key theme for network innovation.

- 81% of respondents agreed with the definition of the "optimised assets and practices" theme: *"Developing and implementing industry-leading techniques for optimising assets and practices for energy networks"*.

- Six respondents disagreed with the inclusion of "optimised assets and practices" as a key theme for innovation, while 19 respondents were unsure about it, including respondents from government, energy suppliers, academia and consultancies.
  - 4 respondents commented that optimising assets and practices is not an innovative theme.

- 71 respondents (51%) gave feedback on the "optimised assets and practices" theme. Comments included:
  - The definition of optimal is unclear (9 responses)
  - The definition should include future-proofing of the networks (6 responses)
  - Optimisation doesn't always consider the consumer, and could inadvertently disadvantage them (6 responses)

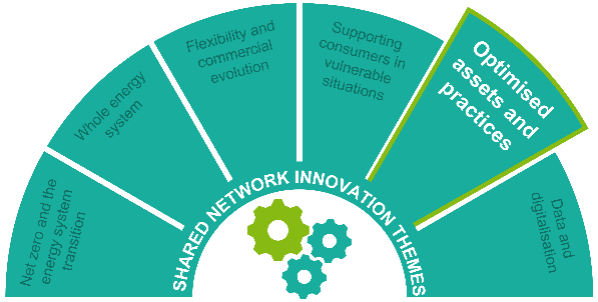
Recommendations

- It was agreed that "flexibility and commercial evolution" should be kept as a key theme for network innovation
- The definition of this theme has been reviewed to ensure that it is clear and that the theme refers to innovative collaboration for optimising assets and practices.

" This feels more like BAU than innovation. Surely, it is in the commercial interests of network operators to optimise their assets and practices. That said, there is a need for knowledge transfer, so I can see value in an innovation theme around this (just less so than other areas). "

" There will need to be a certain level of experimentation as there is no clear master plan to net zero. A too strong focus on "optimised" practices and assets may be counterproductive. "

" This implies the network should focus on optimising its own assets, but this should be widened to optimising operations to include working with external assets. This links to the whole systems theme. "



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THEME 6: DATA AND DIGITALISATION

87% of respondents thought that "data and digitalisation" should be a key theme for network innovation.

- 90% of respondents agreed with the definition of the "data and digitalisation" theme: *"Developing new data services and applying data science methods to harness the power of digitalisation to solve both system operation and wider stakeholder challenges"*.
- Four respondents disagreed with the inclusion of "data and digitalisation" as a key theme for innovation, while 14 respondents were unsure about it.
- 64 respondents (46%) gave feedback on the "data and digitalisation" theme. Comments included:
  - The definition lacks vision of how data is turned into useful information (7 responses)
  - There should be an acknowledgment of data security and protection of personal information (5 responses)
  - The focus should be on data quality (4 responses)

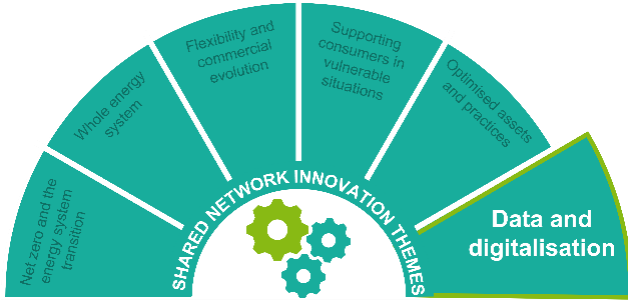
Recommendations

- It is clear that "data and digitalisation" should be kept as a key theme for network innovation; however, some stakeholders were unsure about this theme.
- While stakeholder feedback is acknowledged, data availability, quality and security are part of the network's business as usual and are not focus areas for innovation.
- The definition has been reviewed to ensure that it focuses on innovative data services and methods.

" Needless to say, that with increasing reliance on data and digitalisation for system management and operation, the need for data and communications systems resilience becomes increasingly essential - including resilience to potential cyber attacks, but also to prolonged electricity supply outages. "

"It has to be focused on ways of achieving savings and system benefits with minimal consumer intervention."

" The focus should be on data quality. Data science is useless if data quality is poor, and the data is inaccessible. "



PROPOSED CHANGES: THEMES

Stakeholder feedback that cannot be accommodated in changes to the definitions (i.e. the definitions will be too long) will be explored in greater detail in the theme descriptions in the full strategy, to ensure clarity.

Current themes	Feedback	Proposed themes
Net zero and the energy system transition: Facilitating and accelerating the UK's transition to net zero greenhouse gas emissions.	• "Net zero" implies offsetting • Include the term "just transition" • "Facilitation" is too passive	**Net zero and the energy system transition:** Facilitating and accelerating the UK's transition to net zero greenhouse gas emissions.
Whole energy system: Enabling joined up and efficient approaches across the whole UK energy system and wider industry around planning, forecasting, design, construction, operation, maintenance and data.	• Wording is too minimal in change • Funding should be included • Should extend to more than just the energy system	**Whole energy system:** Developing joined-up approaches across sectors and energy vectors.
Flexibility and commercial evolution: Developing and testing new market-based solutions to increase the flexibility and efficiency of the energy system and to accelerate the adoption of low carbon solutions	• What do these terms mean? • "Evolution" will be too slow • "Market-based is an excuse to work on profit-making solutions"	**Flexibility and market evolution:** Developing and testing market-based solutions to increase the flexibility and efficiency of the energy system; accelerating the adoption of low carbon solutions.
Supporting consumers in vulnerable situations: Exploring how best to support the needs of consumers in vulnerable situations today and in the future, ensuring that everyone can experience the benefits of the energy transition and any adverse effects of change are minimised.	• Adverse effects should be prevented • Vulnerable situations is not a static pool and covers geographic, digital and socio-economic factors	**Supporting consumers in vulnerable situations:** Exploring how best to support the needs of consumers who find themselves in vulnerable situations, today and in the future, to enable a just transition.
Optimised assets and practices: Developing and implementing industry-leading techniques for optimising assets and practices for energy networks.	• A too strong focus on optimisation may be counterproductive • More BAU than innovation	**Optimised assets and practices:** Developing and implementing industry-leading techniques for optimising assets and practices.
Data and digitalisation: Developing new data services and applying data science methods to harness the power of digitalisation to solve both system operation and wider stakeholder challenges.	• Focus on open source and accessibility • Need to improve data quality • Will need to improve data security	**Data and digitalisation:** Developing new data services and applying data science methods to harness the power of digitalisation to solve both system operation and wider stakeholder challenges.

APPENDIX 1: FULL LIST OF RESPONDENTS

Abriox Ltd
AC & T Ltd.
ADAMAS Global Ltd
ADVA/Oscilloquartz
Amp X
Anthesis
Apricum
Aura Power
AUTOMA srl
AVK UK Limited
BEAMA Limited
BP Pulse
Brighton Energy Co-op
British Army
BUFACO Growers LTD
Buro Happold
Bury Council
Cadent
Caldervale Technology Ltd
Cenex
Centre for Sustainable Energy
CESI Spa
CFMS Services Ltd
Chase Community Solar
Circular Malton & Norton
CNG Services Ltd
Coimhearsnachd Bharraidh agus Bhatarsaidh (Barra & Vatersay Community) Ltd
Connected Energy
Connected Response Ltd
CooperWalsh Ltd
CPRE
Ctrl Hub Limited
D&G Electrical services (UK) Ltd
DECCC
Delta-EE
DNV
Dorset Council
Easy Smart Grid GmbH
Electricity North West
Energiesprong UK
Energy Action Scotland
Energy Local CIC
Energy Saving Trust
Energy4All Ltd
ENGIE Power Limited
ESB Innovations UK
Essex County Council
Ethos Environmental Ltd
Gas Assessment & Training Centre Ltd
Go Green Engineering Ltd
Graham Oakes Ltd
Grimsey Marine Technology Ltd
Ground Control
Hilti (GB) Ltd
Hitachi Energy
Hive Composites Ltd
Hoare Lea
Hockerton Housing Project
i4 Asset Management
Innovate UK
Internet Projects
Invinity
IRM Systems
JRC
Julian couch
Kingsley Plastics Ltd
Landis+Gyr
Landmark Associates Ltd.
Low Carbon Electric
Lucy Electric
Maschinenfabrik Reinhausen
Millhouse Power Limited
MW POLYMERS
Northern Gas Networks
Nottingham City Council WLEP
Nu Flow Ltd
Onwave UK Ltd
Optimized Sciences
Oxford Plastics
PE Systems Limited
Plasson UK Ltd
Plug Life Consulting Ltd
Pollywood Ltd
Publica
Pure
R2M Limited
Radius Subterra Ltd
ROSEN(UK) Ltd
Rotaheat
Scottish Renewables
SE2 Ltd
Sembcorp Energy UK Ltd
Sharenergy
Simply Blue Group
Smarter Grid Solutions
Smith Institute
Solar 2 Ltd/Wind 2 Ltd
South Hams District Council
South Somerset DC
SP Energy Networks
Steve Vick International
Storelectric
Strategy Manager, Blackpool Council
Tamar Energy Community, West Devon
Tameside MBC
The Walnut Bureau
TNEI
Totnes Renewable Energy Society
TRACTO-TECHNIK UK Ltd
Transition Buxton
UK100
University of Edinburgh
University of Exeter
University of Reading
University of Sheffield
Utility Customer Service Management Ltd
Vector Business Services Ltd
Vision 2030 ltd
Vysiion
Wattify Limited
West Solent Solar Cooperative
Wiltshire Climate Alliance
WSP
Zero Carbon Shropshire
Zero Chippenham

APPENDIX 2: ENGAGEMENT SUGGESTIONS

What else could the networks do to engage companies and people in network innovation?

Engagement techniques:

- Run more pilot projects
- Make documents more accessible and digestible to a wider audience
- Introduce a standard stakeholder mapping tool/template
- Be honest
- Sector-focused workshops
- More easily accessible forums to discuss strategies in more depth
- Increase visibility of actions to reduce emissions
- More public-facing webinars/series of events
- Roadshows
- Broaden the pool of people you engage with
- Stronger focus on customer service
- Use more mainstream media to talk about the energy transition
- Fewer consultations
- Engage on what our technical and commercial strategy should be in 2-5 years time
- Making energy information more accessible
- Engage with SMEs and allow them to showcase
- Local network surgeries and community energy champions
- Regional test labs and pilot projects
- Run regular stakeholder engagement events
- Workshops and short surveys work well
- More community-level networking
- Phone questionnaires
- Face-to-face forums
- Work with customer-facing energy suppliers to jointly show how the network is innovating
- Better publication of stakeholder engagement
- DNOs to hold webinars on network innovation
- More publicity about the launch of documents
- Send out a quarterly update email

Collaboration:

- Engage directly with developers to work together to find solutions
- Engage with new companies/technologies
- Work more collaboratively with local authorities on multi-vector pathways that align with local needs
- Invite manufacturers to innovation days
- Wider international engagement and collaboration
- More specific support for non-technical community energy groups.
- Work with relevant university departments
- Work with community energy practitioners and local authorities
- Enable collaboration between different parties
- Hold meetings with existing suppliers

Processes:

- Quicker responses to standards amendments and requests
- Training and courses about network innovation strategy
- Assume innovation project can proceed without wider engagement
- Quicker and more detailed feedback on applications submitted via EIC hub
- Better publicity regarding online engagement events
- Provide an app that predicts spot prices
- Make the application process faster and simpler
- Greater consistency in engagement and practice between different network operators
- Make it easier to contact Specific Engagement Persons
- Respond to innovation submissions on the 'innovation portals'
- Be clearer about how innovation is integrated into BAU
- Show how they expect what they aim to achieve in the strategy will be achieved
- Implement a formal framework for what engagement should be, who should be engaged etc.

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