ESB NETWORKS

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT REPORT 2021

DOC-100322-HKG

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to ESB Networks' Stakeholder Engagement Report 2021. This report sets out our enduring Stakeholder Engagement Strategy and how it has helped us to deliver strong outcomes in 2021 for our customers and stakeholders.

This year has seen great developments for Ireland's low carbon future. We have seen the publication of Ireland's Climate Action Plan 2021 'Securing Our Future' setting out a roadmap for decisive action to halve Ireland's emissions by 2030 and reach net zero no later than 2050. To meet these objectives, we, at ESB Networks, have a strong role to play in facilitating the transition for Ireland. At our core, we have a clear ambition to build, maintain, operate, and develop the electricity distribution network to meet the needs of our customers, today and tomorrow. Customers will play an increasing role in Ireland's energy transition as they adopt these new technologies and more actively participate in the energy market through self-generation and storage, demand management, energy efficiency opportunities, and selling electricity back to the network. Customers will share in the benefits and opportunities that lie ahead and we, at ESB Networks, will actively support our customers and all our stakeholders to take part.

To meet the opportunities ahead, it is integral that we engage extensively with our stakeholders to ensure that our plans are aligned to their needs. I am pleased with the broad range of conversations that we have had with our stakeholders across all parts of our business in the past year. This deep engagement with stakeholders is informing our plans and delivered activities to connect Ireland to a clean electric future.

Engagement is everyone's job here at ESB Networks and we are continuing to ensure it is integral to our day-to-day operations. We are committed to continuously improving our approach to engagement to deliver meaningful outcomes for all our customers, stakeholders, and our business. Only through an open and ongoing two-way dialogue with our stakeholders, will we ensure that we are able to meet both the needs of our customers today and prepare the network to meet the needs of our customers in the future.

Our submission this year demonstrates our commitment to being transparent with our customers and stakeholders. In December 2020, we reported our Stakeholder Engagement Plan for 2021 and now, I am pleased to say we have delivered against all 8 of our identified focus areas. We want to hear from you, our customers and stakeholders, as to your views on how we engaged in 2021. We are publishing this document for consultation and your valuable feedback will help shape our continuous improvement.

Nicholas Tarrant

Nicholas Tarrant
Managing Director, ESB Networks

Our values

Our values underpin everything we do. They will continue to guide our decisions and actions as we move forward towards a Clean Electric Future.

WE'RE COURAGEOUS

Each of us is prepared to challenge the way we've always done things, stand up for what we feel is right and try better ways of working.

WE'RE CARING

We're putting customers' current and future needs at the heart of what we do and we keep ourselves and others safe and healthy.

WE'RE DRIVEN

We bring passion and persistence to what we do every day, innovating and collaborating to meet the challenges and opportunities ahead.

WE'RE TRUSTED

We each play our part, taking ownership of our responsibilities, seeing the job through and protecting our own health and safety, as well as others'.

SECTION

1

OUR STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

OUR VISION

Our vision is to enable a clean electric future together with our customers who will be at the heart of this transformation.

Our ambition is to build, maintain, operate, and develop the electricity distribution network to meet the needs of our customers, today and tomorrow. Customers will play an increasing role in Ireland's energy transition as they adopt these new technologies and more actively participate through self-generation and storage, demand management, energy efficiency opportunities, and selling electricity back to the network. Customers will share in the benefits and opportunities that lie ahead and ESB Networks will actively support our customers and all our stakeholders to take part.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

We are committed to continuously improving our approach to engagement to deliver meaningful outcomes for all our customers, stakeholders, and our business. In 2021, we commenced an independent review of our stakeholder engagement strategy and approach. As part of this review, our 'Strategic Stakeholder Engagement Framework' is being benchmarked against international best practice to recommend possible improvements and revisions required.

Some specific areas of our strategy that we have already been working to improve throughout 2021 include:

- Providing a clear demonstration of how stakeholder engagement is delivering tangible outcomes **(Refer to Section 2 for our strengthened focus on demonstrating outcomes from our engagement activities)**
- Providing practical examples of where engagement principles are being carried out in our delivery
- Demonstrating how stakeholder engagement is widely adopted across our entire business across different levels of seniority and different business units
- Providing direct examples of the governance structure materially enhancing the quality and/or consistency of engagement

Further areas of improvement to our strategy that we are currently working to deliver include:

- A metrics framework for measuring the impact of our stakeholder engagement
- A process for closing the feedback loop with our stakeholders, ensuring transparency of how stakeholder feedback is considered within our business
- A process for improving the output focus of our engagement activities, together with a mechanism for capturing and driving actions resulting from our stakeholder engagement

OUR STAKEHOLDERS

Our stakeholders are the individuals, groups of individuals, communities or organisations that affect, or could be affected by, our activities, products or services and associated performance. Given our central role in the electricity industry connecting over 2.3 million homes, farms, communities, and businesses around the country, we have a very broad range of stakeholders. Since considerable changes are taking place within the energy sector at an unprecedented scale, we are fully aware that who we engage with and how is constantly changing. Therefore, whilst we undertake an annual mapping exercise of our stakeholders to identify new groups in consideration of changing priorities, the segmentation wheel below is a working example of how we are looking to improve the granularity of our stakeholder mapping through further subgrouping/segmentation. This will enable us to be even more purpose driven in how we conduct our engagement activities and help to ensure that we are driving inclusive engagement by catering to all of our stakeholders.

OUR ENGAGEMENT METHODOLOGY

PLAN

Purpose: We plan our activities to ensure effective stakeholder engagement.

Action: Define the purpose of engagement. Identify and understand stakeholders (mapping) and tailor engagement to meet the needs of the relevant stakeholders.

Tools and processes:
EMBEDDED – Each year we consult and publish our engagement plans across our business focus areas.

ACT

Purpose: We implement our planned engagement activities to listen effectively to our stakeholders. Reporting on stakeholder concerns and comments to better understand and act upon their concerns.

Action: Brief stakeholders in advance and establish ground rules for engagement. Carry out effective engagement practice and ensure consistent approach to gathering data. Analyse and consider all feedback which is collected and develop action plan which sets out how we will respond to engagement outputs. Communicate outputs and action plan with stakeholders.

Tools and processes:
EMBEDDED – All our delivery focus areas incorporate stakeholder engagement into their plans. Our established Stakeholder Engagement governance process sees these activities from conception through to delivery.

REPORT

Purpose: We publicly report on our stakeholder engagement to show how engagement is informing our actions.

Action: Use a number of channels to communicate the outcomes of our engagement with customers and stakeholders.

Tools and processes:
ENHANCED – We have introduced our Stakeholder Newsletter in November 2020 and it is now fully integrated in our operations.

REVIEW

Purpose: We review and evaluate the success of our engagement to continually improve our process.

Action: Monitor and evaluate the quality of engagement, both overall and for individual engagements.

Tools and processes:
ENHANCED – Our Stakeholder Engagement Steering Groups has representatives from across all of ESB Networks' delivery areas. We hold each other to account to ensure we are delivering for our stakeholders.

IMPROVE

Purpose:
We review feedback from customers and stakeholders to incorporate lessons learned into future engagement planning.

Action: Continually improve our engagement through identifying and acting on specific improvements.

Tools and processes:
NEW – We are trialling an enhanced Metrics Framework into our business which captures specific feedback and ensures we use this to drive our actions.

HOW WE IDENTIFY STAKEHOLDERS

When we look to engage with customers and stakeholders on a topic and involve them in the decision-making process, we first need to assess who we should engage and why. It's important that we can justify and fully explain to our customers and stakeholders the need for the proposed initiative, and the benefits to them that will come as a result. We then look to ascertain which groups will either be most impacted or are likely to have the greatest interest in the proposed activity. For example, whilst customers will be directly impacted by the roll-out of smart meters, other key stakeholders such as electricity suppliers, housing associations and charities are also likely to be identified as key stakeholders as they will be directly or indirectly impacted by the roll-out.

We undertake an annual mapping exercise of our stakeholders to identify new groups considering changing priorities. We also annually review and refresh our central database of individual stakeholder. Business engagement leads present annually on their topic-specific key stakeholders through our steering group governance mechanism, highlighting where there is strong coverage on subject matters and where there are gaps which need addressing to ensure fair representation of our engagement activities.

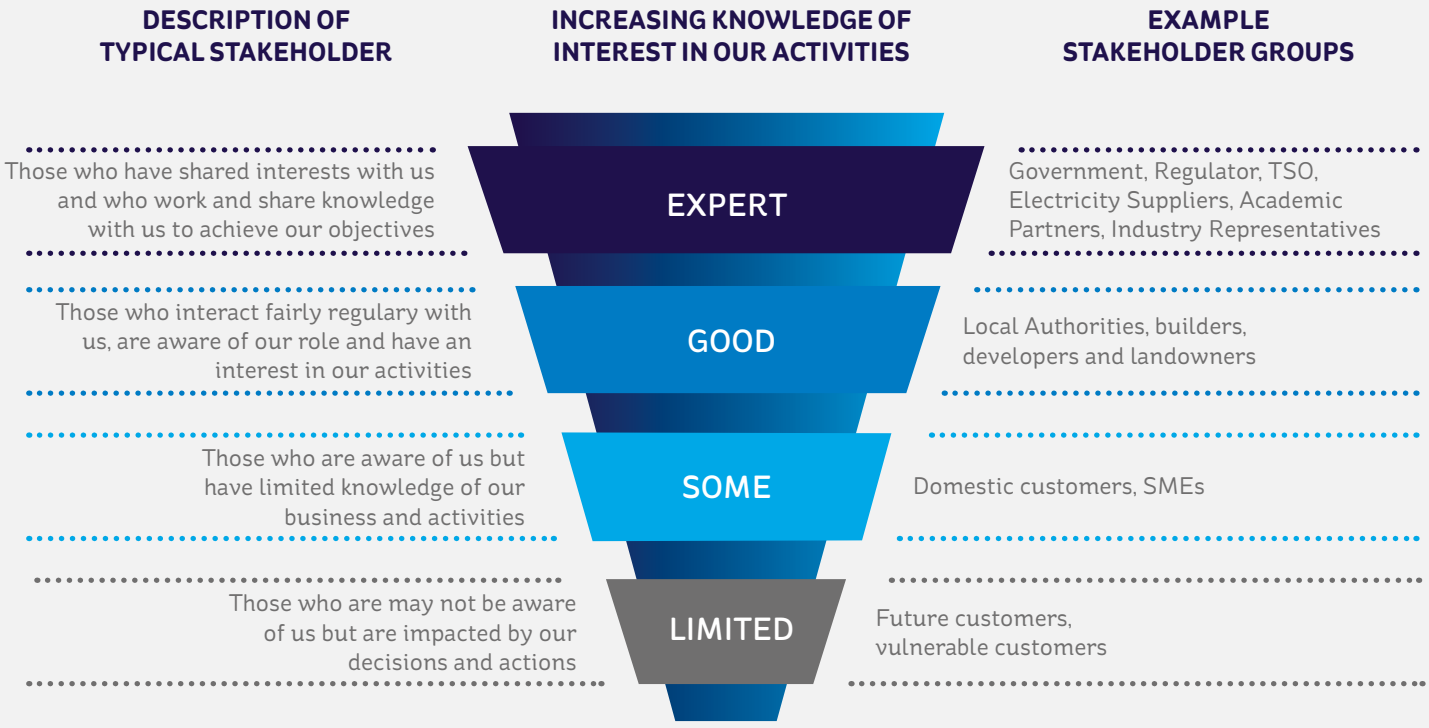
We recognise the considerable changes which are taking place within the energy sector at an unprecedented scale and are fully aware that who we engage with and how is constantly changing. The pandemic has highlighted even more clearly the need to help customers in vulnerable circumstances. Our annual review of stakeholders, in combination with working with the relevant partners, will ensure that vulnerable groups' voices are heard and that they will not be left behind in the transition to a low carbon future.

TAILORING OUR ENGAGEMENT

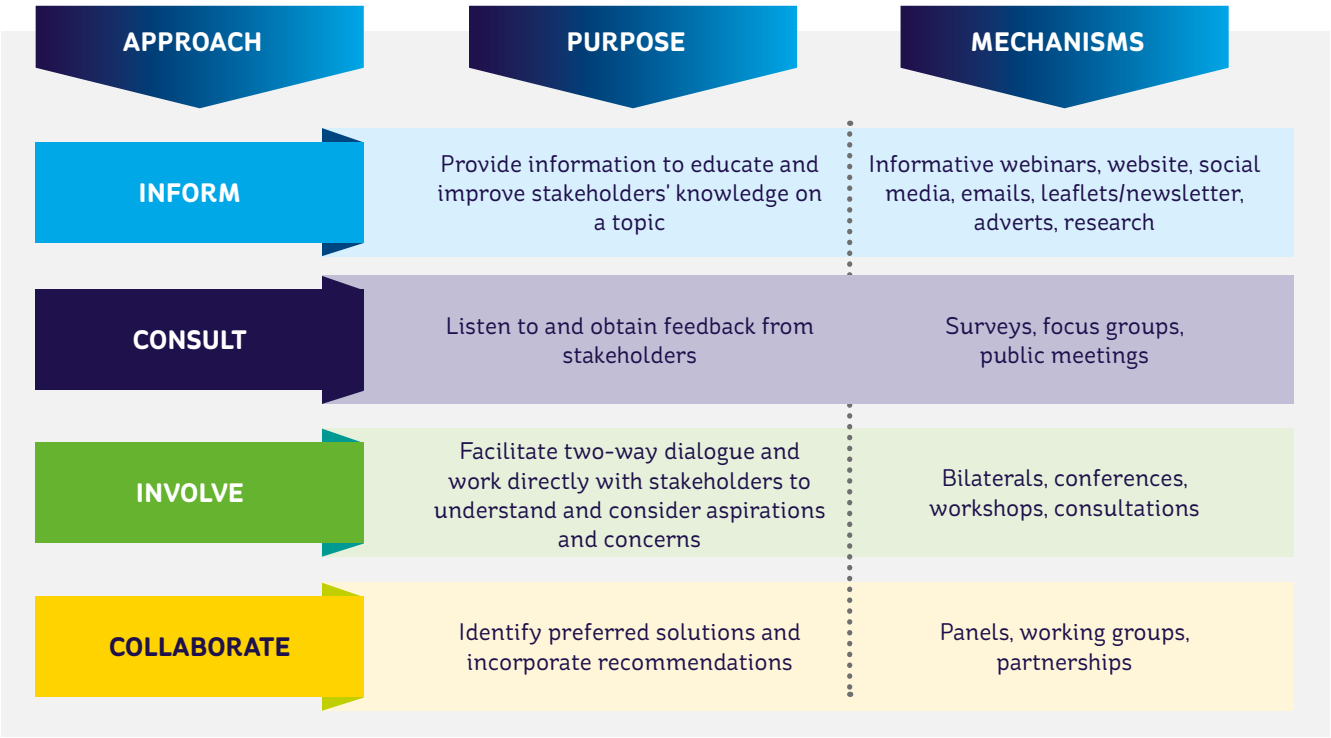
We assign a level of knowledge/ interest to each stakeholder group across each of our strategic engagement areas. Awareness of knowledge levels of each stakeholder group allows us to better tailor engagement to specific stakeholder groups, such as the engagement method, and the appropriate use of technical language. This approach helps us to answer questions around how different customer and stakeholder groups could influence our decision making and how best to involve them.

Different levels of stakeholder engagement are appropriate, depending on the purpose, materiality, desired outcome, timeframe, resources, and level of interest. The level of engagement that is appropriate is considered during the planning phase. This involves an assessment of the materiality of the subject matter of engagement, both for our stakeholders and our business, and includes an evaluation of potential impact and risk. Issues of major significance involving high levels of investment, impact and risk will warrant greater levels of engagement. Where the issue has lower significance and less impact, the provision of information may be more appropriate. In each case, we will discuss our approach with our stakeholders.

Whilst we acknowledge that not all stakeholders can be expert on any one, or indeed all of the topics of strategic engagement, we are committed to informing and educating our customers and stakeholders to empower them to engage effectively with us on the topics that matter to them. For example, prior to consultations with stakeholders with limited knowledge on the subject matter at hand, we run supplementary webinars to support customers in the transition from being 'informed' by ESB Networks, to being 'involved' with engagement and fostering a two-way dialogue with them. Continued engagement with stakeholders allows them to have more knowledge of a topic of engagement, and therefore more of an impact on the decision-making process with time.



Here we set out each of the different approaches and associated mechanisms we use for engagement, based on the knowledge levels of the audience.



Below are some of the examples of our engagement activities from the past year, alongside which groups were targeted, and which mechanisms were used to engage with them.

AREA	MECHANISMS	EVENT	PURPOSE	EXAMPLE STAKEHOLDERS
CONNECTING RENEWABLES	Non-technical publication on website **INFORM**	'Assessment of the scope for Higher Penetrations of Distributed Generation on the Low Voltage Distribution Network'	Inform non-technical audience about the technical impacts of increased microgeneration on the distribution network	Domestic customers
SMART METERING	Survey **CONSULT**	Customer awareness & satisfaction research for the National Smart Metering Programme	Monitor customer sentiment and concerns about the NSMP	All consumers e.g. domestic customers and SMEs
NATIONAL NETWORK LOCAL CONNECTIONS PROGRAMME	Bilaterals **INVOLVE**	Over 15 Focus Groups with a range of stakeholders	Engage with external stakeholders to inform the development of ESB Network's NNLC roll-out	Renewable installers / suppliers, Academia, Government, EV Charging installers
INNOVATION	Panel **COLLABORATE**	External Stakeholder Innovation Panel	Provide early engagement on the selection, prioritisation, and timeline planning of innovation projects, by gaining a collaborative understanding of potential benefits and impacts of proposed projects to both internal and external stakeholders	Generation customers, Academia, Research bodies, Consultants, Electricity suppliers, Transmission, Micro-renewable industry and EV charging installers/ suppliers

WHY WE ENGAGE

For ESB Networks, engaging with our customers and stakeholders is crucial to how we shape the future of our business and the network. It helps us develop new initiatives which benefit the communities and industry we serve, as well as improving and enhancing existing ones. It shapes our business planning and strategic priorities and informs the decision-making process. Engagement with wider industry accelerates innovation within the business and the energy sector through shared learnings and ideas.

SERVICES:
To enable customers and stakeholders to shape out existing and upcoming services

ACCOUNTABILITY ON DELIVERY:
For our customers and stakeholders to keep us to account on our promises and to drive continuous improvement

FUTURE PLANNING:
For our customers and stakeholders to support us in delivering in the long-term

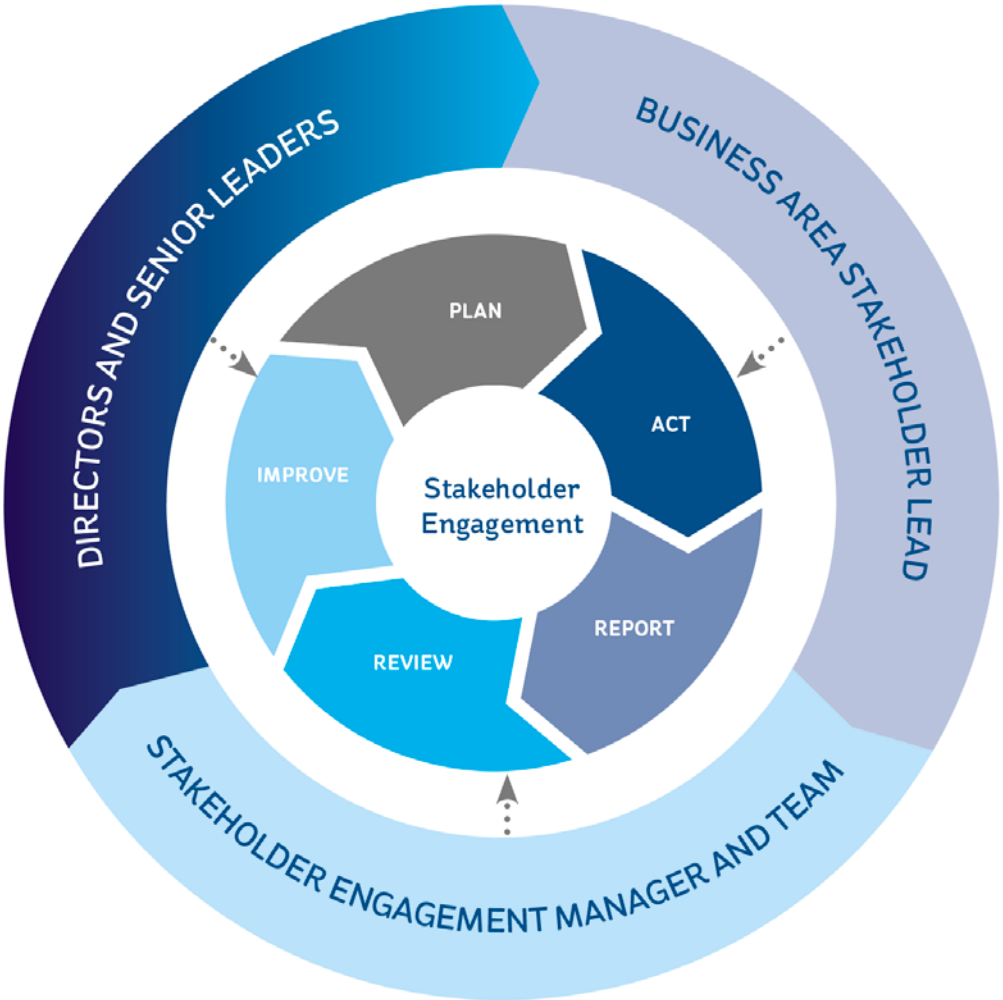
ENGAGEMENT IS AT THE HEART OF OUR OPERATIONS

We recognise that effective stakeholder engagement is essential for the successful management of our business. As a strategic priority, it is led by the Directors and the senior leadership team and is seen as a vital activity at every level of the organisation.

An internal Stakeholder Engagement Steering Group made up of stakeholder leads from across the business meets regularly to discuss planned engagement activities, review stakeholder feedback and agree proposed improvements and adjustments based on recommendations. This group which is led by the Stakeholder Engagement Team and chaired by the Managing Director, provides overall direction to the stakeholder engagement strategy for ESB Networks.

Stakeholder engagement forms a core element of our business processes and remains embedded in our business culture and is seen as the role and responsibility of every employee within the organisation.

Our strategically important delivery initiatives such as our National Smart Metering Programme, the National Network, Local Connections Programme and our Dingle Electrification project is shaping and informing how we undertake engagement across all of our activities from day-to-day service areas such-as maintaining the network and customer service through to our flagship innovation programmes to prepare the network for the future.



DERVLA O'FLAHERTY

Head of Customer Service & Experience, ESB Networks

The Customer Experience team (a group of over 170 employees) is responsible for customer service operations and leading the organisation to think and act in a more customer focused way, embedding customer principles and customer centricity across the business. The ESB Networks Customer Transformation Programme goal is to increase customer satisfaction and drive operational efficiencies. We are focused on streamlining key customer journeys such as new connections and outage management as well as enhancing our customer service touchpoints. The range of customer initiatives in 2021 included the development of customer digital self-serve tools, re-designed website and upgrading ESB Network's PowerCheck outage status tool which accommodates over 4.3 million visits per year. We are at the start of an exciting journey to deliver customer excellence enabled by digital and smarter ways of working to address our customers current and future needs.

ELLEN DISKIN

Head of National Network, Local Connections, ESB Networks

As we commence this new price review period 2021-2025, we would like to thank our customers and stakeholders for their active and open participation in the PR5 process. The actions and the voices of our stakeholders and our customers provided ESB Networks with the clarity and evidence needed to build a transformative and effective business plan. One of the outputs of this plan, includes the National Network, Local Connections Programme which will transform how energy on Ireland's electricity network is managed and consumed at a local level by customers and communities across the country. This will create new opportunities for customers, from renewable generators to homes, farms, communities, and businesses, as they adopt new technologies, manage their energy costs and drive down their carbon footprint. It will also mean ESB Networks collaborating across the energy sector, supporting businesses in Ireland who are committed to creating new opportunities for customers to use and store electricity locally. We cannot do this alone, it depends on participation and we will actively continue to engage with a wide range of stakeholders to achieve this goal.

GREG HANNA

Renewables and Major Load Connection Manager, ESB Networks

Ongoing collaboration and engagement with our stakeholders is enabling us to identify key actions needed to address the challenges of connecting more renewables to the distribution network. Together with our stakeholders we can work to overcome obstacles to connect renewable generation efficiently to the network and facilitate the 80% renewable electricity target by 2030 as set out in Ireland's Climate Action Targets.

DELIVERING ON OUR STAKEHOLDERS' PRIORITIES

Here are some examples of the engagements we have undertaken in 2021, targeting our customers and stakeholders across our different engagement focus areas.

AREA	PURPOSE	MECHANISMS	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES
SMART METERING 	The success of the National Smart Metering programme is of paramount importance in delivering a smart, clean electricity network for the future. We must continue to ensure that our customers are both fully aware of the meter replacement programme and satisfied with the installation process.	Customer and public sentiment and satisfaction surveys, information videos/ adverts, media campaigns, letters. Virtual meetings and working groups with regulators, electricity suppliers, governmental bodies and other industry stakeholders. Briefings to local and national elected representatives.	The National Smart Metering Programme has continued at increased pace over the previous year despite COVID restrictions. We have also produced a number of informational videos on the rollout and operation of smart meters which we have shared across social media and uploaded to our website.	• Total of 620,000 smart meters installed across the country • 90% awareness and 95% of customers satisfied with the installation process • 500+ new jobs created • 30,000+ customers already benefitting from smart meter services • 1m+ remote periodic smart meter readings
CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE 	The customer is at the heart of everything we do, and we want to ensure that they have the best experience possible whenever they need to interact with us. We will continue to listen and respond to their feedback to drive improvements in customer experience.	Customer satisfaction surveys, adverts, media campaigns.	We have fully updated and relaunched our website, including introduction of a new customer WebChat tool. We have also introduced new features to our Online Connections Portal.	• Overall customer satisfaction rate of 83% and 90% for our Customer Care Contact Centre • 90% connections applications completed online through our portal • 2.5m hits on our PowerCheck page
ENABLING ELECTRIFICATION 	In order to enable the transition to a clean, electric future, we need to ensure both that our network is ready to accommodate changes in how it is operated, and that every customer and business has the appropriate support to participate. Engagement and collaboration with customers and stakeholders will continue to play a central role in informing our approach.	Public consultation on Electrification of Heat and Transport Strategy. Interactive webinars (strategic and innovation webinars) and dissemination events. Completed a 3-year project in collaboration with the local communities in the Dingle Peninsula to explore the impact and capabilities of new low carbon technologies on the distribution network.	We have introduced Flexibility Trials as part of the ongoing Dingle Electrification Project. We have increased project outreach through podcasts, radio broadcasts, and our Webinar Series.	• Tested Ireland's first residential scale vehicle-to-grid EV chargers. • Trialled 25 solar PVs, 15 EVs, 5 ASHPs and 5 residential batteries. • Reduced average emissions of Dingle Ambassadors' homes from 9.2t to 4.7t CO_2/ , equating to the amount of carbon 215 trees would capture in a year. • Implementing a system that demonstrates residential-scale low carbon technologies can be scheduled to minimise impact on the local network.

AREA	PURPOSE	MECHANISMS	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES
SAFETY	We are committed to protecting the safety, health and wellbeing of anyone who comes into contact or may be impacted by our network and work activities. As a key priority for ESB Networks, we have partnered with a number of organisations to communicate vital safety messaging to the general public and 'at-risk' stakeholders through a range of channels.	Public consultation on Public Safety Strategy. Meetings with construction and engineering stakeholders, governmental bodies, farmers, and utilities (water, gas, telecoms).	We published our Public Safety Strategy for 2021-2025 and released our 'Are You Sure It's Safe' ad campaign. We promoted and shared cross-industry safety best practice.	• 52 % reduction in the most serious public safety incidents since implementation of the strategy • >800 college and university students engaged with on farm safety • 94% of the population associate ESB Networks with the promotion of safety 'Are You Sure It's Safe' advert • Delivered awareness training to 30 fire incident commanders
ENVIRONMENT	Whilst we are working towards a low carbon future for homes, farms and businesses across Ireland, we are aware of the impacts that our own operations have on the environment and we are always looking for ways to reduce and manage our impact on the landscape, wildlife and the climate.	Pre-consultation focus groups and roundtable discussions targeting cross section of stakeholder groups.	We have reviewed and updated our 'Climate Action, Sustainability and the Environment' section of our website and published our annual Environmental Performance Report, as part of our commitment to transparency around our environmental performance.	• Circa 50% reduction in operational CO2 emissions since 2016 • Ongoing expansion of our electric fleet to 72 vehicles • Overall recycling rate of 71% • Increased interaction with our website from our stakeholders • The Environmental webpages received over 2,000 views between July (launch date) and December 2021
INNOVATION	Innovation will continue to be at the forefront of our commitment to develop and deliver a low carbon electricity network. We recognise the crucial role that collaboration and engagement with both external stakeholders and our internal innovation community plays in driving our current innovation projects and shaping our future plans.	Public consultation and publications of innovation strategy, programmes and project reports on website. Innovation Webinar Series. Innovation Panel. Engagement with industry and community representative bodies and groups, including renewable energy, flexibility and storage, Academia, Consultants, Government bodies, electricity suppliers and utilities, and TSO.	We revamped and updated the innovation section of the website and have published project close-out reports. We have published an 18-month Innovation Programme Plan, updated biannually, to share our project pipeline with stakeholders. We have transitioned the learnings, and some of the outputs, from our projects into Business as Usual (BAU); such as embedding our Weather Forecasting and Damage Prediction tool into BAU operations.	• 94% stakeholders surveyed said that their understanding of our innovation activities had improved since 2020 • 30 Webinars; 10 hours+ of recordings; 26 Showcase events (in-person) • 80 External Company Collaborations; 600 Staff engaged in Innovation, 180 Innovation Ideas; 29 Active Projects; €60m potential savings • Web "time-on-page" user-engagement increased 20%

AREA	PURPOSE	MECHANISMS	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES
RESILIENCE, GROWTH AND NATIONAL NETWORK, LOCAL CONNECTIONS PROGRAMME 	To enable the changes required for the decarbonisation of Irish society, the reliance on the electricity network is ever increasing. This programme has been established to help us work with customers to increase the renewable connections on the network and create opportunities for customers to participate in the energy market by utilising innovative energy technologies.	Pre-consultation focus groups and roundtable discussions targeting cross section of customers and stakeholders, including farmers, SMEs, governmental bodies and academia. Consultation roundtables targeting customers and community groups, utilities, energy and renewables representatives, and technical suppliers. Multiple public consultation documents, targeting generation customers, technical suppliers, renewables representatives, and community representative groups. Offical Launch featuring stakeholders and Awareness campaign featuring stakeholders.	We launched the Programme and began our extensive public consultation to inform the high-level design of the programme. We launched an awareness campaign which featured our stakeholders across the Sunday Business Post, Newstalk Podcast series. A webpage was created to be a central repository for information. Formal consulation process was initiated and feedback was collated from stakeholders across industry, community and general public, this feedback informed the high level design of the programme and the proposals to the CRU we delivered.	• Launched the National Network, Local Connections Campaign • Reached 98% of business decision makers – 271,000ppl • Estimated to reach 96% (3 million) of all adult • Delivering 890,000 recall for ESB Network brand) • 296 questions captured and responded to in 2021 across Ireland • 15 stakeholder featured in awareness campaign • 15 focus groups across various segments of society • 10 round table disucssion to support consultation • 11 consultation documents released with 9 delivery plans being created • 280 registered participants at offical launch • 321 registered stakeholder on database • 26 thought leadership speaking opportunities delivered
CONNECTING RENEWABLES 	Achieving the ambitious targets of Ireland's National Climate Action Plan is largely dependent on the ability of our network to connect renewable generation of all scales and capacities. We are working with our stakeholders to make this process as efficient as possible to facilitate the transition to a clean electric future.	Virtual meetings, bilateral workshops and webinars with renewables representatives, major customers and generation customers. ESB Networks Renewable Energy Industry Survey was commenced in 2021 to explore various aspects related to the experience of a renewable project's life cycle.	We have engaged continuously with stakeholders on our Lean Connections Project, enabling the development of a Future State Map and Improvement Plan. We have also introduced our Mini-generation pilot scheme to streamline the application process for domestic renewable generators.	Survey feedback has identified that the connection application process for renewable connections is a priority area for us to improve, specifically the speed & quality of query resolution; provision of transparent project cost and programme information; process for modification to the connection and provision of clear points of contact.

AREA	PURPOSE	MECHANISMS	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES
RETAIL MARKET SERVICES	We want to continue to improve the service we provide to Market Participants and how we communicate with them. Ongoing engagement will play a key role in understanding their experience.	We undertook our first independent Market Participant satisfaction survey, targeting large, small and self-suppliers in the ROI Retail Electricity Market.	We undertook our first independent Market Participant satisfaction survey, targeting large, small and self-suppliers in the ROI Retail Electricity Market, with the objective of obtaining insights and current views of how the market is operating, how it is performing and where it can improve. The objective of the survey was to obtain insights and current views of how the market is operating, how it is performing and where it can improve. That detail was captured in the output of the Survey Report.	• 88% satisfaction amongst Market Participants with the overall delivery of RMS • 81% satisfaction amongst Market Participants with how RMS engages with suppliers • 88% satisfaction amongst Market Participants with how RMS plans and communicates changes in the ROI Retail Electricity Market • 81% satisfaction amongst Market Participants with how RMS implements changes in the ROI Retail Electricity Market

LISTENING TO FEEDBACK AND MEASURING THE SUCCESS OF OUR ENGAGEMENT

ESB Networks undertook a number of independent stakeholder surveys during 2021 in direct response to our stakeholder's feedback and recommendations.

ESB Networks Retail Market Services Survey aim was to obtain insights from as many active participants in the ROI Retail Electricity Market as possible on their current views of how the market is operating, how it performs and caters for suppliers needs and how the market can improve. The results of this survey will feed into an overall improvement strategy for ESB Networks Retail Market Services which will be delivered in the form of various initiatives throughout 2022. The learnings of this survey will be used to inform decisions on prioritising improvements to our services, strengthen our engagement process, and improve overall communications with our customers and stakeholders.

ESB Networks Renewable Energy Industry Survey was commenced in 2021. This survey explores various aspects related to the experience of a renewable project's life cycle (from the initial DSO application process for connection to the distribution network, to project delivery and ongoing engagement on day-to-day operational issues). The aim of this survey is to provide a professional analysis and understanding of what the baseline of satisfaction is among key customer and stakeholder segments for services appropriate to them. It will help identify improvement actions based on the survey feedback which we can use to inform decisions on prioritising improvements in our services, strengthen our engagement process, and improve overall communications with our customers and stakeholders.

Closing the Feedback Loop

Another recurring recommendation from our stakeholders in 2021 is the need for additional clarity on how stakeholder feedback is considered internally by ESB Networks. As we have significantly increased the number of stakeholder consultations over the last few years, there is a need to establish a consistent, transparent, and embedded approach to listening to customers feedback and demonstrating action/output from their insights.

Metrics

We also recognise the need to demonstrate how our strategy and engagement, using clearly defined and quantifiable metrics, is resulting in quality engagement and successful outcomes for our customers and stakeholders.

We are, therefore, trialling a comprehensive metrics framework which will allow us to measure and quantify the impact of our engagement, ensuring there is more of a focus on outputs from our engagement activities, and providing a trackable mechanism for capturing and driving actions resulting from our stakeholder engagement plans and activities. This framework will help to solidify the high-quality engagement that we carry out across different key topics for our existing and future operations.

The proposed metrics framework includes an ownership tracking element to drive action. This means, that all feedback is driven through a process to ensure that it can be considered for further action.

Our Engagement Framework considers engagement end-to-end, ranging from our approach to ensuring we are choosing appropriate methods for our stakeholders based on their knowledge levels as well as driving clear accountabilities and ensuring key feedback is central to our decision-making.

CRITERIA	DESCRIPTION	WHAT WILL THIS ASSESS
Methodologically sound **(pre-engagement planning)**	Clear aims, sound sampling methodology and consideration given to barriers of inclusion	Details of engagement, governance, and stakeholder segmentation
Rigorously gathered **(recording feedback)**	Thorough discussion of data collection procedures, range of perspectives noted and extensive detail	Identification of event facilitator/ note taker, data gathering methods, and reporting structure
Credibly interpreted **(post-engagement review)**	Engagement interpreted accurately and fairly with detailed outline of all perspectives and issues discussed	Active audience participation, and appropriateness of knowledge level, engagement method, and detail of intent
Contributory score **(action log)**	Feedback provided is specific, clear and relevant with a clear link to the topic discussed – high value added	Action tracking ownership and closing the feedback loop

SECTION

2

EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ACROSS OUR BUSINESS

EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ACROSS OUR BUSINESS

Introduction

At ESB Networks, we are leading the transition to a low carbon future powered by clean electricity. We recognise the fundamental importance of deep and far-reaching engagement with our stakeholders. That ranges from how we ensure we are delivering the essentials: keeping the lights on for 2.4 million customers in Ireland, to how we effectively facilitate a clean electric future for Ireland where we can expect up to 950,000 electric vehicles on our roads in the next 10 years alone.

We are pleased to say, this year, we have increased our engagement activities more than ever before, recognising the importance of stakeholders' contributions to the successful delivery of these initiatives. We have delivered strong end outcomes for our customers, including:

Targeted awareness campaigns such as the all-important matter of Safety, with our 'Are You Sure It's Safe 'campaign amassing over 200,000 views in the first 2 months of its roll-out, alone.

Delivering against our targeted roll-out strategies. We more than doubled our Smart Meter roll-out in 2021 compared to 2020, resulting in 620k Smart Meter installations

Delivering large-scale programmes for the future. Over 320 stakeholders contributed more than 260 individual insights to inform the shaping of our 2021 National Network, Local Connections Programme.

Transitioning innovation into business-as-usual: The Modular MV Standard EGIP Substation project supports the faster connection of renewable generation.

As we commence 2022, we look forward to strengthening our engagement activities even further. For us, it is essential that stakeholders play a tangible and measurable role across all our activities.

Summary of our Initiatives

ENGAGEMENT FOCUS AREAS IN 2021		INITIATIVES	PAGE	EMBEDDED	NEW THIS YEAR	INNOVATIVE APPROACH	CO-CREATED
1	CONNECTING RENEWABLES	Making connecting renewables easier through Mini-generation services	19		✔	✔	
		Delivering an improved connections process: Lean Connections	20	✔		✔	✔
		Unlocking demand and generation data for customers	20	✔		✔	
2	INNOVATION	Innovating to deliver MV Substations: Embedded Generation Interface Protection (EGIP)	21	✔	✔	✔	✔
		Updating standards to unlock growth: Smarter MV and HV Customer Connections	22				✔
3	RESILIENCE GROWTH AND ACTIVE SYSTEM MANAGEMENT	Delivering our National Network, Local Connections Programme	23		✔	✔	✔
4	ELECTRIFICATION OF HEAT & TRANSPORT	Electrification of Heat and Transport Strategy	26				✔
		Low Carbon Technology confidence and fostering Active Energy Consumers: Dingle Electrification Project	27			✔	✔
5	THE ENVIRONMENT	Minimising our impact on the environment	29	✔			
		Enhancing the environmental information available to our stakeholders	29			✔	✔
6	CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AND DELIVERY	Launching a new website to improve ease-of-use for customers	30		✔	✔	
		Facilitating connections to meet Ireland s 'Housing for All' ambitions	31				✔
7	SMART METERING	Achieving Ireland s National Smart Meter rollout programme	32	✔			✔
8	SAFETY	Being a safety-led organisation for the communities we serve	33	✔		✔	✔
	DELIVERING BEYOND OUR FOCUS AREAS IDENTIFIED IN 2021 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN	Driving collaboration with the TSO to deliver stronger benefits for our communities	34	✔			✔
		Day-to-day management of the network	35	✔			✔
		Innovating where customers expect us to perform: Weather Forecasting model	36	✔	✔	✔	
		Learning through independent surveys: Retail Market Services (RMS) Satisfaction Survey	37		✔		

Focus area 1:
CONNECTING RENEWABLES

We recognise the crucial role the ongoing growth in the connection and use of renewable generation of all scales will play in enabling a clean, electric future and achieving the ambitious goals set out within Ireland's National Climate Action Plan. We are working hard to connect renewable generation efficiently to the network and facilitate the 80% renewable electricity target by 2030 as set out in Ireland's COP 2026 commitments.

250MW
Battery Energy Storage System customers connected

4722MW
Current total renewable capacity connected to the distribution network

100
Approx 100 ECP2.1 engagement meetings in 2021

Making connecting renewables easier through Mini-generation services

Stakeholders said:

Domestic and small business generation customers who responded to our Microgeneration Framework consultation in 2020 emphasised the need for a simpler connections process.

What we did

- We developed a new, streamlined connections application process for mini-generation customers, defined as *renewable generation in the range of 6-17kVA for single phase and 11-50kVA for 3-phase*, which will be trialled as a pilot in 2022.
- We simplified the existing application form which now requires only the appropriate level of technical information in relation to the proposed generator.
- We produced a dedicated page on our website containing step-by-step guide and eligibility criteria.
- We provided relevant training to staff and hosted a number of advanced key stakeholder webinars.
- We will prioritise customers who apply for an MEC in the Smart Meter rollout, removing the requirement for them to install a non-smart import /export meter, reducing costs and unnecessary waste.

OUTCOMES

- We improved the communication of terms and conditions to applicants, ensuring aspects which may impact connection parameters are known.
- We have introduced the option for applicants to choose a reduced Maximum Export Capacity (MEC) or to install their own Export Limitation Scheme to avoid reinforcement costs.

Delivering an improved connections process: Lean Connections

Stakeholders said:

- Generation and large demand customers and other industry stakeholders expressed the desire for an improved, more efficient connections process with reduced timescales.

What we did

- We consulted and collaborated with technical experts, major customers and other key stakeholder groups to inform a review and analysis of how we deliver renewables connections, identify areas for improvement and embed lean delivery of connections.
- We have performed a comprehensive, end-to-end review and redesign, with specialist consultancy support, of our major capital project delivery processes and produced an Improvement Plan for 2022.
- We have undertaken intensive stakeholder consultation to gather feedback on the changes we are proposing and implementing.
- Engagement through our 'Voice of the Customer' (virtual) interviews, has provided valuable inputs to supplement our own investigations.
- The information gathered through these discussions was used in the Value stream assessment to develop process improvement events. The themes from the Customer engagement included accuracy and time to deliver connection offers, programme visibility and communications with our customers.

ECP 2.1 update

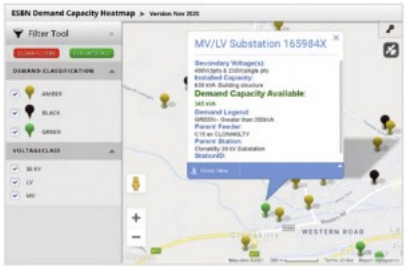
- A Management of Daily Improvement system was developed with key departments to facilitate reducing the time to deliver ECP2.1.
- We are building on the improvements done in ECP2.1 to further develop a new approach to delivery of ECP2.2 to further improve the customer experience.

OUTCOMES

- An end-to-end visual management system is under development for ESB Networks to improve management throughout the lifecycle of renewables projects.

Unlocking demand and generation data for customers

We have developed a capacity Heatmap in our efforts to improve the availability of information for customers on connections.



The Heatmap is abating time and process delays by allowing customers to identify where there is capacity available on the network. This will also reduce the demand on our customer connections planning team, who receive high levels of requests about available capacity. The current version of the Heatmap was developed through consultation with stakeholders. New features are currently under development and an update will be released in mid-2022.

Focus area 2:
INNOVATION

Innovation will continue to drive forward the development and delivery of a future electricity network which empowers our customers, delivers value for money, and provides a sustainable energy system for us all. **We are the first DSO globally to be accredited with a 5-star Innovation Recognition by the European Foundation for Quality Management**, demonstrating our commitment to integrating our innovation culture across our business.

600
Staff engaged across our broader internal innovation community

€60M
Combined potential lifecycle benefits of our 29 active projects

80+
Organisations we are actively collaborating and delivering with

94%
Stakeholders understanding of innovation activities improved over 2021

Innovating to deliver MV Substations: Embedded Generation Interface Protection (EGIP)

Stakeholders said:

- Independent Power Producers want innovative solutions to improve and streamline the connections process. Those who responded to our consultation in December 2020 recognised the benefits of our proposed solution and supported us adopting this approach.

What we did

- We have designed and developed a new standardised, pre-fabricated modular substation unit that can be deployed to site for the connection of renewable generation of between 1 to 20MVA to the distribution system.
- We undertook consultations with stakeholders to inform the final design to ensure the solution will cater to their needs.
- Benefits for customers include reduced construction time and effort as well as more predictable costs through standardisation, facilitating a faster connection of renewable generation.
- We installed a demonstration unit at our National Training Centre, Portlaoise and arranged 14 showcase events to promote the innovative design to MV customers and provide the opportunity for visitors to ask questions about the module and assess its suitability as a new, alternative option.
- We hosted informative events to share the detailed specifications and requirements, as well as being discussed with a wider audience at one of our Innovation Webinars.
- This solution has been progressed to business-as-usual as an option for MV customers. We have developed the specification, procedures and processes for installing, testing, and commissioning the module.
- We are publishing the specifications and requirements for installation on our website, providing additional information for customers to use in their connection applications.
- 4 modules are now under construction, ready for customers who choose this option.

OUTCOMES

- Facilitating faster connection of renewable generation
- Standardised design for customers
- 14 In-person Showcase Events
- Facilitating the transition to a low carbon future

Updating standards to unlock growth: Smarter MV and HV Customer Connections

Stakeholders said:

Our Distribution System Security and Planning Standards (DSSPS) need to evolve to meet the changing needs of our customers, and to incorporate new and innovative technologies to enable a clean, electric future.

What we did

- We have undertaken a fundamental review of our DSSPS, which determines how we connect customers to the network. We consulted and engaged with industry stakeholders such as Wind Energy Ireland (WEI), Irish Solar Energy Association (ISEA), Irish Energy Storage Association (IESA) and the Demand Response Association of Ireland (DRAI) throughout the project to better understand their needs and inform our approach.
- We published our new DSSPS and have transitioned many changes to BaU. For example, we now provide detailed network planning criteria and information on our website to improve transparency around the planning process.
- We have introduced the option of **Non-Firm Access** for up to 80% of distributed generation generators, allowing for more economical and faster connections, and **Non-Wires Alternatives** to allow customers to delay or defer conventional network reinforcements in 25% of situations.
- Technical guidance for these two options has also been published alongside the new DSPSS on our website, empowering our customers to make more informed applications for their renewable connections.
- In collaboration with stakeholders, we developed a new 'load indices' approach providing a loading level profile for HV stations, and allows us to identify and prioritise work for Price Review 5 (PR5) and beyond.
- We will continue to monitor changes to the Standards in other jurisdictions to ensure best practice.

OUTCOMES

- Introduction of a Non-Firm Access option for up to 80% of applicants
- Introduction of Non Wires Alternatives
- Development of 'Load Indices Approach'
- Provision of technical criteria for the assessment of Energy Storage Facilities

Focus area 3:

RESILIENCE, GROWTH AND ACTIVE SYSTEM MANAGEMENT

ESB Networks' National Network, Local Connections Programme is a multi-year project that will transform how energy in Ireland's electricity distribution network is managed. In the new energy landscape, customers and communities across the country will become more active in managing and controlling their electricity usage as they adopt new technologies, products and services.

Delivering our National Network, Local Connections Programme

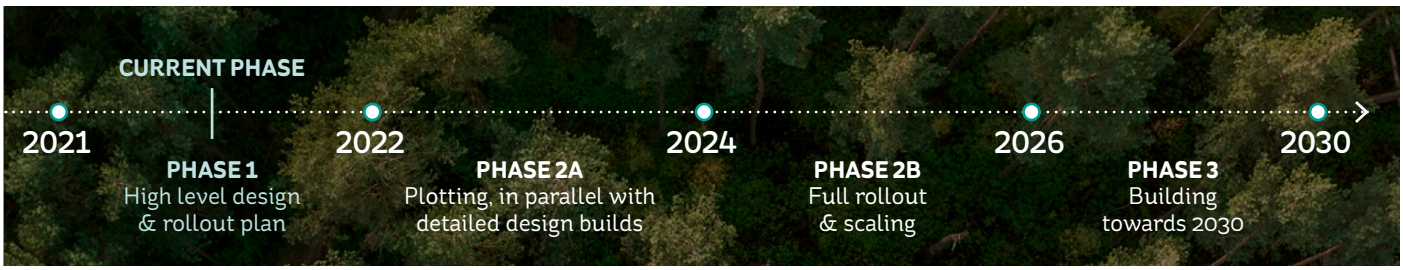
In September 2021, we launched the National Network, Local Connections Programme consultation which included 11 consultations that were developed through roundtables and focus groups with stakeholders. Our objectives for the programme in 2021 included

(1) Building broad and deep awareness of the project, its timeline objectives, and opportunities to participate;

(2) Building customer and stakeholder consultation channels, and

(3) Ensuring that customers and stakeholders have a voice in the project at high-level design and project development activities from the outset.

The core objective of the National Network, Local Connections Programme is to bring together changes in how we are generating and using electricity, to enable all electricity customers and communities to play an active role in climate action, by using or storing renewable electricity when it is available to them local.



Stakeholders said:

Since the launch of the Programme, formerly known as Active System Management, stakeholders have asked for more education within the industry and community about the wider energy transition. In the current energy landscape, the needs of Irish homes, farms and communities are changing. Our stakeholders and customers expect us to empower them to participate in the transformation happening in the energy landscape, whilst simultaneously meeting their energy needs. In the initial stages of programme design, it was established that there will be a reliance on stakeholders across customers, communities, and industry. Policy makers' support and customers' participation will be central to delivering the National Network, Local Connections Programme. In the first phase, we have built awareness and educated stakeholders on the programme and received direct feedback from various stakeholder groups, from households to large utilities, on the following four areas:

Access & Awareness, Technology, Market Design and **DSO TSO Joint Plan.**

What we did

- To ensure that we build an inclusive Network to support the energy requirements of the people of Ireland we put an emphasis on listening and respecting varying opinions and insights of our stakeholders and to be transparent on the programme delivery plan. Over the course of 2021 year we set ourselves a target to:
- **Ensure stakeholders views are reflected in the design and delivery of the programme**
- **Engage in a timely, relevant, and meaningful way.**
- **Ensure we move at a pace and scale which is in line with industry and customer expectation and need.**

Shaping the consultation period

- The consultation process was built around stakeholders' needs through 5 pre-consultation roundtable workshops. During these sessions we listened closely to stakeholders' perspectives on how to engage and on which topics. The inputs received were directly implemented in the programme. Furthermore, we held 5 roundtable workshops during the consultation for stakeholders to speak with the programme team and to field queries.
- Alongside the consultation document we published an overview document that explained the background to the Programme and provided a summary of each of the documents to enable stakeholders to easily navigate them.
- As a result we have registered an additional 136 stakholders on our list.
- Since the launch of the programme, each insight gathered from stakeholders has been mapped to a manager and is considered in-depth at management meetings and design forums. To date, insights have been used to inform many aspects of the programme, including the high-level programme design, communication roadmap, consultation direction, awareness campaign and even the programme name.

12 **Knowledge transfer** with International Utility Companies

20 meetings with **International Energy Industry Experts**

15 **Focus group sessions** with a range of stakeholders

14 **Knowledge transfer sessions** with technology experts

262+ Insights and queries were registered on our **insights log**

12 meetings with **Irish Energy Industry Experts**

280 **Registered participants** for the launch

Awareness, education and engagement

Stakeholders welcomed the 2021 programme's consultative approach and called for consultation and engagement over the life-cycle of the programme. Stakeholders also recommended that we actively engage a more diverse group of stakeholders. Some of the changes we have made to the framework as a result of stakeholder input includes the following:

1. Consultative steering group: The steering group will play a central role as one of the channels for understanding stakeholders' views, supporting stakeholders' ability to plan for and influence the timing of consultation in the future. The ToR for the steering group has been sent to CRU for approval at the time of writing.
2. Insights workstream: Early in Phase 2, we will seek to recruit an 'insights' workstream to work throughout the lifecycle of the programme, seeking to deliver a continuous stream of stakeholder insights.
3. Targeting stakeholders: For future engagement, we have categorised stakeholders in three groups: (1) Proactive stakeholders who are on our stakeholder list, (2) stakeholders that need to be on our stakeholder list and be a more active part of future decision making, and (3) the general public who need to be aware and learn about our programme. In 2021 we have grown our stakeholder list from 186 to 321, coming from increasingly diverse backgrounds. We plan to double that number by the end of phase 2.

> ***Excellent approach by ESB Networks, with due attention given to fully explaining the vision and what is possible, while being very open to business and community inputs. A case study in best practice***
>
> **Bob Hanna**
> Chairperson of Smart Grid Ireland

Targeted Engagement

Through more targeted engagement we have developed a deep understanding of stakeholder views on pace & scale of piloting, technology, and market design. When appropriate and possible, we have taken stakeholder recommendations on board.

- Stakeholders wanted us to broaden the scope of piloting to include other areas, such as residential demand response features. Over the 3 releases of the programme, we have proposed the definition of 6 pilots through which we are seeking customer and industry perspectives. Based on the consultation feedback received on our piloting roadmap, we have introduced (1) an additional customer and community driven pilot, and (2) a consultative definition steps at the beginning of each pilot. Pilot learnings and outcomes will be shared with stakeholders.
- In some instances, it was not possible to directly apply stakeholders' recommendations. For example, stakeholders advocated for automation as a tool to facilitate near real-time communication between the DSO and DER and called for it to be introduced earlier in the programme. Despite stakeholder appetite, we are not proposing to increase the early investment in automation due to it becoming redundant when legacy DSO systems are retired, and Release 3 goes live.
- With our co-creation approach, stakeholders will always be sighted when we choose to go in another direction and why.

> ***... the programme requires engagement with a broader group of energy stakeholders than ever before – it's important we work together to transform how energy on Ireland's electricity network is managed and consumed.***
>
> **Siobhán McHugh**
> CEO of the DRAI

OUTCOMES

- Increased awareness about the consultation programme led to input from a range of key stakeholders
- Updated our consultation framework to reflect stakeholder inputs
- Updated the piloting roadmap to include a community driven pilot and a consultative definition step at the beginning of each pilot.

NEXT STEPS

In the next phase of the programme:

- We plan on the engagement and collaboration initiated in 2021 as we move forward with the design and implementation of the programme.
- Our Consultative Steering Group will oversee all of engagement and help us ensure our communication, education and engagement approaches deliver relevant information at relevant times.
- We will use insights to inform the initial piloting plans and once the pilots are active.
- More information on the Consultation delivery plan can be found on the website.

Focus area 4:

ELECTRIFICATION OF HEAT & TRANSPORT

We have and will continue to engage and collaborate with customers and stakeholders as our plans and objectives evolve to develop a cost effective, and resilient distribution system that will support our customers to make the transition to electrified heat and transport by 2030, our network has to be sufficiently reinforced.

Electrification of Heat and Transport Strategy

Stakeholders said:

Domestic and small business generation customers who responded to our Microgeneration Framework consultation in 2020 emphasised the need for a simpler connections process.

What we did

- In January 2021 we published the Electrification of Heat and Transport (EoHT) Strategy taking into account our stakeholder's feedback.
- Our overarching objectives for EoHT co-designed by stakeholders are (1) removing any ESB Networks policy barriers, (2) engaging, enabling and empowering our customers to electrify, and (3) ensuring Low Voltage (LV) network readiness.

EV charging for off-street, apartment blocks & public places

- Through our work with the Low Emission Vehicle Taskforce chaired by DECC, we have estimated that 75% energy used for charging by 2050 will be delivered via home charging. This finding indicated that facilitating home charging should be on our list of priorities.
- This year, we have supported SEAI by providing technical assistance for launching their Apartment EV Charging Grant and inputted into drafting technical requirements for EV chargers.
- Our newly established Electrification Strategy Implementation Group has led the development and publishing of ESB Networks' EV Charging Guidance Document in collaboration with local government.

> *The SEAI Transport team has been working very closely with the ESB Networks team on emerging solutions for EV Charging Infrastructure. Dan Catanase (ESB Networks' Electrification Strategy Manager) has played a central role in managing regular meetings and follow-up actions which have already resulted in a number of key decisions being reached. The relationship is expected to continue to develop, and we look forward to more collaborations.*
>
> **Robert Cazactuc**
> Programme Executive for EV Charging Infrastructure
> seai Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland

Electrification of heat

- Engagement with stakeholders in 2020 and 2021 allowed us to identify six broad sectors to consider for our Strategy: Domestic housing – new / existing, Apartment blocks – new / existing, Office blocks, and Industrial / Commercial.
- In the past year, we have been reviewing design standards to accommodate the additional load driven by low carbon heating solutions.

Collaborations

- We ensure continuous collaboration with our peer DNOs and recognised international professional bodies such as CIGRE and CIRED.
- Key collaboration where stakeholders have informed and shaped our strategy include The Dingle Electrification Project (see below), +CityXChange, SuperHomes, and Exploration of Air Source Heat Pumps.

OUTCOMES

- Developed a collaboration framework with SEAI for future technology trials and initiatives
- Provided clear guidance to the market on EV charging infrastructure connection requirements in apartment blocks

Low Carbon Technology confidence and fostering Active Energy Consumers:

DINGLE ELECTRIFICATION PROJECT

In 2018 we started a 3-year project in collaboration with the local communities in the Dingle Peninsula to explore the impact and capabilities of new low carbon technologies on the distribution network. Through this project, we enabled a community to connect to a clean electric future by trialling clean-energy technologies on the local electricity network.

The Dingle project had a number of key objectives:

(1) Enable and trial residential **customer flexibility,**

(2) Increase **network reliability,**

(3) Showcase the impact of an effective engagement strategy in enabling **Active Energy Citizenship**.

Stakeholders said:

Customers have made it clear to us that visibility and understanding the 'lived experience' of low carbon technologies by other people in their local area enables more informed investment decisions on installing low carbon technologies in their own homes.

What we did

With collaboration with local communities, we trialled clean energy enabling and low carbon technologies in participants' properties. This included 25 Solar PV, 15 Electric Vehicle chargers, 5 air-source heat pumps, 5 residential batteries, together with smart devices on the electricity network to provide visibility of the impact of these technologies on the local network, and to enhance the reliability of the network for all our customers.

- We developed a bespoke Community Engagement Strategy to ensure that everyone in the community was informed and involved in all phases of the project, enabling the diffusion of Active Energy Citizenship behaviours into the future.

The Ambassadors Programme

- We launched an Ambassadors Programme in 2018. Over the course of the programme we installed all the elements of the 'behind-the-meter' test-bed infrastructure which enabled the ambassadors to effectively share their experiences throughout the project.
- The 5 ambassadors' (and all other trial participants) were provided with a mobile app with next to real time information on their energy footprint and what's happening in their premises, enabling them to make small changes to their energy usage behaviours, according to their needs. As an example, this induced turning on household appliances on a sunny day to leverage free electricity or throttling back the EV charger to only use solar and not consume from the network.
- In addition to the technologies installed at the Ambassador properties, we also installed smart EV chargers and V2G chargers at the homes of 10 EV Ambassadors and Solar PVs on the roofs of an additional 20 properties across the peninsula.
- The benefits of combining solar PV with residential batteries quickly became apparent to the project ambassadors many of whom intend to increase the scale of both over time.
- Our EV ambassadors understood the value in charging electric vehicles during off-peak night-time periods but nevertheless were cautious about ceding full control over the charging of their electric vehicles to us.
- During 2021, following feedback received from Ambassadors, we modified the mobile app functionality to provide an over-ride / EV-charging boost function, to permit the charging of EVs outside the optimal off-peak time schedule, thereby removing anxiety from EV drivers that their vehicles would not be charged in advance of times when they considered a fully charged battery was required.

Outreach

- The Dingle Ambassadors participated in multiple stakeholder engagement events, including ESB Networks' hosted webinars and site-visits to their properties where their "lived experiences" were shared and the role of technologies, including the mobile app, in enabling behaviours with a positive impact on the local network, were demonstrated.
- They also shared their experiences of Low Carbon living and the role of the technologies provided by ESB Networks on several webinars in partnership with the Dingle Innovation & Creativity Hub and podcasts with Radio Kerry with over 29,000 listeners.
- The Project Ambassadors spoke about their enthusiasm in sharing their experiences of the transition to low carbon and into active energy citizens, with family, friends, neighbours and the wider community and indicated their intention to continue to do so into the future even when ESB Networks' project has finished.

Flexibility Trail and EV Range Confidence

- We ran a range of tests within our flexibility trial to demonstrate how loads associated with EV charging and hot water heating by ASHPs could be moved away from peak periods.
- One EV Trial participant claimed switching to an EV had reduced their travel costs by 87% over their diesel engine family car.
- The Dingle Project achieved a significant milestone in 2021 through the installation of the first residential-scale vehicle to grid / bi-directional EV charges in Ireland. 5 of these V2G units were installed for selected EV trial participants. We have already learnt from V2G tests that power can successfully be fed from the electric vehicle battery into the home, with any residual power fed back onto the network.
- Our analysis of the EV journeys in the trials showed a growing confidence in the range of EVs and the performance of home charging, with total distances travelled per week increasing consistently over the duration of the trial.

> *It's too early to say exactly what we have saved because we would need to wait until we have gone through a winter and a summer to get an accurate estimate...But if you add all the measures together, we have probably saved around €1,500, but that is just a very rough estimate.*
>
> **Rory McKeown**
> Dingle Project Ambassador

20 **Webinars** held with a total audience of over **800 stakeholders**

76% **increase in the views** of the Dingle Project Website

12 **Dingle site visits** with key stakeholder groups

4 DAY **Lunchtime Dingle Webinar Series** with a total **audience of 280**

4 **podcasts** involving Ambassadors with listenership of **29,000**

OUTCOMES

- Tested Ireland's first residential-scale vehicle-to-grid EV chargers.
- Trialled 25 solar PVs, 15 EVs, 5 ASHPs and 5 residential batteries.
- Reduced average emissions of Ambassadors' homes from 9.2t to 4.7t CO_2/ , equating to the amount of carbon 215 trees would capture in a year.
- Implementing a system that demonstrates residential-scale low carbon technologies can be scheduled to minimise impact on the local network.

NEXT STEPS

The insights from the Dingle Project have already informed some recently established projects across ESB Networks and have provided learnings that are being implemented across the business.

Focus area 5:
THE ENVIRONMENT

We have a responsibility to our customers and the communities we serve to ensure we manage the impacts of our activities on the environment, including wildlife. Any opportunity to reduce our impact on the environment whilst improving the performance of the electricity network is valuable to our organisation, customers, and stakeholders.

Improving our environmental performance

It is a key strategic priority for ESB Networks to help facilitate Ireland's transition to a low carbon future in line with the National Climate Action Plan. We continue to take on the responsibility to reduce our carbon emissions. Under our Environment and Sustainability commitments, we will reduce the carbon footprint of our operations and deliver on the E.DSO Sustainable Grid Charter. Along with several of Europe's largest and leading Distribution System Operators, we have committed to facing the challenges of Climate Change.

Stakeholders said:

Stakeholders, rightfully expect us to lead the way in minimsing our impact on the environment.

What we did

We have seen a long-term reduction in our operational CO2 emissions and intend to continue this trend in line with Ireland's National Climate Action Plan. We have introduced several initiatives across our operations to help us achieve this.

Buildings and vehicle fleet

- Ongoing electrification of our vehicle fleet and installation of charging infrastructure at our depots
- LED Lighting Upgrade Project: To date, 11 locations with significant energy use have been upgraded with LED lighting. These works commenced in 2020 and were completed in 2021 at our depots in Dundalk, Ballycoolin, Rosbrien, Portlaoise, Letterkenny, Athlone, Inchicore, Tralee, Wilton, and Waterford, as well as the National Training Centre, Portlaoise.
- Two major refurbishment projects commenced in Q3 2020 in Finglas and Leopardstown and with a significant energy efficiency improvement emphasis. Both buildings will have a B energy rating post completion of works.

SF6

- SF6 leakage is most commonly attributed to faults with older switchgear. With our continued efforts to repair and replace old switchgear, we have ensured consistent leakage reduction over the past year.
- We have continued engagement with the relevant stakeholders e.g. local authorities and EPA in relation to incident and emissions reporting.

Fluid filled cables

- We have completed preliminary environmental site investigations at 68 sites to further inform the assessment of any potential risk from leakages. For PR5, we have identified priority circuits for replacement as part of our FFC replacement programme. All DSO FFC replacement projects achieved capital approval in 2021.

OUTCOMES

- Circa 50% reduction in operational CO2 emissions since 2016
- Ongoing expansion of our electric fleet to 72 vehicles
- Overall recycling rate of 71%

NEXT STEPS

LED lighting upgrade project at our Tallaght Depot is due to commence in 2022 in addition to a tranche of lighting upgrades targeting the next largest energy-using locations.

Enhancing the environmental information available to our stakeholders

Stakeholders said:

It is of upmost importance to our customers and communities that we operate in a way that is open and transparent.

What we did

As part of our commitment to ensuring open and transparent reporting of our performance, we improved the environmental and sustainability section of our website.

- The website includes current information relating to our Climate Action & Sustainability vision, Innovation for a low carbon future, Biodiversity, and how we are managing our environmental risks.
- We have also published the Annual Environmental Performance Report that is issued to the Regulator on our website.

OUTCOMES

- Increased interaction with our website from our stakeholders
- The Environmental webpages received over 2,000 views between July (launch date) and December 2021

Focus area 6:

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AND DELIVERY

Our customers are at the heart of everything we do. We are always looking for ways to improve the experience our customers have when interacting with us, from introducing channels for provision of information and proactive communication, to streamlining the application process for connections.

90%
Satisfaction with our National Customer Care Contact Centre

2.5M
Visits to our PowerCheck tool

87%
Connections applications undertaken online (new)

82.88%
Overall customer satisfaction score

Launching a new website to improve ease-of-use for customers

Stakeholders said:

Our customers and stakeholders want our website to be as easy to navigate and find relevant information. They want interaction with us to be smooth and for us to provide a number of ways to contact us.

What we did

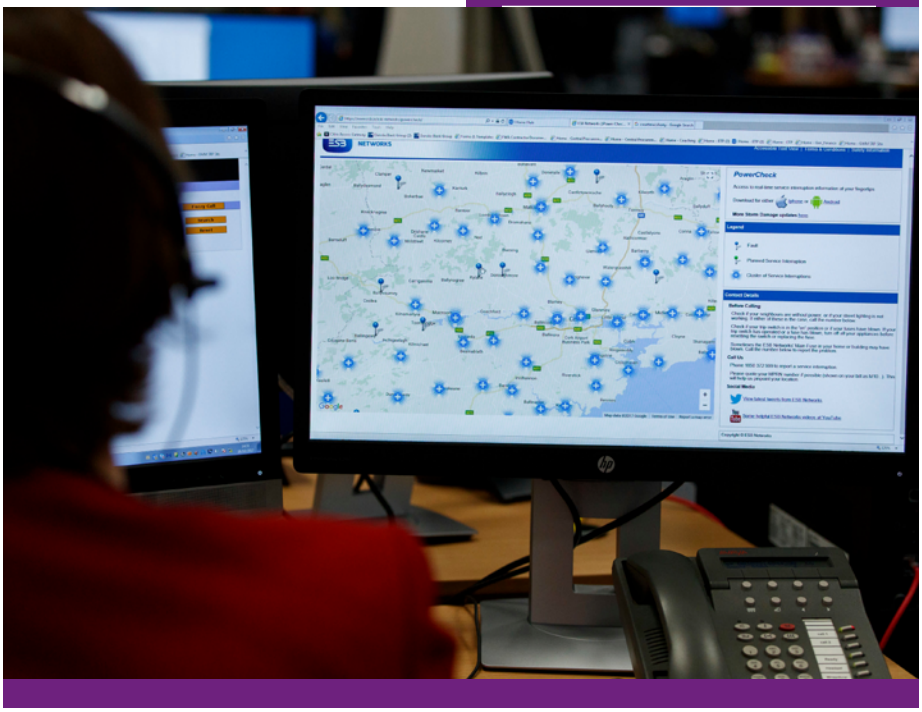
- We have been working on a number of customer experience initiatives throughout 2021. We have worked to enhance, integrate and upgrade the systems linked to customer interfaces and progressing easy to use applications to enable access to accurate and real-time information, whether in relation to a new connection, a planned outage or a general customer query.
- We have improved and relaunched our website, making it more straightforward for users to navigate, and find relevant information.
- The relaunch has been a result of collaboration across multiple teams and the website has been simplified to improve user experience across all devices.
- As part of our website relaunch, we have made significant improvements to our PowerCheck page to improve usability and have continued in our efforts to raise awareness amongst our customers to further increase uptake.
- We have continued promoting our Online Connections Application (new) Portal and have been developing Phase 2, which will bring additional features such as project tracking for Online Commercial and Multi-Unit Customers
- We want to provide as many channels as possible for our customers to contact us, and as such, we have introduced a WebChat feature with 2-way messaging between customers and the customer service team on our website
- We have continued to train and educate staff across the organisation, from our technicians to our office staff, to ensure we can continue to be a customer focused organisation.

OUTCOMES

- 64% increase in connections being applied for online in 2021
- 2.5m hits on the PowerCheck App

NEXT STEPS

We recognise the need for continuous improvement of all aspects of customer experience. We are proud of our achievements in 2021 but we don't plan to stop there. Over the next year, we will introduce customer self serve options for frequent interaction, and proactive messaging for outage updates and complaint handling.



Facilitating connections to meet Ireland's 'Housing for All' ambitions

Stakeholders said:

Builders and developers want a smooth and efficient connections process to keep pace with their projects.

What we did

- ESB Networks have a crucial role to play in supporting the government's plans to build 33,000 new homes per year to 2030 under their Housing for All scheme through the delivery of timely and cost-effective connections.
- We have committed, as part of our Service Level Agreements, to work with property developers to keep pace with construction and ensure the delivery of a safe and prompt electrical supply to every new housing unit. Over the past year alone, we have delivered connections to nearly 30,000 new housing units, almost 20,000 of which were for large-scale housing developments.
- We are also performing well against the commitments we have made through our Customer Charter when delivering an electrical supply to new homes, providing quotes within 6 weeks upon receipt of a completed application for larger developments.
- We are keeping pace with construction in terms of time to connect upon completion of construction work.

OUTCOMES

- Delivered electrical supply connections to a total of 29,322 new homes in 2021

NEXT STEPS

We will continue to support the delivery of this ambitious scheme through accelerating our pace of delivering connections for new housing across Ireland.

Focus area 7:
SMART METERING

The National Smart Metering Programme is a key deliverable of the Climate Action Plan, aiming to have 2.4m smart meters installed by 2024. Smart meters will support customers playing their part in the energy transition by providing them with more information on their electricity usage so they can make more informed decisions on how and when to use electricity, and will support the connection of microgeneration to the network.

>95%

Smart Meter Customer Satisfaction

90%

Smart Meter Awareness

Delivered in collaboration with industry stakeholders including CRU, DECC, SEAI, GNI and electricity suppliers.

Achieving Ireland's National Smart Meter rollout programme

Stakeholders said:

- The programme has made significant progress over the past year, with over 380,000 smart meters installed. We spoke to 1,500 of our smart meter customers, over 95% of whom were satisfied with the replacement process.

Smart Meter Roll-Out

- The meter replacement programme began in 2019 and by the end of 2021 a total of 620,000 meters have been installed. Despite interruptions due to COVID-19, the rollout programme now has the capacity to install over 500,000 meters per annum. The rollout is being progressed on an area by area basis and we anticipate having a presence in every county by 2022.
- We have maintained consistent engagement with industry stakeholders in order to support the delivery of the programme.
- Our customer awareness and engagement programme is reviewed regularly with the industry communications and engagement working group, which is chaired by ESB Networks and is attended by industry stakeholders including DECC, CRU, SEAI and representatives of the electricity supply companies. The working group discusses progress and ensures industry alignment on communications to support the programme.
- We supported the introduction of smart services in February 2021, which provide customers with more information on their energy usage, allowing them to move some of their consumption away from peak times, and providing them with more accurate bills. Over 49,000 customers have already signed up for these services, which are offered by electricity suppliers.

What we did

Awareness Campaign

- This year, we continued the rollout of smart meters, extending into new deployment areas, supported with bespoke communications and stakeholder engagement based on local deployment.
- We ran five targeted media campaigns across print, radio and online channels in rollout areas to raise awareness of the programme.

This included:

- 160 press adverts in local newspapers.
- 2,400 radio adverts on local radio stations.
- Social media campaigns had a combined reach of over 1.4m across Facebook and Instagram channels.

- In response to stakeholder feedback to showcase the benefits of a smart meter more easily we have produced several information YouTube videos on the overall programme and meter replacement process, and how customers can read their smart meter, all of which have been uploaded onto our website.

Learning from others

Our approach to the meter rollout, including public and stakeholder engagement, has built upon international benchmarking and learning.

> ***It's very positive that we have reached the half million milestone in the National Smart Metering Programme...Smart meters will help us to meet our climate goals and become more energy independent.***
>
> **Eamon Ryan TD**
> The Minister for Environment, Climate and Communications

OUTCOMES

- Total of 620,000 new meters installed by the end of 2021
- Installing 2,000 meters per day
- 95% customer installation satisfaction rate
- Over 300 customers called to share satisfaction with installation process in 2021
- Over 30,000 views across our Smart Meter YouTube videos
- 90% smart meter awareness
- 49,000 customers using new supplier smart services
- Over 1m periodic smart meter reads completed remotely
- Approx 400 installers in the field working alongside our network technicians

Focus area 8:
SAFETY

Our purpose has always been to connect and distribute electricity - safely, securely, and affordably. Our customers are at the heart of everything we do, and we will continue to ensure their safety and the safety of those who work on or may come in close contact with the network. Increasing everyone's awareness of electrical safety risks is essential, and education and awareness programmes in this regard continue to be a strategic objective of our Public Safety Strategy 2021-2025, which is anchored in the core purpose of our business and continues to be a core strategic priority and area of focus for ESB Networks.

52%
Reduction in most serious incidents involving the public since implementation of the strategy

>800
Agricultural college and university students engaged via lectures on farm-related electricity safety risks

94%
of the population associate ESB Networks with the promotion of safety

Being a safety-led organisation for the communities we serve

Stakeholders said:

Responses to our Public Safety Strategy in 2021 highlighted the importance of everyone being able to feel safe around our network, and the continued need to raise awareness of the potential dangers posed by electricity. We should focus on tracking performance in relation to safety, including engagement/ raising awareness and incidents, to drive annual improvements.

What we did

- We released an update to our 'Are You Sure It's Safe?' advertising campaign to draw attention to the dangers posed by overhead wires. This has achieved a wide reach, having been viewed 208,000 times on YouTube
- We continued the 'Safe Family Farms Partnership', a joint initiative with the Irish Famers Journal to promote safe working practices.
- We have partnered with the Construction Industry Federation to raise awareness around overhead and underground networks and delivered a number of presentations as part of Construction Safety Week.
- We undertook a consultation on our new strategy where we sought feedback from a range of stakeholders who provided valuable input and informed the final strategy, published on our website in 2021.
- We have also introduced a new, fifth pillar, focusing on embedding a Public Safety Management System (PSMS) across the organisation to track and report performance and compliance, and drive yearly improvements in safety efforts.
- Monitoring and review will be enabled through the introduction of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for each of the pillars, adoption of new internal, group-level, and external audits, and introduction of a new Public Safety Governance Structure
- We are certified to the ISO 45001 Occupational Health and Safety Management System standard and we are working to integrate our new PSMS with this international standard to further monitor and provide assurances on our public safety operations and efforts.
- We have updated and enhanced each of the four pillars around which our previous strategy was centered. For example, we have introduced a public safety dashboard under the Asset Management Lifecycle pillar to monitor and report on public safety elements of the work programme and will form part of the new PSMS.
- We will continue to engage with and learn from our 'At-Risk' stakeholders, introduce more channels for public safety communication and education, and drive greater engagement at Divisional Level.
- We have also introduced our five Public Safety commitments to empower our people to be safe, healthy and environmentally responsible across all our operations, allowing us to see how we impact upon safety in our everyday activities.

> ***On our public safety commitments, it was noted from the audit that "the areas under review comprehensively demonstrated that public safety is a top priority, which is above and beyond any potential penalty on the commercial side relating to business continuity".***
>
> NSAI

OUTCOMES

- 52% reduction in the most serious public safety incidents
- >800 college and university students engaged with on farm safety
- 94% of the population associate ESB Networks with the promotion of safety
- Delivered awareness training to 30 fire incident commanders

DELIVERING BEYOND OUR FOCUS AREAS IDENTIFIED IN 2021 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN

We have provided an insight of the extensive engagement and outcomes we have delivered against our identified Focus Areas, as set out in our December 2020 plan for 2021. However, in recognition of the changing in-year needs of our stakeholders and customers, we can't plan for all areas in advance. Below is a selection of areas where we have undertaken strong engagement beyond our core focus areas.

Driving collaboration with the TSO to deliver stronger benefits for our communities

Stakeholders said:

Stakeholders expect a future-proofed network and for us to have the necessary relationships in place to ensure a reliable service.

What we did

- We submitted our multi-year DSO/TSO Work Plan Covering 2022-2026, in collaboration with EirGrid which contains a detailed programme of work to deliver better outcomes.
- The plan will adapt to changing customer need, technology maturity, stakeholder input and pilot learnings.
- Customer participation and engagement will play a critical role in ensuring pilots and activities deliver enduring outcomes
- We have put in place programme management and governance structures to develop and deliver the work programme, which includes 7 standing committees.
- We have undertaken extensive engagement with EirGrid which has informed our core objectives to accelerate our operational performance against, as well as the core work areas we will focus on comprising:

1. Security of Supply
2. Reducing Dispatch Down of Renewables,
3. Facilitating New Technologies
4. Whole System Approaches

OUTCOMES

- Published joint DSO-TSO multi-year plan covering 2022-2026
- Established 7 committees now in operation covering a range of areas

Network Operations: Day-to-day management of the network

Stakeholders said:

Our customers and stakeholders expect a reliable network from us at all times and when things go wrong, such as during extreme weather events, they expect us to respond promptly and restore power for all customers who have been impacted.

What we did

Over the past year, we have continued in our efforts to maintain and improve the reliability of our network for all of our customers.

Distribtuion Outage Programme (DOP)

- DOP is a mechanism used to capture and align DSO outages with HV Customer outage, which is now entering its third year of use at ESB Networks.
- Major demand and generation customers benefit through improved engagement with us, which has been achieved through streamlining the customer communications process.
- Through engagement with our HV customers, we have a greater knowledge of their requirements, and we are able to provide an early indication of upcoming outages.
- There are currently 147 HV customers connected to the distribution network, with whom we have aligned 156 times over the past year, on matters relating to:
  - Early sequencing of distribution works to reduce the impacts of projects
  - Co-ordination of outages to reduce the number on the system, allowing it to operate in its most secure mode for longer. This allows customers, particularly those with a portfolio of sites, to sequence contractors more effectively, also potentially resulting in cost savings.

Storm Barra

- In response to red and orange level weather warnings given for Storm Barra, we engaged with a broad range of stakeholders at local, regional and national level, in advance of and during the storm, to effectively co-ordinate our response.
- Engagement in preparation for Storm Barra included
  - Collaborating with the National Emergency Co-ordination Group, convened by the National Directorate of Fire and Emergency Planning;
  - Attending the Regional Emergency Co-ordination Groups; and
  - Co-ordination with other customers and infrastructure utilities
- We continued efforts to promote our 'Stay Safe, Stay Clear' campaign through news and social media outlets to ensure the safety of the public, as well as our PowerCheck app to provide information and updates to customers.
- Despite continued poor weather conditions hampering repair works in some areas, our crews were able to restore power to almost 80% of homes who had lost power on the 2nd day of the storm

Driving effective support to the North East South West Area Consortium (NEWSAC)

- Under this agreement, we are committed to providing and co-ordinating mutual aid, which might include transfer of field resources and supplies, between network operators in the UK, Ireland and the Isle of Man during supply emergencies, such as extreme weather events. Our membership forms an important part of our emergency response plans.
- This year, Storm Arwen caused significant network challenges in the UK. Mutual aid was requested by SSE Networks and Northern Powergrid and we promptly deployed 27 engineers to East of Scotland and North East England to support with their restoration efforts.

Dial Before You Dig

- We began the 'Dial Before You Dig' (DBYD) campaign in 2018, in collaboration with other major utilities companies in Ireland, to encourage workers to contact utility owners to check the location of underground services before breaking ground.
- This year, we undertook engagement with significant network route data users to raise awareness of the availability of site information in a consolidated format. These stakeholders include those who frequently plan construction activities in proximity to our network, such as local authorities and major engineering firms.
- Through this engagement, issues were raised around soft copies of information issued to users laying idle in mailboxes in vacant offices due to COVID-19.
- As a result of stakeholder feedback, we have now developed a secure online portal which will allow organisations to access relevant data on demand, supporting the hybrid working arrangements which many have now adopted.
- This will ensure greater access to this data among these significant users of our network route data which will further improve the safety of construction activities and safeguard public safety by protecting against accidental collisions with our network.
- We also facilitated a video to explain the hazards associated with construction works near live services and promoted our DBYD service during CIF Construction Safety Week in October 2021.

OUTCOMES

- Aligned 156 times with HV customers in 2021 to provide reliable information to help with outage management
- 80% homes' connection restored by day 2 of Storm Barra
- 27 ESB Networks technicians deployed to the UK to support restoration efforts after

NEXT STEPS

DOP: provide customised views which customers have access to, integration into Microsoft Teams, and a shared area where customers can update site and contact details and store relevant data.

DBYD: rollout portal in 2022 and continue to engage with relevant stakeholders, working with the Public Safety Team, to continue raising awareness and drive adoption of the consolidated data offering and to further refine and improve the panel of participating stakeholders.

Innovating where customers expect us to perform: Weather Forecasting model

Stakeholders said:

Our customers prioritise the reliability of our network and expect us to have as good a handle on incidents when challenges arise

What we did

- We are looking to adopt a new, innovative system to reduce impacts of extreme weather events on our network. incorporating a localised, multi-day ahead weather forecast with a set of ESB Networks-customised and specified weather metrics supplementing the existing Met Éireann weather forecast. We created an outage and damage prediction model using previous weather-related network outage events and local continuity data in conjunction with the look ahead forecast.
- The system will be used alongside existing operational technologies to forecast damage and outage numbers to relevant stakeholders and feed into our response to major weather events
- We have transitioned the system into BaU and has proven to be of great benefit, often providing the earliest indication to trigger the requirement for additional resources
- We have developed a proof-of-concept service as part of the second phase of the project, using historical network fault data and weather events. The tool will provide a multi-network fault prediction as part a first-cut model using localised forecasts and asset damage data to predict vulnerable parts of the network during weather events. Further analysis and development of the tool is proposed in 2022.

OUTCOMES

- Optimising mobilisation of resources.
- Reduction in customer restoration times and CML.
- Improved communication in advance of major weather events.

Learning through independent surveys: Retail Market Services (RMS) Satisfaction Survey

Stakeholders said:

In order to identify improvements for our Retail Market Services (RMS) and in consideration of ongoing feedback from our stakeholder engagement forums, we identified the need to gather views and feedback on how RMS is currently delivering for Market Participants (MPs).

What we did

- As part of RMS we offer a number of services to Ireland's electricity suppliers, including reading, registration and operation of meters, as well as processing Distribution Use of System (DUoS) charges. We serve close to 2.4m end customers, operating under license from CRU following strict service level agreements.
- We carried out the first annual RMS satisfaction survey, in liaison with Behaviour & Attitudes (B&A), engaging with MPs representing over 85% of the Retail Electricity Market (REM).
- Satisfaction with the overall service was high at 88%. All participants agreed that it is delivered accurately and 94% considered it to be reliable.
- 81% of MPs were satisifed with how RMS engaged with suppliers. 88% were satisifed with how RMS plans and communicates changes in the REM and 81% were satisifed with how changes are implemented.
- We are also performing well across the individual functions for RMS. For example, we managed around 8m household visits for the purpose of meter reading in 2021, achieiving 80% satsfaction. 81% MPs were satisifed with how we had performed as the Meter Service Registration Operator (MRSO), facilitating circa 437,000 successful transactions over the past year.
- Stakeholders provided valuable insight into how to further improve RMS. For example, some felt that we could improve the speed and consistency of our responses and communications.
- We will be undertaking steps to deliver against the MPs' priorities through our RMS Improvement Plan 2022 to improve the service offered and increase user satisfaction.

OUTCOMES

- 88% satisfied with RMS overall
- 81% satisfied with MRSO
- 80% satisfied with meter reading
- 77% satisfied with DUoS team

Learning through independent surveys: Renewable Energy Industry Survey

Stakeholders said:

Feedback from our public consultations in 2021 recommended that we carry out an independent annual survey to better guage the impact of our engagement with our stakeholders.

What we did

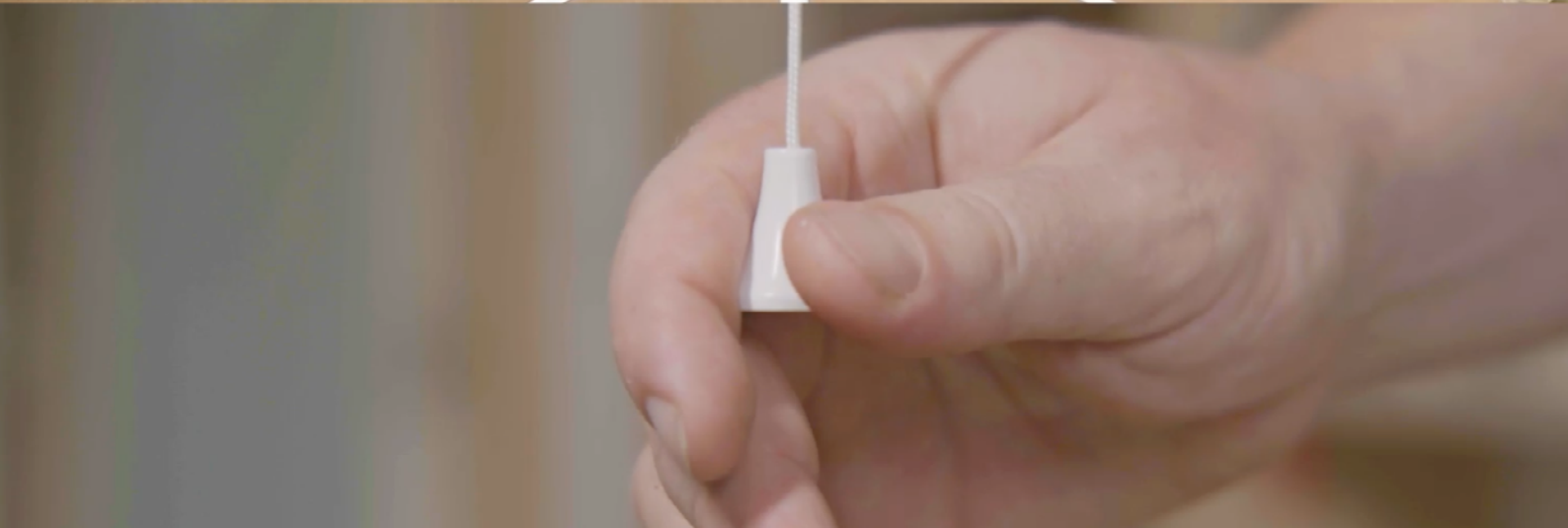
- We have undertaken a comprehensive survey of our Renewable Energy stakeholders to gather industry sentiment towards our performance in helping them connecting their renewable projects to the network.
- The survey, conducted in Q4 2021 focussed on their overall relationship and engagement with us, as well as each phase of a renewable projects' lifecycle from 1) connection application, 2) project delivery, and 3) post energisation and day-to-day operations.
- 73% of respondents believed our engagement with them had improved in 2021, with 77% agreeing that we had adapted our engagement well in response to COVID-19. Key areas for improvement identified included working together to meet challenges, providing clear points of contact, and listening to their views and feedback.
- Over 70% were satisifed with project delivery, commenting on the professionalism and technical proficiency of our team. We could, however, improve the quality of cost information; accuracy and timeliness of progress updates/ programme management and the asset transfer process.
- 75% of those surveyed who had a connection to the distribution system were satisifed with their relationship with us and our performance in engaging with them post-installation of their generator, particularly on network faults and planned customer outages
- Whilst 94% of respondents agreed that the steps involved in making an application were easy to understand, only 53% were satisifed with the overall application process. Feedback has identified this as a priority area for us to improve, specifically the speed & quality of query resolution; provision of transparent project cost and programme information; process for modification to the connection and provision of clear points of contact.

OUTCOMES

- 77% believed we had adapted our engagement well in response to Covid-19
- 75% satisfied with engagement post-installation
- 73% believed engagement had improved over the past year

SECTION

3 APPENDICES



APPENDIX 1 - CONSULTATIONS

Planned public consultations in 2021 that ESB networks leads/contributes to include the following;

Consultation	Objective	Mechanism	Planned Timing	As delivered
ESB Networks Engagement Strategy & Plan 2021	Seek feedback on ESB Networks proposed engagement strategy and plan for 2021 such that it is fully informed and shaped by both our business and stakeholders needs.	ESB Networks Consultation	Q4 2020 - Q1 2021	December 22nd 2020 – February 12th 2021
ESB Networks 2020-2030 Strategy	Gather insights on ESB Networks strategy to 2030, which sets a broad framework for how we intend to navigate the next ten years, delivering on the government Climate Action Plan.	ESB Networks Consultation	Q1 2021	Q2 2022
ESB Networks Report on Stakeholder Engagement in 2020	Describe and capture our stakeholder engagement approach and activities during 2020 and seek stakeholder views and feedback on our engagement performance for 2020.	ESB Networks Consultation	Q1 2021	March 23rd 2021 - April 30th 2021
ESB Networks Engagement Strategy & Plan 2022	Seek feedback on ESB Networks proposed engagement strategy and plan for 2022 such that it is fully informed and shaped by both our business and stakeholders needs.	ESB Networks Consultation	Q4 2021	January 11th 2022 - March 2022
Distribution Annual Performance Report 2020	Seek stakeholder feedback on Distribution Annual Performance Report 2020.	ESB Networks Consultation	Q3 2021	August 2021
Joint TSO & TAO Investment Planning and Delivery Report 2020	Seek stakeholder feedback on TSO & TAO Electricity Transmission Performance Report 2020.	ESB Networks/ EirGrid Consultation	Q3 2021	August 2021
Joint TSO & TAO Electricity Transmission Performance Report 2020	Seek Stakeholder feedback on TSO & TAO Investment Planning and Delivery Report 2020.	ESB Networks/ EirGrid Consultation	Q3 2021	August 2021
Public Safety Strategy	Gather stakeholder input to help shape and develop ESB Networks Public Safety Strategy.	ESB Networks Consultation	Q1	July 2021
Active System Management: Consultation on key high-level design and development issues	Ensure that effective and accessible proposals are developed, based on a strong customer and stakeholder voice in setting the direction of the active system management project.	ESB Networks Consultations	Q2 to Q4	Q3 - Q4 2021
Smart Metering: Customer awareness & satisfaction research for the NSMP		Customer surveys	Quarterly	Q1 - Q4 2021
Innovation for the Network of the Future 2021	Consultation to share information on ESB Networks innovation strategy, activities/projects.	ESB Networks Consultation	Q1	February 2021

APPENDIX 2 - PUBLICATIONS

Reports/information booklets/data sharing on website;

Publication	Objective	Mechanism	Planned Timing	As delivered
Stakeholder Newsletter	To provide regular updates and overview of engagement activities/ opportunities between ESB Networks and stakeholders.	Quarterly newsletter emailed to relevant stakeholders and link on ESB Networks website to subscribe	Quarterly	Q1 & Q4 2021
Response paper on ESB Networks Engagement Strategy & Plan 2021	To summarise stakeholder feedback received during the consultation process and explain how ESB Networks will respond, adjust, and implement any necessary changes to Engagement Plans for 2021.	Publication on ESB Networks website	Q1 2021	May 2021
Response paper on ESB Networks Report on Stakeholder Engagement in 2020	To summarise the responses received during the consultation process and explain how ESB Networks will respond to this feedback.	Publication on ESB Networks website	Q2 2021	May 2021
Distribution Annual Performance Report 2020	Annual summary of the Distribution System Operator's activities over the previous calendar year.	Publication on ESB Networks website	Q4 2021	August 2021
Joint TSO & TAO Investment Planning and Delivery Final Report 2020	Final CRU Approval on TSO & TAO Investment Planning and Delivery 2020.	Publication on ESB Networks website	Q4 2021	August 2021
Joint TSO & TAO Electricity Transmission Performance Final Report 2020	Final CRU Approval on TSO & TAO Electricity Transmission Performance Report 2020.	Publication on ESB Networks website	Q4 2021	August 2021
Electrification of Heat & Transport Final Strategy Document (post 2020 consultation)	To outline ESB Networks strategy for the electrification of Heat & Transport which was developed through consultation with key stakeholder groups during 2020.	Publication on ESB Networks website	Q1 2021	January 2021
National Network, Local Connections Programme: A range of key high level design and project development decisions, relating to power system capabilities & requirements, market design, signalling & data exchange, and project roadmap.	Provide customers and stakeholders with relevant technical and roadmap information, to enable their future participation in active system management products and services, and pilot activities.	Publication on ESB Networks website	Q3 – Q4 2021	Q3 – Q4 2021
Public Safety Strategy	Inform and educate the public about safe behaviours in relation to the electricity distribution network.	Publication on ESB Networks website	Q2 2021	August 2021
Smart Metering Video material – 'How to Read Your New Meter'	To help customers to read their new meter and support the provision of new smart services from Suppliers.	Video uploaded on ESB Networks website	Q1 2021	On-going

APPENDIX 2 - PUBLICATIONS

Reports/information booklets/data sharing on website;

Publication	Objective	Mechanism	Planned Timing	As delivered
Response Paper on Innovation for the Network of the Future	To provide ESB Networks response to feedback received on the Innovation for the Network of the Future 2021 consultation.	Publication on ESB Networks website	Q2 2021	March 2021
Heat Capacity Maps	Provide an indication of available network capacity for new demand and generation customers.	Interactive map on ESB Networks website	Ongoing	Ongoing
Community-led renewable energy projects guidebook	Increase customer knowledge of the connection process, CRU policies and to highlight the lower barrier to entry for community-led projects.	Publication on ESB Networks website	Q1 2021	December 2020
18 Month Innovation Programme	To share our rolling 18 Month Innovation Programme that aligns with ESB Networks strategic objectives and our commitment to the Climate Action Plan targets.	Publication on ESB Networks' Website	Not captured in original plan	January & July 2021
Innovation Project Reports	Share learnings and benefits from our Innovation projects through the publication project progress and Close-Out reports.	Publication on ESB Networks' website	Not captured in original plan	Ongoing

APPENDIX 3 - PATHWAYS TO ENGAGEMENT

ESB Networks hosted meetings, working groups, events, and webinars 2021

Engagement Activity	Objective	Mechanism	Planned Timing	Delivered
Customer & Society Panel	Provide an opportunity for a critical external perspective (and sounding board) on our business planning and engagement activities and enable us to consider feedback and suggestions.	Bi - Annual Meeting	Q2 & Q4	April 29th and November 9th 2021
Innovation Panel	Provide early engagement on the selection and prioritisation & timeline planning of our innovation projects, by gaining a collaborative understanding of potential benefits and impacts of each proposed project to both our internal and external stakeholders.	Bi - Annual Meeting	Q2 & Q4	March 23rd 2021 and September 22nd 2021
National Network, Local Connections Programme	Consultation on key high-level design and development issues: establish research / evidence-based understanding of relevant customer preferences.	15 Focus groups & surveys delivered over a wide range of our target segments	Q2 – Q4	Q2 - Q4 2021
	Ensure that key high-level design and project development decisions are informed by customer and stakeholder voices.	Road table consultations	Q2-Q4	Q2 - Q4 2021
ESB Networks Strategic Webinar Series	Provide high level engagement opportunity on ESB Networks business strategy and plans.	**Series of targeted interactive webinars on various topics including:**		
		ESB Networks Strategy- Powering the Change	Q1	January 27th 2021
		Grid Investment Study	Q1	February 9th 2021
		Connecting Community-Led Renewable Energy Projects	Q1	April 13th 2021
		Electrification of Heat & Transport	Q2	March 9th 2021
		Transforming Energy Systems for a Low Carbon Future.	Q2	May 11th 2021
Innovation Spring & Autumn Series of Webinars	Sharing of information on our innovation activities and the dissemination of project learnings and outcomes.	**Series of targeted interactive webinars as informed by stakeholders**		
	1. Compact Standard Modules for Electric Vehicle Charging, Embedded Generation Interface Protection (EGIP) & HV Connections		Spring Series	May 12th 2021
	2. Electrification '25 – EV Ready			May 18th 2021
	3. Delivering a Network for the Future - Active System Management			May 27th 2021
	4. ESB Networks Innovation Project Portfolio and Pipeline		Autumn Series	September 28th 2021
	5. Dingle Electrification Project			October 7th 2021
	6. National Network, Local Connections Programme			October 14th 2021

APPENDIX 3 - PATHWAYS TO ENGAGEMENT

ESB Networks hosted meetings, working groups, events, and webinars 2021

Engagement Activity	Objective	Mechanism	Planned Timing	Delivered
Distribution Code Review Panel (DCRP)	The Distribution Code is the set of rules that specifies the technical aspects and relationships between the DSO and all other users. The Distribution Code is kept under review and updated as required through the Distribution Code Review Panel (DCRP). The DCRP meets quarterly and is chaired and coordinated by ESB Networks as the DSO.	Quarterly meetings	Q1 – Q4	Q1-Q4 2021
Smart Metering: Engagement with industry - Industry Liaison Group & Comms and Engagement Working Group	Monthly meetings with the Programme's Partners to discuss open items / plan ahead.	Conference call	Monthly	Monthly
Smart Metering: Information events for local political representatives and stakeholder groups	Brief local stakeholders in roll out areas to answer questions and raise awareness of programme.	Information sessions/ evenings (Covid-19 restrictions permitting).	Q3 & Q4 (restrictions permitting)	Replaced with written briefings
Smart Metering: Pre-payment service working group	Define the changes to electricity retail market processes and supporting IT systems to enable the launch of prepayment services at the end of phase 2.	Design workshops	Q1-Q2	10 collaborative workshops throughout 2021
Construction Safety Partnership Advisory Committee	Promote best practice of electricity safety in construction.	Quarterly meetings	Q1-Q4	January, April & July 2021
Farm Safety Partnership Advisory Committee	Promote best practice of farm electricity safety in farming.	Quarterly meetings	Q1-Q4	January, March, May, June, July 2021
Safety Joint Utility Forum	Share safety best practice and learnings across utilities.	Bi-annual Meeting	Q2 & Q4	Q2 & Q4
Community – led Renewables Energy Liaison Panel	Introduce the initiatives being provided by ESB Networks to assist community-led renewable energy projects.	Regular engagement with stakeholders in relation to the connection of community-led renewable energy projects, (website, FAQ dedicated email)	Ongoing	Ongoing
Enduring Connection Policy Information Webinars – ECP2.2	Present and explain the ruleset relating to ECP2.2	Interactive webinars	Q2-Q3	September 2nd 2021

APPENDIX 3 - PATHWAYS TO ENGAGEMENT

ESB Networks hosted meetings, working groups, events, and webinars 2021

Engagement Activity	Objective	Mechanism	Planned Timing	Delivered
Lean Connections Project Engagement	Engagement with key stakeholder groups on the development of the Lean Connections Project.	Bilateral meetings, workshops, and webinars	Ongoing	October/ November 2021
The Dingle Project - Lessons Learned and Information Sharing Engagements	Sharing and dissemination of Lessons Learned from the Dingle Electrification Project.	Dingle On Site Stakeholder Visits, On Site Community Event & Webinars	Not captured in original plan	October 5th 2020 – December 10th 2021
MV EGIP Modular Substation Showcase visits	Showcase final module to industry and public stakeholders who indicated an interest in ESB Networks' progress in Module build and standardised design. Presenting the new EGIP Module construction and will be promoting uptake of this innovative module design to MV generation customers as the preferred MV connection option to choose in future generation projects.	Series of interested stakeholder visits	Not captured in original plan	October/ November 2021


NETWORKS