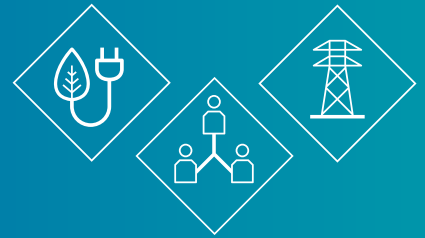


# Switched On

Local Authority Newsletter



Welcome to our second edition of our newsletter, specifically designed for our Local Authority stakeholders. The newsletter aims to share best practice, keep you updated on the work that we are doing to help local areas decarbonise, as well as providing useful information to support your Local Area Energy Planning.

## Focus on: Distribution Future Energy Scenarios

Our Distribution Future Energy Scenarios (DFES) are often the first thing we explain when asked about how we are planning for net zero, which will undoubtedly require more electricity and associated infrastructure. Due to the important role DFES plays in helping us determine your local electricity needs, we have taken some time to explain them below.

### What are they?

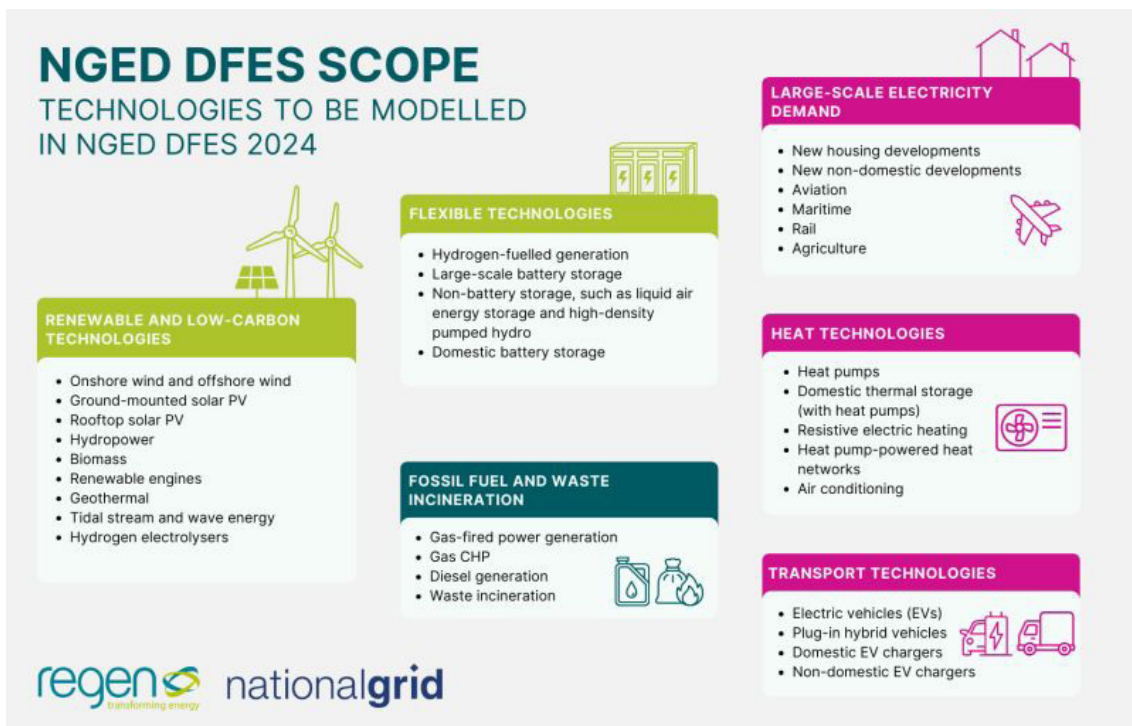
Our Distribution Future Energy Scenarios (DFES) are the first stage in our strategic planning to develop the network needed for a decarbonised future.

They represent the way we expect demand and generation to grow on our network and align to the national Future Energy Pathways (formerly scenarios) produced by ESO.

Our next step is to create single, highest certainty projections that we use for investment decisions – we call this our Best View scenario/pathway.

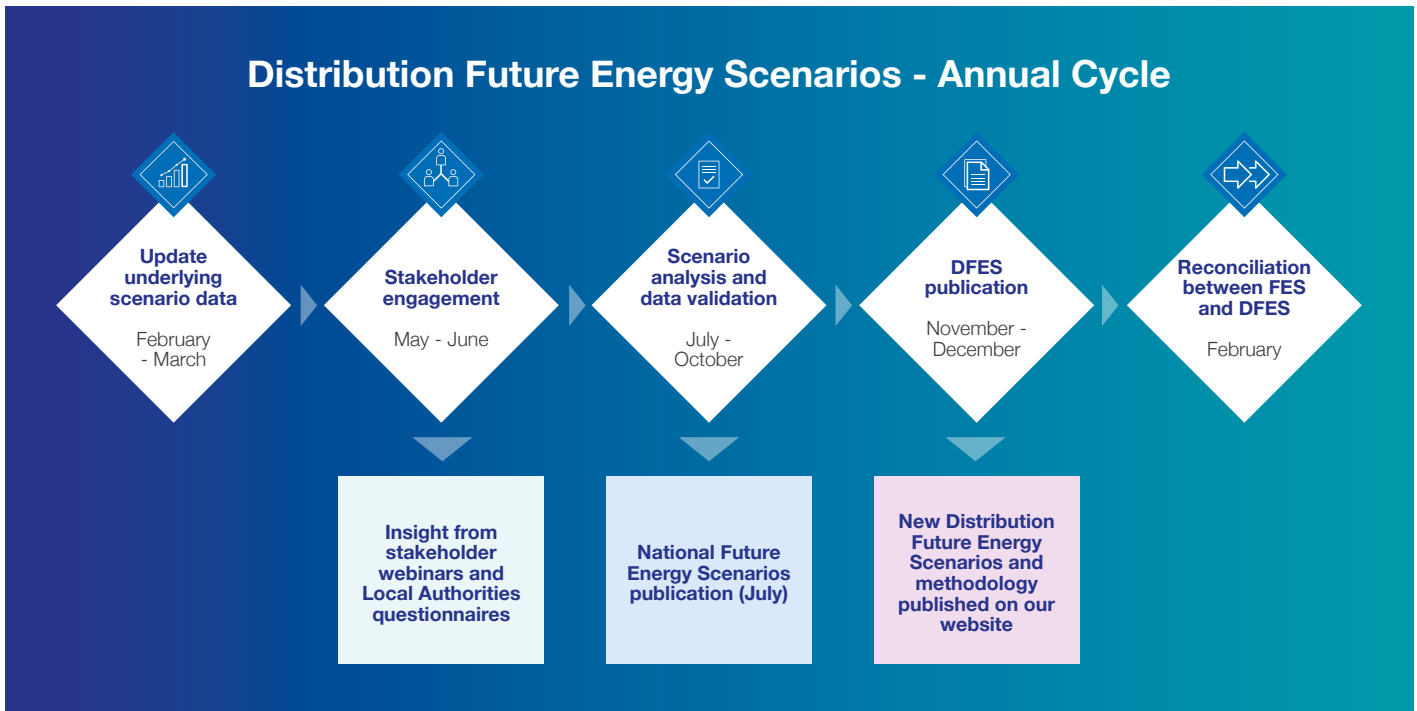
Through using this data, we can identify which network constraints arise and when. This informs our Network Development Plans, which we will cover next time.

Fig 1. DFES technologies in scope in 2024



# DFES process

We produce our DFES every year with the support of Regen and together we collect and analyse vast amounts of data. Below is a diagram showing the process involved in developing our DFES.



## How can DFES help you?

The DFES can tell you what we expect the demand on our network to be from now through to 2050 for each scenario/pathway.

We have broken down our DFES data by Local Authority or Electricity Supply Area, so you can see the growth we expect for your area and the data we have used to inform our Network Development Plan.

It is important Local Authorities engage with the DFES process and share any additional information you may have about your local area.

This is so we can align our forecasts to your decarbonisation plans as closely as possible.

## Do they include Local Authority plans?

Yes, data from local ambitions and targets, new homes and businesses, and existing and developing energy projects are combined with stakeholder inputs to create our DFES.

Last year's DFES includes 7,200 developments and projects taken from information you have provided us with or that is publicly available.

Regen sends a questionnaire to Local Authorities every year asking about their plans, such as their Local Plan, electric vehicle strategies, and decarbonisation strategies. We have only had responses from around 50% of Local Authorities this year and our Stakeholder Engagement team are working hard to increase this response rate year on year.

## How can you ensure your local plans are included?

Our DFES engagement period runs from May to July each year.

We run engagement webinars for each network area to get feedback on the technologies being considered within our DFES.

This year, these webinars took place on June 11 and 13 and you can watch the [recordings here](#).

The annual survey was also sent out to all Local Authorities on 15 May. If you are concerned that your Local Authority hasn't yet responded, please get in touch with us at [nged.energyplanning@nationalgrid.co.uk](mailto:nged.energyplanning@nationalgrid.co.uk)



## Want to find out more?

We have a [webpage](#) dedicated to our DFES where you can view the following information:

- Our **DFES interactive map** shows data that is broken down by scenario, technology, and area. This map is where you can find data related to your local authority, and we have created a **tutorial video** that explains how to use it.
- **DFES regional information** shows information specific to each of our four network areas including learning from stakeholder engagement.
- **Customer behaviour profiles and assumptions report** gives an in depth review of how the DFES volumes are assigned an electrical profile for the purposes of strategic network analysis.

# Local decarbonisation in action



## Stories from across our network

We are eager to learn from each other as 120 local authorities are working to help local areas decarbonise across our four network areas. Each newsletter, we will share people's experiences and innovative approaches to addressing the challenges we face and the opportunities that arise during the decarbonisation process. This time we share information about an innovative event in the Forest of Dean and hear from Oxfordshire about their approach to Local Area Energy Planning.

### Forest of Dean – Climathon

We were delighted to be a part of the Forest of Dean's Energy Climathon.

More than 40 local stakeholders and industry experts came together to develop locally relevant solutions to decarbonise the district during the event in April, hosted by Forest of Dean District Council.

Climathons are an innovative, creative approach to help communities engage with local climate issues and the council partnered with the Countryside and Community Research Institute at the University of Gloucestershire to bring the Climathon to the Forest of Dean.

The event tackled the question "how might we decarbonise electricity and heat at scale in the district?"

A climate emergency was declared by Forest of Dean District Council in 2018, with the aim of both the district and council achieving net zero by 2030.

It was acknowledged that to decarbonise the district will require collaboration and needs the support of partners to develop ideas and solutions for a rural energy transition.

We supported the event by presenting an overview of our role in local decarbonisation, ensuring Local Authorities plans are included in our future forecasts.

We explained how we use these forecasts to identify how customers will use the network in the future, analyse future network constraints, and assess how best to invest in the network to solve these constraints.

As a result of the daylong event, we developed collaborations with other stakeholders and participated in solution development, which resulted in five solutions for local decarbonisation that can be seen above.

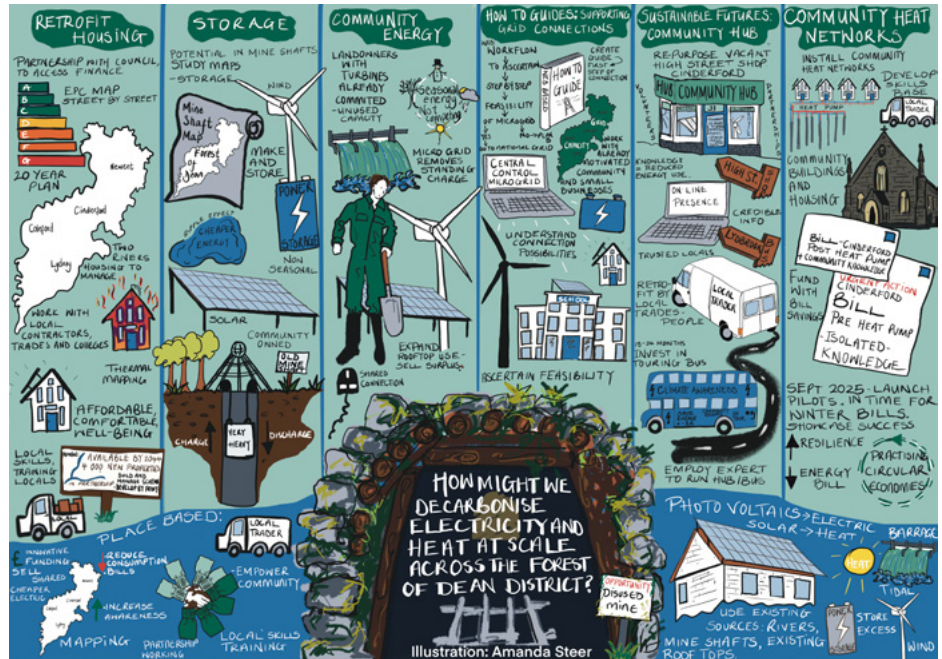


Illustration credit: Amanda Steer

The event was focused on being creative, supporting each other and having fun.

Simon Richards, Net Zero Innovation & Delivery Officer commented

**"I'd like to thank NGED for its positive engagement in the Climathon.**

**"NGED are a key stakeholder in the energy transition, and it was great to have their involvement in the development of potential solutions for our District.**

**The Council and other partners are now working with NGED on a number of initiatives developed during the Climathon and we look forward to implementing solutions together."**

In a short YouTube video you can hear from key stakeholders involved in the event about taking action and how the event was structured.

You can watch the video [here](#).



### Next steps

We are now part of a working group exploring how we can we can all work together to support the customer journey towards a grid connection with the aim of increasing the amount of renewable electricity generation within the Forest of Dean.

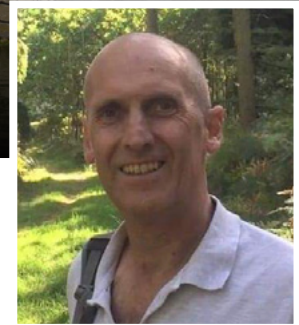
The group are meeting monthly to identify how we might overcome barriers and better understand the customer journey with an aim of improving it.

Despite being in the early stages the group are already seeing the benefits of having key stakeholders around the table and sharing information and knowledge.





# Spotlight on Oxfordshire Local Area Energy Planning



**Mark Saunders, Energy Systems and Investment Manager at Oxfordshire County Council takes a moment to share his thoughts about Local Area Energy Planning and collaborating with not just one, but three Distribution System Operators (DSOs).**

Like many parts of the UK, Oxfordshire councils are working on producing a Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP), but unlike most areas, Oxfordshire sits at the junction of 3 Distribution System Operators (DSO) licence areas.

Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks serve the bulk of the county, National Grid Electricity Distribution serve a large area in the north, while UK Power Networks cover a small area on the eastern boundary.

## Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) Governance

Oxfordshire's future energy transition requirements were set out in the **Pathways to a Zero Carbon Oxfordshire Report** in 2021. This was further developed in the **Oxfordshire Net Zero Route Map and Action Plan 2023** where the idea of developing LAEPs and a long term LAEP function was set out.

All Oxfordshire Councils are signed up to these plans. Funding for the development of the LAEPs is via Housing and Growth Deal Capacity funds held by the Future Oxfordshire Partnership. Councils will also need staff resources available to support the LAEP development process.

Oxfordshire has a two-tier authority structure with five district councils and a county council.

The Future Oxfordshire Partnership, a grouping of all councils and other key public and private sector bodies, normally leads strategic countywide initiatives.

The Oxfordshire LAEP (OxLAEP) is an initiative and a governance framework with an officer working group and an executive steering board has been set up to drive the project forward.

The County Council's Climate Action Team acts as the convener and provides programme management services and each DSO has a representative on both the working group and the steering board.

## Progress to date

The OxLAEP programme began in September 2023. After a series of regular working group and steering board meetings we are now preparing the tender specification having considered the programme scope in some detail and engaged in an early market process with LAEP consultants.

Oxfordshire hopes to pursue an innovative approach which suits our two-tier structure and also ensures our LAEPs enable councils to move quickly to deliver projects.

This approach means conducting the **LAEP stages 1 – 4** at a county scale, with stages 5 – 7 focusing on district level LAEPs.

We will also seek to make LAEPs digital using SSEN's LENZA platform as part of our ambition to create an internal LAEP function. LAEPs deal with the strategic dimension of energy system planning.

We are keen to explore in Oxfordshire how LAEPs can inform tactical work at the grid edge and how different levels of spatial analysis can nest together – so hyperlocal community level energy planning would sit beneath district level LAEPs and so on.

## Benefits of DSO involvement

Our experience working with three DSOs has been very positive. The DSOs have committed to working together where they are able to assist with the coordinated provision of data. They regularly update on DSO activities useful to the LAEP process.

Having the DSOs on board gives them the opportunity to hear first-hand the issues councils are grappling with and has led to some fruitful conversations about some of the connections and capacity issues currently affecting the distribution network.

They also have good knowledge of what is going on elsewhere and can help connect you with other local authorities who are trying to achieve similar outcomes.

**All the DSOs have set up teams to support local authorities with LAEP work. I recommend you use them.**



## Not involved us in your Local Area Planning meetings yet?

Please do, one of our Strategic Engagement Officers will be happy to attend, just let us know at [nged.energyplanning@nationalgrid.co.uk](mailto:nged.energyplanning@nationalgrid.co.uk).

# The results are in – DSO Stakeholder satisfaction survey

Your feedback about our DSO network is important to us. New regulatory requirements introduced this year require all DSOs to conduct an annual survey with its stakeholders.

The survey ran from 8th April and closed on 31st May, and we really appreciate everyone who took the time to complete the survey and provide valuable feedback to help us understand where you feel we're doing well and any areas you'd like us to improve.

Our teams are currently analysing all the scores and comments received and look to incorporate your suggestions into our service improvement action plans.

If you missed this year's survey or would like to follow-up with us, we'd love to hear from you. Please get in touch with us at [nged.energyplanning@nationalgrid.co.uk](mailto:nged.energyplanning@nationalgrid.co.uk) and we'll book in a time to meet with you.

## Get in touch

### Strategic Engagement Team

We have established a dedicated team of Strategic Engagement Officers focussed on supporting your local area energy planning and decarbonisation plans.

They can help you find the information you need about your electricity network needs now and in the future.



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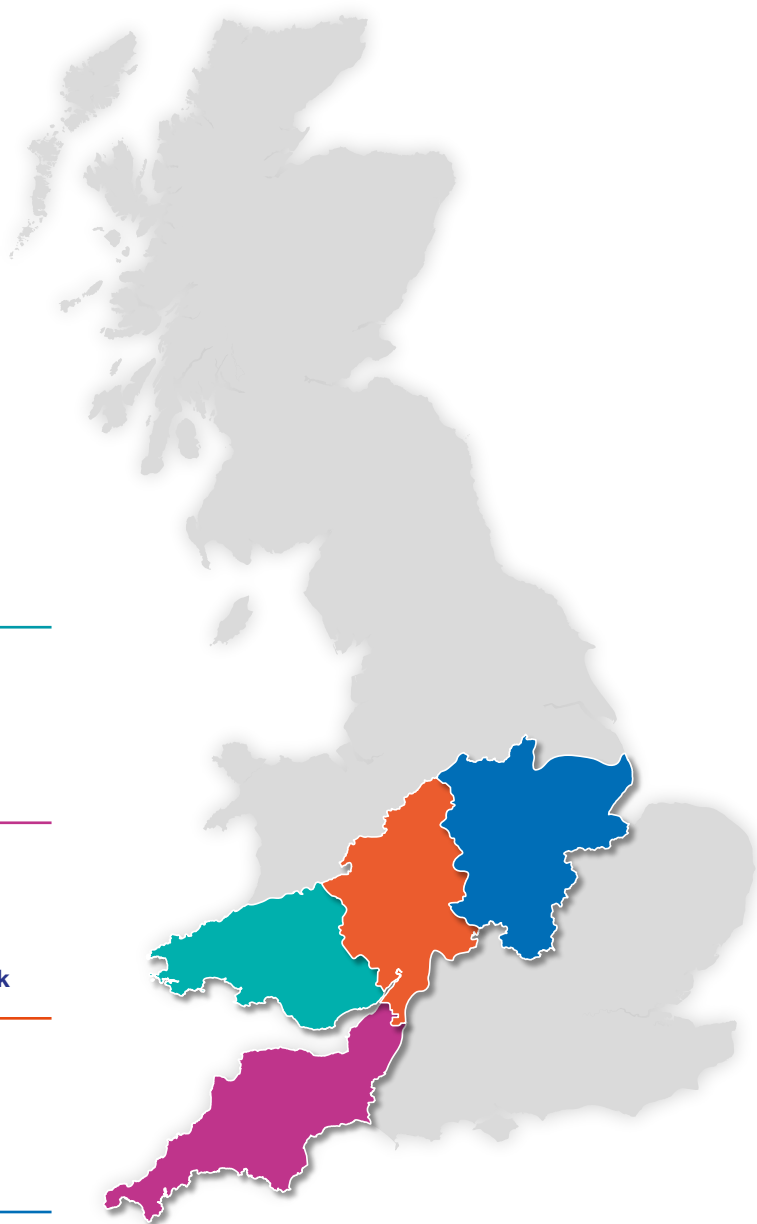
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We would love to hear your thoughts and ideas on our newsletter. If you have any ideas or comments, please feel free to share them with us.

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