

Network Stakeholder Roundtable

Summary Report

October 2023



SGN

Your gas. Our network.

Event Summary

Why did SGN hold this event?

SGN is committed to delivering a safe and reliable gas network. To do so, we undertake a programme of pipe maintenance and replacement, as set out in our plans for the price control period 2021 - 2023 (GD2). Changes within the UK connected to global pandemics, price increases, policy updates and changes of thought on key topics like climate change can impact our activities. It is important for us to engage with stakeholders and gauge our performance against their evolving expectations. As we build our business plan for the next price control period covering 2026 -2031 (GD3) it is vital we reflect our stakeholder’s views on where we should focus resource, time and money in the future.

What did SGN share?

SGN shared information about the pipe maintenance and replacement works carried out since 2021 and plans to meet targets in the coming years.

Points related to the ongoing debate about the future of gas networks and their role in a changing UK energy landscape were raised to initiate the forthcoming discussions on this topic.

What did SGN learn?

Stakeholders were split into discussion groups and asked for their thoughts on SGN’s investment in the priority areas of safety, reliability and availability, and environmental performance. These were considered with thought given to the long-term uncertainties surrounding heat policies and their impact on the network’s future. The key insights gained where:

Investment decisions need to account for wider stakeholder and customer priorities while acknowledging uncertainties

- Most stakeholders focused on hydrogen and felt more should be done to communicate the potential benefits to customers
- Minimising works to reduce the amount of associated carbon embedded in processes should be a goal
- Investing in the workforce will be crucial in the longer term

Acting safely should not be compromised by investment decisions but doesn’t necessarily need more investment

- Current standards should be maintained but whether this requires more investment was questioned
- Investment in safety should not decrease from current levels
- There are, however, other areas such as *future proofing the network* and *keeping customers bills low* that would be better to invest more in

More should be done to safeguard the network’s future and provide increased certainty and confidence in reliability and availability

- Reliability is more important than availability for some stakeholders.
- More could be done to promote gas as a future energy solution alongside electricity
- More certainty of on the availability of gas will help workforce and skills development
- Given uncertainties over future energy policy, SGN should be mindful of how much is invested

There is high support for non-mandatory mains pipe replacement, especially among those in the utility sector and its suppliers

- Proactive and pre-emptive replacement and repairs are seen as more cost effective and less disruptive, especially when works can be coordinated with other utility or building projects,
- Introducing new technologies to predict, find and/or address gas leaks is supported

Key Event Info



31 October 2023



Specialist online event



37 participants



31 organisations representing nationwide interests



Public and private sector representatives in attendance

What did stakeholders think of the event?

Stakeholders were invited to share their views on the event through a Slido poll. In summary:



94% agreed that they were satisfied overall with the event.



82% agreed that topics discussed were relevant to their area of work.



100% agreed the event had enhanced their understanding of SGN and its activities.



100% felt the facilitation was professional and effective.



100% agreed the format was appropriate and enabled them to have their say.



88% felt confident SGN will listen and act on the views.