

Incentive on Connections Engagement

Half Year Update 2018-2019



Scottish & Southern
Electricity Networks

About this document

This is the combined Scottish Hydro Electric Power Distribution and Southern Electric Power Distribution half year update on our Incentive on Connections Engagement (ICE) 2018-2019 work plan.

This document is designed to be read in conjunction with our full 2017-2018 Looking Forward, Looking Back report published in May this year (a summary is also available).

This document provides further information on our stakeholder engagement strategy, an updated 2018-2019 Looking Forward work plan, combined with our

rationale for updating our commitments and our response to feedback to date.

This report sets out the progress we have made against our ICE 2018-2019 workplan, including access to outputs and visibility of success measures. It provides the details of how we are extending and updating our 2018-2019 work plan to include two new actions and amend one further action based on feedback. It also highlights further information on our approach to engagement and our response to items raised by customers.

Foreword

We are continuing our journey to drive genuine change in how we deliver our services to our connecting customers. Putting our customers at the heart of everything we do is a core principle of our business. In putting that principle into practice, we need to build on our engagement with connecting customers, continue listening and responding to their feedback to make sure we keep moving forward.

I am pleased to be sharing the progress on our 2018-2019 work plan and proud of our continued focus on stakeholder engagement. Stakeholder engagement isn't just the right thing to do; it's essential to the long-term success and sustainability of our business. We know stakeholder engagement holds us to account; ensures we can adapt to the rapidly changing environment in which we operate; and ultimately improves the services we offer our connecting customers. Listening to your feedback to date, suggests we have more work to do. I want our service to be the best it can be and that's why my team are reviewing all the comments we have received since our reports were published in May and are responding to issues you've raised, not only in this report but on an individual basis. Based on your feedback we are also taking this opportunity to update and introduce new commitments this year to meet our customers' changing needs.

I would like to thank all our customers who engage with us throughout the year, as well as taking the time to respond to Ofgem's recent consultation. Your feedback has been invaluable to help us develop this report, future commitments as well as our business' long-term objectives.

I trust this report provides you with an update on progress towards delivering our 2018-2019 commitments, our updated and new commitments that we are introducing for 2018-2019, a summary of stakeholder feedback raised through the Ofgem ICE consultation and importantly how we are responding to that.




Colin Nicol,
Managing Director
Networks



Stakeholder engagement

Our strategy and approach

Our approach is focused on three main levels of engagement. The purpose of our engagement, methods, topics that are discussed and feedback routes are all tailored as appropriate for each level.

	Engagement Method	Engagement Purpose	Engagement Topics (examples)
 <p>Strategic Access to high level business plans and strategies</p>	Connections Customer Steering Panel Stakeholder Advisory Panel Industry engagement	Influence decision making	Policy changes Commercial policy
 <p>Targeted Engagement tailored to different customer groups</p>	<p>Engagement days & surveys</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities Demand Distributed Generation Microgeneration ICPs/IDNOs Unmetered 	Collect targeted feedback	Practical advice and process information Pre-application advice
 <p>Operational Ongoing opportunities to discuss projects with staff</p>	Connection surgeries Portfolio meetings Site visits National events	Explain processes Respond and resolve project queries	Resolve technical and wayleave queries, discuss network status and capacity (pre application)

Independent research

In addition to our targeted and operational engagement we also commission an independent research agency, Explain Research to run an annual survey with customers who apply for a commercial connection. This includes all customers who have applied for non-domestic connections across the metered distributed generation, demand and unmetered markets who have given their consent to participate in research. This year's survey was sent to randomly selected customers applying for commercial connections in 2017-2018. Provided that we have stakeholders' consent to invite them to surveys, this gives all customers applying an equal opportunity to provide anonymised feedback to an independent research agency. The survey has been running since November 2017, providing another route of feedback into our decision-making process.

Engagement Outcomes

In our May 2017-18 Looking Forward, Looking Back report we outline how our engagement and strategy leads to outcomes for our customers. At our recent Connections Customer Steering Panel we engaged with customers on possible functionality within our newly developing Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, to ask their thoughts on which functionalities would benefit them most. Customers engaged in this session selected their preferred option which we have embedded into the functionality specification for the new system. As a result, customers have directly influenced our decision-making during the development stage of our new CRM system.

How we contact stakeholders

In March this year we initiated a wide review of our engagement activities with connections stakeholders, including how we make contact, provide updates and invites to events. This review also explored permissions we had collected from stakeholders to allow us to contact them regarding connections engagement. Under the General Data Protection Regulations our activities have been redefined and as such it was necessary for us to renew these permissions.

We provided all stakeholders on our database an opportunity to renew their permission but also to have much more control over what information they wanted to receive from us. Based on stakeholder responses, we undertook a proactive database cleanse.

Stakeholders now have a clearer understanding of how we use their details and feedback, what types of contact we will make with them and why. They also now have greater control over what information they receive from us.

We encourage any stakeholders who wish to receive updates and event invites directly from us to [register online](#) or contact us at connectionsfeedback@sse.co.uk. Alternatively, we provide details and wider information on all our upcoming events and stakeholders can register directly for these on our events webpage. All members of our SSEN Connections Engagement LinkedIn group also receive posts and notifications of our upcoming events.

Key benefits

- Stakeholders have greater control over how we make contact
- Stakeholders can control what information they wish to receive
- Stakeholders have a greater understanding of how we treat their information and ensures ongoing input

New ways to engage

Want to be kept up to date and receive direct invitations to our events?

[Register here](#)



We understand that travel to our offices and event locations can be challenging for stakeholders based in more remote areas. We started providing virtual meetings last year and made commitments (in our April Looking Forward submission) to provide more of these through 2018-2019.

For all stakeholders who are unable to attend, we routinely upload material used at our events (i.e. presentations etc.) onto the relevant event page on our website.



Looking forward work plan

We see our commitments to improve services for customers as a continuous process that we review and monitor throughout the year. Since publishing our Looking Forward work plan in May earlier this year, we have continued to engage and listen to customers.

Based on feedback, we have decided to add two further actions for 2018-2019 and update two existing actions.

We have identified software issues in the development of our new GIS system which has meant that the delivery is now expected to be delayed by three months. To keep customers involved and to give them earliest possible sight of functionality, we have decided to offer customers the opportunity to use the additional time to undertake 'user acceptance testing' on the new system. The testing is intended to be completed remotely, using test data, replicating how they would access the new system once implemented. We engaged with customers in both our north and south events, showing the prototype version of the system. Based on these demonstrations, we currently have three customers signed up to undertake testing on the new system.

Unmetered customers have told us that we could do more to clarify the process we use when restoring supply when street furniture is damaged. We have added a new commitment to our 2018-2019 work plan to provide guidance and a process to customers affected by knockdowns.

Customers also told us that we could do more to offer advice to customers looking to install electric vehicle charging points. Therefore, we are making a new commitment to develop a guide for customers wishing to install a charging point at home, at their workplace or on the street.

Following customer feedback on our quote letters since May 2018 as well as our own initial reviews we have established that the legal information provided in our documents is required. However, we recognise customer feedback has indicated that our documentation is longer than other DNOs. As such, we are now looking to focus on providing a summary document, designed to be shorter and more accessible, providing key information relating to the connection. This document would not form part of the contract but would help customers quickly locate key information.

We will continue to listen to customers and act on their feedback, based on what they believe is important. We critically review and consider all the feedback we receive, whether suggestions are seen as 'small steps' or 'big leaps' forward.

Update on completed 2018-19 actions

Commitment	Drivers for commitments	KPI	Dist. Gen	Demand	ICP/IDNO	Unmetered	Target	Update	Completion
Information Provision									
Create a facility for customers to feedback on network design policy changes We will provide visibility of our draft network design policy changes on our secure area to give registered customers the ability to review and provide feedback on document changes prior to implementation.	This commitment is driven by our intention to implement industry best practice.	Number of documents issued. Number of people who were consulted. Number of people who have responded and our action.			●		Q2	Following a detailed review of our contacts database to comply with GDPR requirements we now have an updated circulation list of 153 ICP/IDNO customers who receive copies of our draft network design policy changes. We have established an online portal where the documents can be viewed and a link to our response e-mail can be found (icpfeedback@sse.com). The online portal went live in second week of October.	✓
Provision of additional contact information and escalation processes We will complement our existing contact guides by providing additional contact hierarchies for other areas of our connections business (e.g. flexible connections) which will include information on their escalation processes.	"Overall very good, I can always escalate and it works, though I prefer not to." Stuart Batty, Energetics "Escalation would useful for holidays, I always go for Paul Munday." Nikki Pillinger, BSR	Improved website content published. Target 8/10 customer satisfaction.	●	●	●	●	Q2	We have enhanced our existing contact guides to include contact information for our Application and Quotation Acceptance Performance Manager, Regional Design Team Leads, Regional Lead Wayleave Officers and new Competition in Connections design and delivery personnel. These guides were uploaded in the first week of October. Customer satisfaction data is being collected via events and online (see www.ssen.co.uk/Connections/)	✓
Provide information on the Statement of Works processes and Appendix G trials We will provide information on the Statement of Works processes and updates on our Appendix G trials.	"GIS and SoW, both top hits and very important to all. Will be great, as long as you can make it work." Rob Such, RS Renewables	Improved website content published. Target 8/10 customer satisfaction.	●	●	●		Q2	Additional online content has now been published (see www.ssen.co.uk/Connections/StatementOfWorks/ and www.ssen.co.uk/Connections/AppendixG/) and customer satisfaction data is being sought.	✓
Application and Quotation Processes									
Target improvement in time to quote We will target enhanced timescales for customers who have been included in our new connection offer expenses.	This commitment is a continuation of one of our commitments from 2017/18.	We will target 10% improvement on industry best practice benchmark; the guaranteed standard. In line with our roll out of connection offer expenses. This will be applied to HV/EHV Generation offers, reducing their quotation timescale from 65 working days to 60 working days.	●				Q2	Since June 2018, we have been implementing staged changes to our internal design processes to reduce the quotation timescale for all HV/EHV Distributed Generation offers from 65 working days to 59 working days. In May we issued 93 quotations over more than 59 days but since implementing our new process this dropped to 14 in September 2018. We will continue to monitor and report our progress over the year.	✓
Queue management and Interactivity We will explain in more detail how the queue management and interactivity processes work.	"You want to know where you are, anything interactive will affect you so any information on that will be helpful." DG Customer	Improved website content. Additional information provided with generation offer.	●				Q2	Improved website content has now been published (see www.ssen.co.uk/Connections/QueueManagement/ and www.ssen.co.uk/Connections/InteractivityProcess/).	✓
Delivery									
Mains phasing information Where requested, we will provide mains phasing information prior to any works commencing on site	This commitment is driven by our intention to implement industry best practice.	Mains cable phasing to be clarified at initial contact meeting following quote acceptance.			●		Q1	We have reviewed and updated the post acceptance job progress checklist used by our delivery team managers to ensure that they advise our ICP/IDNO customers of any known mains phasing issues at the initial contact call or site meeting, if arranged.	✓
Enhancement to MPAN Process We will make it more visible how customers can request new or additional MPANs.	"MPAN numbers are on always high on customers agendas! Getting the supply connected is the first part of the puzzle and having the meter installed promptly afterwards is vitally important. Making the process more visible will ensure all affected parties are aware of what they need to do and when they need to do it." Ben Byatt, J McCann	Develop a customer information pack and issue to customers at events. Target 8/10 customer satisfaction.		●			Q1	We have introduced a new publication for customers (see www.ssen.co.uk/MPAN/) to fit with our existing "family" of MPAN guides detailing how to apply for an additional MPAN. The guide is also included in delegate packs for customer engagement events. Customer satisfaction data is being collected.	✓
Site readiness guides Following quote acceptance we will provide to each customer or site manager guidance on what is required to be delivered prior to the connection being made. This will include information on desired meter board locations and sizes, cable depths and trenching guide, joint bay sizes and general/emergency contact details.	"The site readiness guide will ease the process between design and construction. The guide will help to avoid abortive site visits and avoid delays in the build programme." Darren Thrussell, MJA Consulting	Publish guide. Target 8/10 customer satisfaction.		●			Q2	This is substantially completed as we have introduced a site readiness guide for customers requiring up to four connections. This includes details of meter board locations and sizes, service cable trenching requirements and other key information. A further guide for larger connections is in development and will be available by the end of October 2018.	✓
Collaboration and Engagement									
Pre-application meetings We will enhance our connection surgeries to offer pre-application advice on capacity, constraint, reinforcement and other factors that could affect project viability	"The call [being able to contact planners before application] is really important and will be even more important when A&D fees come in - it's getting to speak to the right person." Lucy Naughton, Green Frog Power	Subject to demand, we will hold a minimum of 10 pre-application surgeries and target 8/10 customer satisfaction	●	●	●		Q2	To date, we have provided 11 pre-application meetings across our north and south areas and continue to seek feedback.	✓

Update on new and existing 2018-19 actions

Commitment	Drivers for commitments	KPI	Dist. Gen	Demand	ICP/IDNO	Unmetered	Target	Update
Information Provision								
Review of Connections Website We will carry out a detailed review of our connections website to ensure this is easy to navigate, intuitive and that relevant documents and information are easily accessible.	This commitment is driven by feedback you gave us at one of our online application 'how to' workshops.	Development of proposals for a new website structure.	●	●	●	●	Q4	We have been actively engaging with customers to gauge their thoughts on the structure and navigability of our current website. This has led to an early navigation prototype which is currently being tested with customers at engagement events.
Information on capacity of network assets We will improve the information on the capacity of substations and current loading to simplify initial assessment of connection viability.	"Getting better network information is key; it saves you having to apply for a point of connection and also to explore options for our customers" David Overman, GTC	Improved website content published. Target 8/10 customer satisfaction.	●	●	●		Q4	We are reviewing how we currently store, update and present information on the capacity of our network assets to identify how the visibility of this information can be improved online.
Update and improve our GIS system We will invite customers to review and test our new GIS system, which will provide an improved user experience compared to our current GIS System.	"we'd definitely be interested in testing the GIS, that's a definite yes" David Overman, GTC	Customer testing conducted on developing GIS system	●	●	●	●	Q4	Please see comments on page 5 above Updated commitment
Street furniture reconnection guide We will develop a guide outlining the process we follow to achieve reconnection following street furniture knockdowns.	"SSEN work plan should include the development of guidance and process for telecommunications infrastructure including high priority no supply faults and high priority power restoration following knockdown." Open reach, 17-18 ICE consultation	Develop and publish guide.				●	Q4	Please see comments on page 5 above New commitment
Electric Vehicle connection guide We will develop a guide outlining what to expect and key considerations when applying for a domestic, work place or on-street charging point.	"We'd be able to tell the client what we can/ can't do without calling you, and it will give a better understanding of what to expect and what it might cost." SSE Enterprise, ICP workshop	Develop and publish guide.		●		●	Q3	Please see comments on page 5 above New commitment
Application and Quotation Processes								
Quote letter review We will develop a summary document to be issued with our generation quote letters. This will include the key information that customers require in a more accessible and shorter format than the existing documentation.	"The quotations/connection offers need further work. SSEN's connections offers are still by far the longest documents issued by the DNOs" Lightsource, Consultation	Summary document produced	●				Q3	We are currently collating quote letter examples from other DNOs with a view to reviewing our own generation quote letter template and introducing improvements where required. Updated commitment
Improve our online application process for mixed generation/demand sites We will enhance our online application process to expand the generation and storage options. We will also review and improve the information available for mixed generation/demand connections (e.g. housing with PV) to provide better information for customers wishing to apply online.	"Online applications still need improving as it doesn't cover all aspects." Rob Such, RS Renewables	Complete improvements to online application forms.	●	●			Q3	We are currently developing an online solution where customers can provide all required information at the application stage to allow the design of a mixed connection, or a modification to an existing connection.
Delivery								
Detailed review of our wayleaves process We will carry out a detailed review of our wayleaves process to ensure that this is operating effectively and, where possible, is avoiding undue delays to the connections process.	This commitment is driven by feedback you gave us at one of our wayleave workshops.	Review completion expected in 24 months. Publish progress update at 12 months	●	●	●	●	Q4	The review is ongoing and on target to produce a progress update by the end of Q4.
Enhanced tracking information for online applications We will improve information on our tracking functionality for online application projects which include design approval stages.	"Online tracking will be crucial, the ability to track will be great rather than relying on a phone call from someone at SSEN." Lucy Naughton, GreenFrog Power "Better online tracking of connections process" Arwell Lloyd, UCML	Develop an information pack on the use of our tracking function and issue to customers at events. Target 8/10 customer satisfaction.			●		Q3	We are in the process of revising the online tracking portal to provide a project summary screen which will highlight key dates including design approval stages. We are also developing "how to" guides to assist customers applying online or tracking their projects.

Continued on the next page >

Update on new and existing 2018-19 actions continued

Commitment	Drivers for commitments	KPI	Dist. Gen	Demand	ICP/IDNO	Unmetered	Target	Update
Competition in Connections								
Dedicated Forum for Competition in Connections We will help establish a dedicated forum for ICPs and IDNOs.	"I think as the role of an ICP grows, these meetings need to be separate and more specific." IUS	Forum established. Number of meetings held.			●		Q3	Dedicated fora for our ICP/IDNO customers have now been established and initial meetings were held in our North and South licence areas in August and September respectively. Further meetings are planned and will be subject to stakeholder preferences on timing, location and method of engagement. We will now begin to embed these as Business as Usual.
Dedicated team for Competition in Connections We will provide dedicated points of contact for Competition in Connection customers who will oversee the delivery of their connection projects.	"If you had one team you'd be dealing with for all jobs, to talk to about our jobs, that would be good." Stuart Batty, Energetics "Contact with a dedicated resource." Chris Wilson, IUS	Dedicated team established in our SEPD area. Dedicated CiC contact/ key account manager identified for each of our SHEPD regions.			●		Q3	We are currently training our key contacts for Competition in Connections customers in both our licence areas. Details of these have been included in our revised contact guides and will be promoted in future newsletters and events.
Collaboration and Engagement								
We want customers to drive what we talk about We will introduce an online process allowing customers to request future events or workshops on topics that are of most interest to them.	"We like the idea of applying on line for future events and having the visibility of seeing when items are being planned. A good use of technology." David Overman, GTC	We will implement the process and share outputs with customers.	●	●	●	●	Q4	Through our established online events portal (www.ssen.co.uk/stakeholderevent/basicsearch/) we now offer customers the opportunity to "Suggest an Event". This is also actively promoted through newsletters and staff e-mails.
Customer engagement We will trial opportunities for booking "virtual" or online connection surgeries to ensure customers, particularly those in remote locations, have the opportunity to discuss their project or connection offer	"I like the virtuality of it, coming in and sitting down isn't always possible, I like the informal element of talking to the planners." Hugh Taylor, Roadnight Taylor	Subject to demand, we will hold a minimum of 10 virtual surgeries target 8/ 10 on customer satisfaction	●	●	●		Q3	Our WebEx offer and functionality is currently being trialled internally with remote depot staff and, once proven, will be rolled out to customers during Q3 and will be promoted to customers through our events portal.

Engagement with connected customers

Outside of our ICE engagement with **connecting** customers, we also undertake engagement with **connected** customers. For instance, we recognise the importance of managing outages with connected customers and host two DG Owner-Operator forums each year in both licence areas to discuss outage plans, notification preferences, engagement strategy and provide main points of contact within the business.



Our response to feedback to Ofgem's consultation

In our May Looking Forward, Looking Back 2018-2019 submission we provided a section outlining the suggestions we had received through the year which had not translated into specific ICE commitments, along with our rationale as to why.

This new addition to the report provides further feedback, in addition to the contact made with customers on an individual basis, through the year, following events.

Following Ofgem's ICE consultation in July 2018, we are in the process of writing out to those who responded to the consultation inviting them to meet with us to discuss items raised in the consultation.

Of the 11 customers that responded to the consultation, the following themes were raised.

Ability to locate and collate information on the network to inform and steer applications, including better view of what is connected/contracted and direct access to system planners

We recognise that customers need to be able to contact our staff both to understand capacity availability (in addition to using our online tools) and also ask queries about their particular quotation. Our business is structured to provide initial points of contact, our Commercial Contract Managers (CCMs), to identify queries that are commercial or technical in nature. Where questions are specific to the network, our CCMs facilitate meetings with system planners as well as representatives from our flexible connections teams as appropriate.

Managing and cancelling accepted offers where they do not show sufficient progress

At SSEN we proactively manage accepted offers to ensure that they proceed in a timely manner. We were the first DNO to include milestones in our offers and were instrumental in formalising and have now implemented, the industry agreed milestones to manage and cancel accepted jobs that have not progressed as anticipated to avoid sterilisation of capacity and ensure all available capacity is utilised in a timely and efficient way.

Over 2017-2018 we have engaged with customers with all our accepted projects, and where progress does not meet agreed milestones, we have exercised rights under contracts and cancelled projects. This has released that capacity to others.. We continue to work with all our customers to ensure that network capacity is utilised in a timely manner.

How we respond continued

Visibility of Network Capacity including National Grid/Transmission Plans

We currently publish available headroom for all our Grid Supply Points, Bulk Supply Points and Primary Substations on our generation availability heat maps. This includes all connected and contracted generation. Where applicable, this information also includes planned National Grid/Transmission future works: the results of the Statement of Works process. Where modification applications trigger the need for additional reinforcement at transmission level, this is published alongside its expected dates and details of the works.

The facility to request quotations for different scenarios

We currently provide a range of scenarios exploring options for customers including up-front on-line network information on network arrangement and capacity, pre-application meetings, feasibility studies and budget estimates. These are designed to provide various levels of indications of likely connection solutions and costs for a range of possible connections. We believe that these are the best way for customers to undertake 'optioneering' before identifying which option for which they wish to request a formal connection offer.

Many customers recognise that 'options' or 'optioneering' often involves similar levels of work as multiple new applications would. Therefore, they understand that requesting options could increase the amount of analysis required, design costs and potentially the time taken to complete and issue the quote. Based on customer feedback in 2018 customers told us that timescales for issuing quotes were very important to them.

With this in mind, we have committed in 2018-2019 to facilitate greater up front dialogue between designers and customers through our pre-application meetings.

The treatment of applications and modifications to applications

Our detailed requirements are in line with industry requirements including our licence and the Electricity Act. We require information provided to be consistent across customers and between our on-line, email, telephone and paper applications. The information we request is required to provide a robust quotation. Where an application is not deemed "competent", we follow up with the customer explaining what is required, assisting wherever we can. For example, where a customer cannot identify their plot location we will provide a map of our understanding of this for them to confirm that the location is correct.

Modifications to applications is a significant issue for all customers and as such there has been comprehensive industry engagement (April 2016 – June 2016). Previous consultation has focused on the scope of what is termed 'material' and 'immaterial' change and therefore what modifications are feasible without requiring a new application. We have actively engaged and subsequently implemented learning from this process to ensure the agreed industry approach is consistently applied. We understand that customer feedback has re-ignited discussions on this topic and led to a new consultation (January 2018 – March 2018). We have provided our response to the latest consultation (March 2018), however we believe no alternative best practice or recommendations have yet emerged. As such, we continue to align with what was previously agreed in 2016 as best practice and await the feedback at a national level from the latest round of consultations.

Connection offer document length and complexity

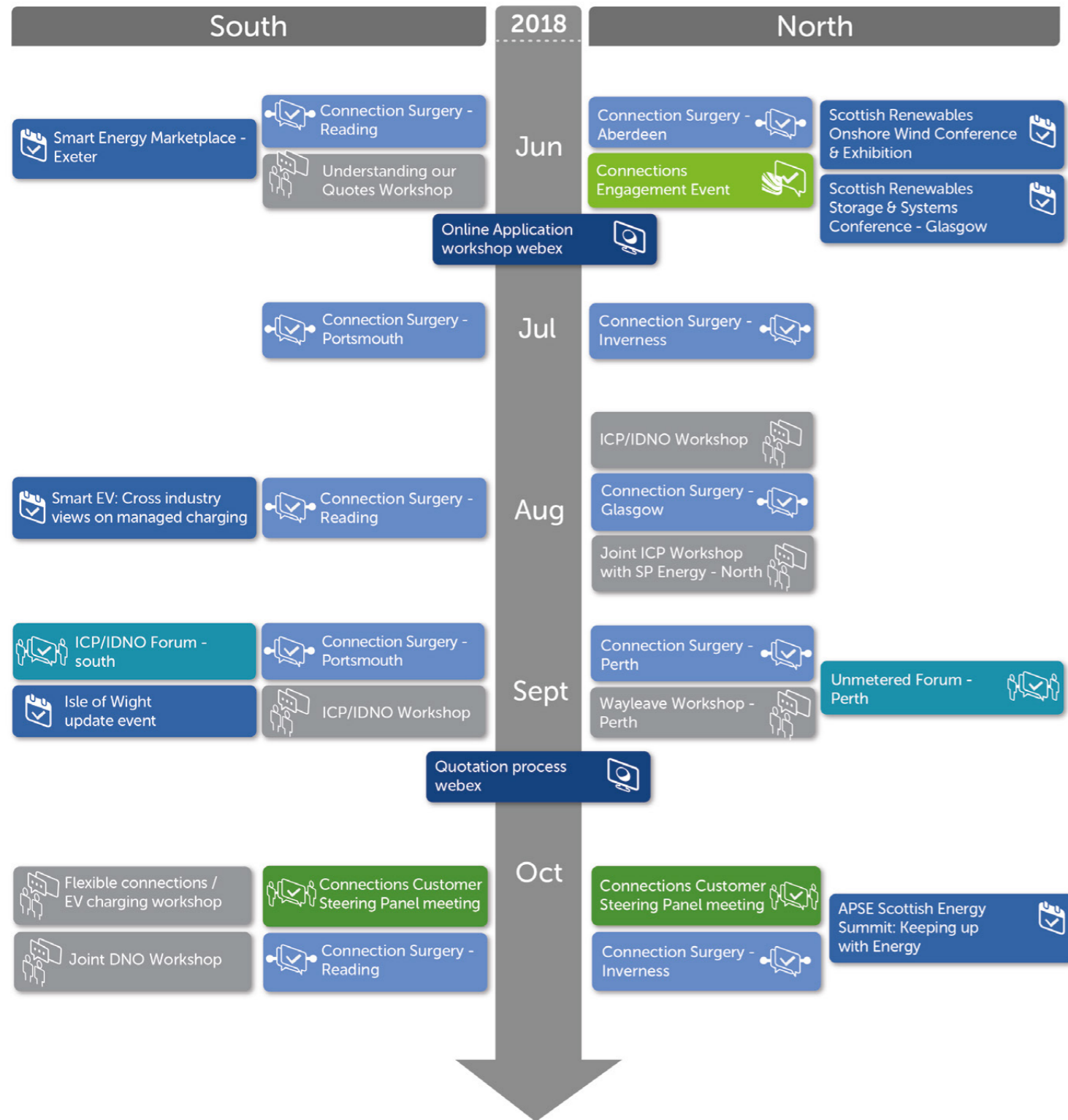
We have made commitments in our 2018-2019 work plan to review our generation connection offer documentation to ensure they reflect industry best practice. As such, we accept that this is an area that stakeholders have identified as needing attention and we are making appropriate commitments based on this.

There are also queries regarding the cost breakdown we provide in our quotations.

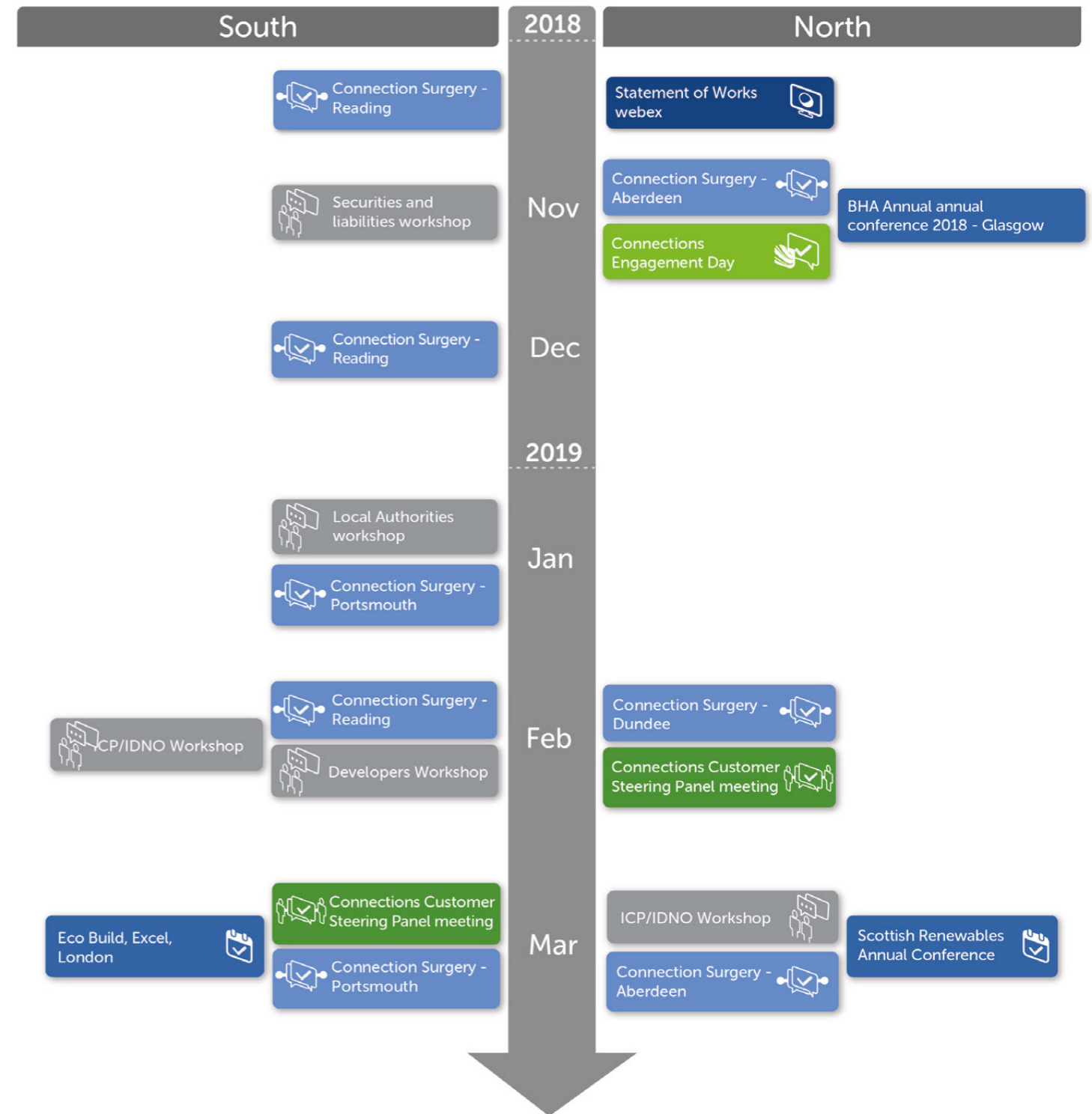
We provide a detailed cost breakdown at the end of our quotations. This is based on the same level of detail used to generate quotations. We would suggest that this level of detail is required to enable our customers to understand how we have developed our quote and to allow them to make an informed decision on how to proceed.



Completed engagement



Planned engagement



Industry Engagement
 Connection Surgery
 Workshop
 Engagement / Consultation Event
 CCSP
 Operator Forum
 Webex

If you have any questions, would like to be kept updated with our progress or are simply interested in finding out more please

contact: connectionsfeedback@sse.com

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