Emotionally Intelligent Communications

NORTHERN GAS NETWORKS

ANNUAL STAKEHOLDER CONFERENCE

FEEDBACK REPORT

22 OCTOBER 2026

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INTRODUCTION

On 22 October 2026, Northern Gas Networks (NGN) hosted its annual stakeholder conference. The purpose of the event was to seek feedback from stakeholders on the following topic areas: the new regulatory contract and progress during the first six months of RIIO-GD3, social sustainability, including supporting customers in vulnerable situations, strengthening communities and building a sustainable workforce; and environmental sustainability, including GD3 environmental commitments, energy strategy, regional energy planning and emerging opportunities from Artificial Intelligence (AI) and data centre growth.

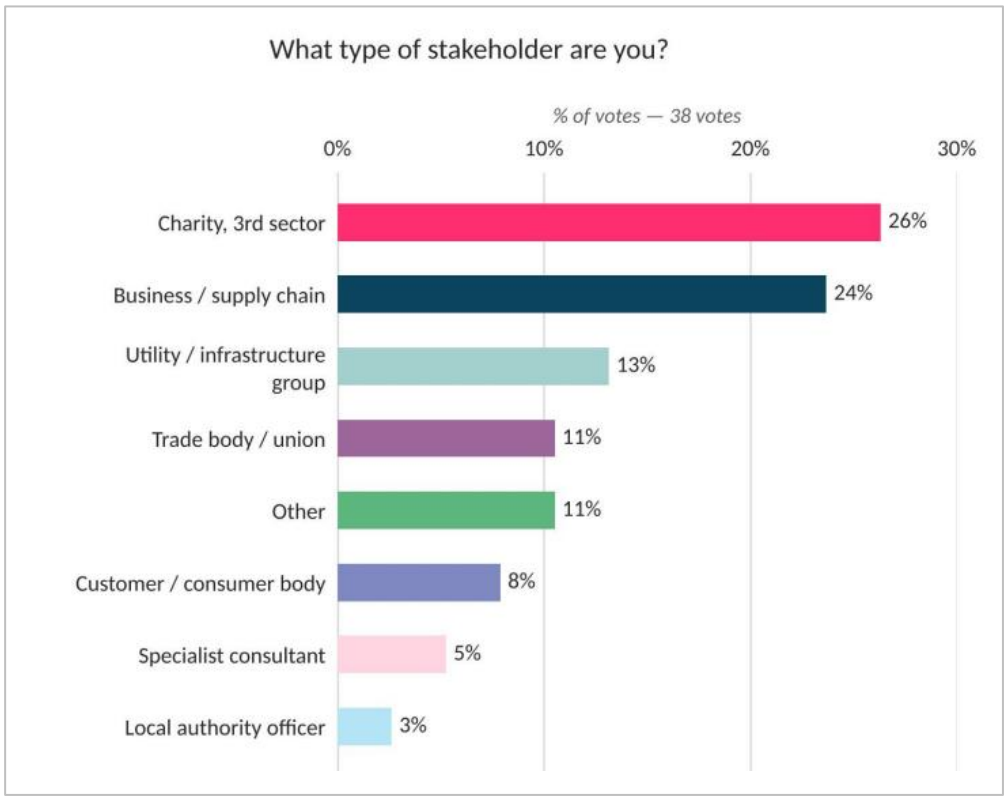
The workshop was hosted online. The event opened with a 'fireside chat', which led into a series of discussion sessions. Each discussion session consisted of a short presentation given by one or more NGN representatives, followed by facilitated discussions in virtual breakout rooms. In addition, stakeholders were asked to vote in a series of online polls using Slido. The workshop closed with a Q&A panel session.

NGN instructed EQ Communications, a specialist stakeholder engagement consultancy, to independently facilitate the event and to take notes of the comments made by stakeholders. This document summarises the feedback received. Every effort has been made to faithfully record the feedback given. To encourage candour and open debate, comments have not been ascribed to individuals.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PARTICIPANTS

- 71 stakeholders attended the workshop, representing 46 organisations.
- The most prominently represented stakeholder groups were from the charity sector (26%), followed by business / supply chain (24%) and utility / infrastructure representatives (13%).
- 100% of attendees who filled out a feedback form told us that they found the workshop either ‘very interesting’ or ‘interesting’. 94% felt the facilitation of their breakout sessions was ‘good’ or ‘very good’.



OVERALL

- Overall, stakeholders supported the direction NGN has set for GD3, particularly on social sustainability. Across the sessions, stakeholders emphasised that delivery should remain grounded in affordability, support for customers in vulnerable situations and the core service of a safe, reliable and good-value gas supply. Collaboration was a consistent theme throughout the workshop, alongside an expectation that NGN should help customers and communities navigate the energy transition in a way that is accessible, fair and relevant to their circumstances.

SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

- Stakeholders identified **affordability** as the region's most pressing social sustainability issue, with each rise in energy costs drawing in new groups who had previously coped, and with vulnerable and less mobile customers at particular risk.
- Stakeholders were largely confident that NGN's GD3 social sustainability plans will help tackle the region's challenges, with 81% agreeing and a further 6% strongly agreeing in the Slido vote. Many nonetheless saw NGN as **one contributor within a broader effort**, noting that wider influences such as geopolitical crises are beyond its control and that results depend on budget and resource.
- When asked where NGN could do more, stakeholders identified a need for more action on **joint working and workforce resilience**, a view echoed in the word cloud, where 'collaboration' was the most frequent term, followed by 'partnerships' and 'community'.
- The greatest scope for collaboration was felt to be in **skills and education**, with calls for NGN to team up with the Green Gas Taskforce, local and combined authorities and colleges to prepare a workforce for future gas network and net zero careers, and to expand its school outreach promoting Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) roles.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- Stakeholders saw the **slow decarbonisation of heating and transport** as the region's main environmental challenge, with older homes and civic buildings needing major retrofitting and insulation, and sustained investment in heat networks and heat pumps seen as essential. Other flagged issues included households held back from decarbonising by cost and confusion, and the impact of **extreme weather** such as flooding, drought and heat.
- There was **some uncertainty** as to whether NGN's GD3 activities go far enough to address these challenges: while 59% agreed, 28% stayed neutral and 10% disagreed with this question. To improve this, it was suggested that NGN consider how it frames energy efficiency advice for households in financial stress, and whether its vulnerability funding can extend to climate adaptation.
- Stakeholders articulated areas where NGN could do more to tackle these challenges, such as publishing a **clear biomethane strategy**, setting out how it will **cut leakage**, explaining the costs of green gas in plain terms and increasing low-carbon advice and support for lower-income owner occupiers and tenants.
- Stakeholders were wary of the gas networks' involvement with AI and data centre growth. The most common view was that gas could play a **limited, short-term role** while electricity grid connections remain constrained, and that NGN could help bring sites online.

STAKEHOLDER PRIORITIES

- When asked to rank NGN's People and Planet commitments, stakeholders placed **enabling affordable, decarbonised energy** and ensuring vulnerable communities can access information, funding and affordable energy well ahead of the others.
- Asked which areas NGN should focus on overall, stakeholders prioritised **the core service**: providing a safe service, keeping bills low, maintaining a reliable supply and delivering value for money.

INTRODUCTION, OVERVIEW AND FIRESIDE CHAT

Mark Horsley, Chief Executive of NGN, opened the conference and welcomed attendees. He explained that, as NGN moves from planning to delivery at a time of economic uncertainty and rising energy prices, the company needs to stay responsive to customers' needs, and he asked attendees for honest feedback, including where they felt NGN could do better.

He then handed over to Greg Dodd, Regulation and Strategic Planning Director, who explained what NGN's new regulatory contract means for customers and stakeholders. Greg described how the focus has moved from planning to delivery under GD3. He said early performance is strong, but NGN must keep adapting to new challenges while staying focused on the outcomes it committed to. He named the main pressures ahead as affordability, skills and resourcing, and uncertainty over the future role of gas. Greg then explained how NGN is responding, by collaborating across the industry and with other utilities, and by investing in data, digitalisation and AI so it can adapt as policy becomes clearer.

FIRESIDE CHAT

James Garland (EQ) then facilitated a 'fireside' chat, which was an informal, facilitated conversation with four panellists, designed to set the scene for the discussion sessions. The panellists were Tom Lowe, Principal Economic Regulation Specialist at Citizens Advice, Tim Myatt, Head of Corporate Affairs at Yorkshire Water, Brian Matthews, Chair of NGN's ISG, and Olivia Porteous, Regional Lead for Yorkshire & Humber at Business in the Community (BITC).

James then asked what good support looks like for customers who are struggling or finding systems hard to navigate. Tom said rising gas prices have left 3.5 million households in energy debt, with nearly 10 million worried about paying their bills this winter. He urged networks to build strong referral pathways to Citizens Advice, find households who could benefit from the Warm Homes Plan and identify people for the Priority Services Register (PSR), ideally through a multi-sector register so customers only share their needs once. Brian added that customers often do not see themselves as vulnerable. NGN's teams are among the few who go into people's homes, so they are well placed to spot the signs and point people towards help.

The panel then discussed trust. Brian said that trust comes from doing what you say you will do, being open when things go wrong and treating customers fairly. He felt NGN could also earn trust by guiding people through processes it does not own. He warned that strong emergency response builds trust, but a single spell of bad weather that leaves people without supply could quickly erode it. Tim acknowledged that trust in the water sector is low. He said Yorkshire Water is responding by putting the region first, publishing regular performance reports and giving customers routes to question senior leaders. He added that the public needs to see utilities and local government working to a joined-up regional plan.

Asked what practical actions build trust, Tom said organisations should deliver on their commitments and respond quickly when issues arise. He also said customers will need clear information on the disconnection process and its costs as domestic gas connections begin to fall. Olivia emphasised the importance of listening to customers and communities, hearing diverse voices and balancing quick wins with long-term impact, while being honest when things do not go to plan.

SESSION 1: SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Hannah Jewison, Business Sustainability Lead, began the session. She took stakeholders through NGN's People and Planet strategy, which was developed with stakeholder input and provides an overarching framework for the company's social and environmental commitments.

Laura Ratcliffe, Head of Social Strategy, then outlined NGN's GD3 social commitments. These centre on £19.13m of Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA) funding to support more than 150,000 households in greatest need, alongside additional funding for grassroots community projects. She explained that 56 VCMA projects had been mobilised in the first six months, many of them in collaboration with other gas networks and utilities.

Claire Allcock, HR Director, went on to set out NGN's workforce resilience commitments on inclusion, education, apprenticeships, and health and wellbeing. She highlighted the recent launch of the "Belonging at NGN" inclusion strategy and a campaign to attract more female apprentices, which led to a 472% rise in female applications, with 36% of apprenticeship offers going to women. She added that NGN's education strategy, now in development, will focus half of its activity on areas of low social mobility.

REGIONAL ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

Affordability was the dominant concern. Stakeholders described a region where rising energy costs continue to hit deprived households, housebound and less mobile customers, plus an emerging group who were not struggling before but are now. It was pointed out that every bill increase pulls more people into difficulty, and partners said the depth of need is making it harder to deliver meaningful help. There was also concern that the effects go beyond bills. Stakeholders **linked affordability to unsafe behaviour**, including skipped boiler servicing and appliance repairs, the use of camping stoves and paraffin heaters, and carbon monoxide risks made worse by landlords not meeting their responsibilities. **Funding was a second major theme**. Stakeholders cited the loss of the Household Support Fund, oversubscribed insulation schemes until 2027 and uncertainty over the Warm Homes Plan as all leaving gaps in short-term and long-term help. There was also concern that community support such as warm spaces may not survive rising prices. Hard-to-retrofit housing, off-gas properties in rural areas such as North Yorkshire, and weak enforcement in the private rented sector were seen as compounding fuel poverty.

Stakeholders also identified challenges around **reaching people and making support last**. Rural distances, particularly in Northumberland, and low awareness of what help exists mean that many people who need it do not find support. Stakeholders asked for more proactive outreach based on mapping vulnerability, shared data and joint working with other utilities. There was a clear call to **move from crisis response to prevention**, with a focus on outcomes and quality over volume. It was felt that NGN should prioritise targeted outreach, combine affordability support with carbon monoxide awareness and use its trusted partner network to deliver longer-term impact.

ADDRESSING THESE CHALLENGES THROUGH GD3 ACTIVITIES

Stakeholders were broadly positive that NGN's GD3 activities will address the current challenges and this was backed up by the Slido voting, with 81% agreeing, and a further 6% strongly agreeing. Most, however, framed **NGN's activities as one part of a wider solution**. Support to date was described as responsive and transparent, and the £19.13 million commitment was seen as a meaningful contribution. The **Services Beyond the Meter scheme was singled out as a real lifeline**. Stakeholders gave examples of it identifying faulty pipework and giving frontline workers confidence that a gas leak can be fixed. Education work, including in primary schools, was welcomed, as was the focus on apprenticeships and bringing young people into the industry. Stakeholders were realistic about the limits of NGN's impact. Factors such as geopolitical crises sit outside NGN's control, and delivery depends on budget and resource. Some also asked how apprenticeships fit with graduate schemes and whether they bring in local young graduates.

Stakeholders also identified clear areas for improvement. It was felt that **NGN should strengthen collaboration** between organisations delivering similar projects to avoid a scattergun approach, and improve information sharing between utilities. Stakeholders also urged NGN to offer a variety of ways to reach people, since community centres work well for some but not for those who rarely leave home. Voluntary sector partners asked for **clearer information on future funding** and for lead-in time when asked to scale up delivery.

MOST IMPORTANT ASK OF NGN OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

Many stakeholders asked NGN to **deepen its understanding of vulnerability and strengthen support** for less affluent customers. Stakeholders wanted more done behind every door to identify fuel poverty and signpost the Priority Services Register (PSR), and for NGN to evolve so that it can manage the emerging crisis as bills rise. There was a **clear ask for collaboration**, both with other utilities to deliver a better collective outcome and with local communities in a place-based way. Some asked for more focus on safety, wanting NGN to put greater emphasis on **carbon monoxide prevention** and the safe use of gas appliances. Others focused on **skills and the workforce**, asking what NGN is doing to help people retrain and keep their jobs as the mains replacement programme draws to a close. One stakeholder argued that the industry had been wrong to assume a completed network needs fewer skilled people, and urged NGN to train its own designers, engineers and quantity surveyors in house.

WHERE CAN NGN DO MORE

Stakeholders were broadly positive about NGN's direction but saw room to do more, especially on **coordination and workforce**. This was reflected in the word cloud that stakeholders contributed to on this question. The most widely cited word was 'collaboration' followed by 'partnerships' and 'community'. On supporting customers and communities, they asked for **closer coordination with other utilities**, which currently set their own targets and work within their own parameters. It was also felt that **practical guidance**

from NGN for frontline organisations would help, giving advice on how partners can deliver most effectively. Stakeholders also valued the free CO monitors NGN provides and asked for more promotion of the fact that such support is free. On workforce resilience, stakeholders saw early signs of progress. They pointed to more applications from women, more apprenticeships going to women, youth voices on the ISG and plans to offer 24-hour roles to the existing workforce first, and suggested NGN share how it drove the increase in female applicants so others can learn from it. They also wanted NGN to build on this work by **making technical and vocational careers more attractive** to young people, presenting itself well to local communities and clarifying its apprenticeship offer.

OPPORTUNITIES TO COLLABORATE

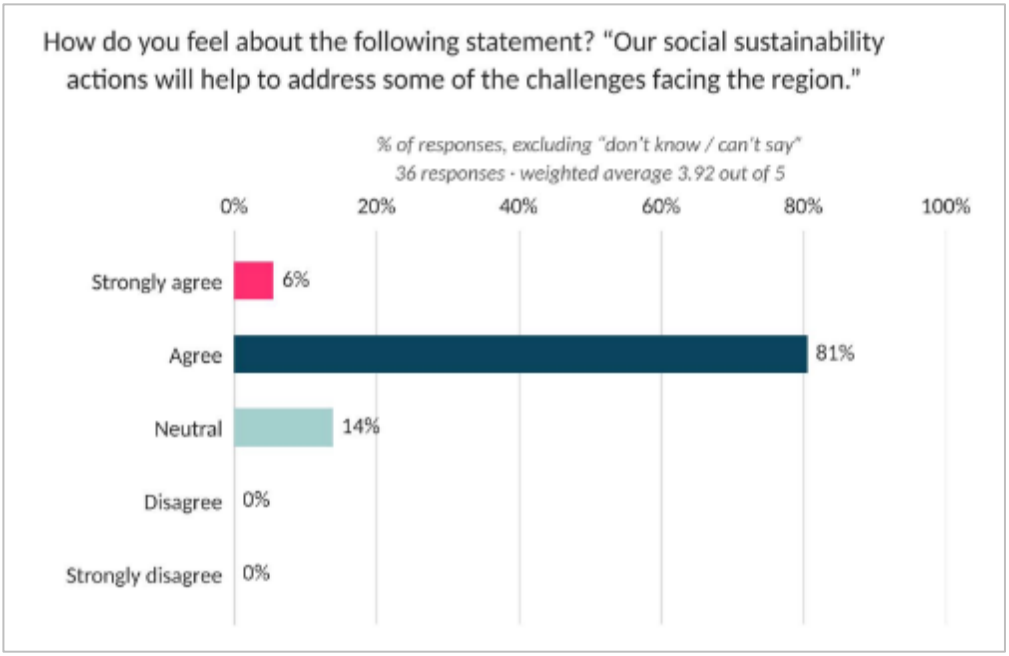
Stakeholders saw clear **opportunities for collaboration**, most often on **skills and education**. They encouraged NGN to work with partners such as the Green Gas Taskforce, local and combined authorities and local colleges to build skills for future gas network and net zero careers. They also urged more school outreach to promote STEM careers in the sector. Local authority stakeholders wanted a more direct link with NGN to unlock joint work on boiler grants for less affluent customers and school outreach. Stakeholders also stressed that collaboration should span the public, private and third sectors. Charities and communities understand what is happening on the ground, and combined authorities are already active in these areas. NGN should therefore **establish named local contacts**, and build joint programmes with combined authorities, colleges and community organisations.

1. What are the biggest issues and challenges with regard to social sustainability facing NGN's region?

- "Affordability is a major problem at the moment. We've got a lot of deprived families and knowing that prices are going up I expect there are a lot of concerned people out there, worried about how they're going to keep their families warm." Business / supply chain
- "I'm worried that any further bill rises will increase their hardship over the winter and beyond." Local authority elected member
- "We find that so many of them are in absolute crisis. Regardless of how much we put forward to provide and work alongside partners to deliver great solutions, it's harder and harder to deliver to the depth people need." Utility / infrastructure group
- "As those issues become deeper, we've also got this emerging group of people who weren't struggling but are now. Every price increase impacts greater groups of people." Utility / infrastructure group
- "We provide lots of support for vulnerable customers and it's getting harder." Specialist consultant
- "When people make the choice between heating and eating they're not repairing appliances and they're not getting servicing done in the way they should, so they resort to different ways to meet their needs. So, we hear about people using camping gas stoves and paraffin heaters and cookers." Customer / consumer body

- “More and more, there is a definite issue with landlords not meeting their responsibilities. People are certainly in danger of poisoning from CO as a result.” Charity, 3rd sector
- “The loss of the household support fund is going to have a big impact as households can no longer apply. There is short term help needed, now things like fuel vouchers have been lost.” Charity, 3rd sector
- “The lack of funding is going down and down, basic insulation means finding a pot at the end of the rainbow. Everything is oversubscribed until 2027 and it’s heartbreaking.” Charity, 3rd sector
- “On VCMA funding, we’re all waiting to see what happens after the budget around the warmer homes plan.” Specialist consultant
- “As prices rise, a lot of the sector will not be around to provide support and warm spaces.” Charity, 3rd sector
- “We look at old housing stock which is very hard to retrofit. [...] Private housing support, highest levels of fuel poverty, very hard to enforce regulations.” Charity, 3rd sector
- “In North Yorkshire the number of off-gas properties is probably greater than the rest of the country. Because of that, the energy costs for them are much greater.” Local authority officer
- “Being in Northumberland, our biggest issue is location and everyone being rural and being spread out.” Charity, 3rd sector
- “It’s interesting how the representative from Citizens Advice and myself said there’s lots of support out there but people are struggling to find them. There are also groups in society too proud to stick their hand up and reach out for help, such as former members of the armed services. Those groups may need a more proactive outreach approach. That’s one of the bigger challenges now in the area around how you go out and map out vulnerability and use the data that is available, working with other utilities to understand where you can focus your efforts.” Customer / consumer body
- “How do we focus our efforts towards making those longer-term sustainable impacts? How do we turn things around so we’re seeing fewer issues in future?” Charity, 3rd sector

2. Do you think NGN's activities in GD3 will help to address these?



- "I'm quite happy with the support that we've had so far from NGN, as it responds to our needs and is helping us to make steps forward based on the information that we are providing." Charity, 3rd sector
- "It's going to make a great impact, and I think ultimately NGN are very transparent about how they support customers. They look to stakeholders to feed into their decision making." Utility / infrastructure group
- "What they're doing with £20 million is wonderful, that is part of the solution. Ideally, optimally, we'll all need to find a solution overall, but one organisation can only do the bits they're committed to doing." Utility / infrastructure group
- "This work is timely and important, and it will definitely contribute towards providing support for less affluent customers and addressing bill-affordability challenges. However, GDNs are only a small part of a much bigger picture, as there are so many aspects that can affect gas bills that NGN cannot control, such as geopolitical crises. Therefore, we have to be realistic around how far NGN's support can actually stretch." Specialist consultant
- "I think all of that means they're doing exactly what they need to do but it's down to budget and resource." Utility / infrastructure group
- "The Services Beyond the Meter scheme through NGN has proved to be a real lifeline. We referred someone of pension age who had recently bought her property through right-to-buy but couldn't pay for gas servicing herself. This found that her gas heater installed by the local authority had faulty pipework. This could have led to a carbon monoxide leak, so this service for those kind of people is really important to have." Charity, 3rd sector

- “The Services Beyond the Meter scheme is a great tool for us on the road. We walk away from someone’s property not knowing what will happen next, and this hangs heavy over you. We now know they can have help to get a gas leak fixed.” Trade body / union
- “I like the focus on education that is something important, having a full understanding of the sector, participate in the solution, that pleases me, and going into primary schools.” Charity, 3rd sector
- “The apprenticeship scheme is so important to build, so apprentices get a view of the whole NGN business. I wondered how this fits with graduate schemes and if apprenticeship schemes bring local young graduates on board too?” Charity, 3rd sector
- “It’s refreshing to see NGN focusing on apprenticeships and bringing young people into the business. I think the need for technical education is greater now than ever.” Business / supply chain
- “The word collaboration was mentioned a few times, specifically where you have organisations delivering the same types of projects. There’s been a bit of a scattergun approach, especially similar services, the collaboration element to work out how best to work together.” Charity, 3rd sector
- “One of the key things when it comes to collaboration is how we can communicate between different energy companies. We do a lot of work with British Gas and the National Fire Chiefs Council, and how we can utilise that information with other organisations.” Business / supply chain
- “Local community centres as one-stop-shops are so, so valuable, but equally there are people who don’t leave their house who are accessing services in different ways. So having a variety of ways that people can be supported is really important.” Charity, 3rd sector
- “From the voluntary sector’s perspective, it’s been a tough few years, we rely on support from places like the Distribution Network Operators (DNOs). Understanding how much funding is going to be available. So we try to flex to allow us to continue to develop support for customers but also to satisfy NGN. In terms of flexing up to deliver anything new, that is our biggest challenge. It doesn’t necessarily mean recruitment, but we often need a bit of lead in time to do this.” Charity, 3rd sector

3. If you could ask one thing of NGN over the next five years to address these challenges, what would it be?

Ask: Understanding vulnerability and supporting less affluent customers

- “For me, the most important thing would be to establish a better practical understanding of what vulnerability looks like for your customers and how you can provide more effective support for less affluent customers. Think about what more can be done behind every door to identify fuel poverty and signpost the PSR to the relevant customers in response. There is far more that you can do to address affordability concerns too, as many people are in fuel poverty and are really worried about their bills for the coming winter.” Trade body / union
- “For me it’s about vulnerability, and it’s around how you’re going to evolve to ensure the emerging crisis the public are going to see is going to be managed in the best way you possibly can.” Utility / infrastructure group

Ask: Collaboration with other utilities and local communities

- “How can we better work together? I do feel that there’s so much opportunity in the utility space to do more for a better collective outcome.” Utility / infrastructure group
- “I would also recommend that organisations make contact with local communities in a place-based way. By working with pre-existing support networks, the interventions are more likely to have a long term positive impact.” Charity, 3rd sector

Ask: Carbon monoxide and safe use of gas appliances

- “I would also like to see greater focus on carbon monoxide and safe use of gas-powered devices in the home. Some customers do not realise the importance of having a properly working boiler from a safety perspective, for example.” Trade body / union

Ask: Skills and workforce

- “I’m interested in the skills and workforce of the future. I know the mains replacement programme is ending, what are you doing to help them retrain, retain jobs?” Specialist consultant
- “There was a school of thought that the network and infrastructure is in place, we don’t need as many people to maintain it, that was wrong. NGN need to educate people like designers, engineers, quantity surveyors, in house. The sooner they move towards that the better.” Business / supply chain

4. Is there more NGN should be doing?

- “The work NGN has done on inclusion and social outreach has set a really good foundation for this. It comes back to the point around collaboration.” Charity, 3rd sector
- “More coordination with other utilities in the area. They all have ambitions to support people in the region. Can there be more coordination to tackle these issues.” Specialist consultant
- “There does feel that each company has their own target and do things in their own ways. I want to be the person who can have that bigger conversation.” Charity, 3rd sector
- “NGN have this thing where they tell us what to do but they don’t tell us how to facilitate this process.” Trade body / union
- “We get a lot of support from NGN, but being able to physically give the carbon monoxide monitors is so simple but beneficial. Sometimes it’s about letting the householder know that it’s free and it’s out there.” Charity, 3rd sector
- “You should show some patience, as successes from workforce-resilience initiatives already in place are already becoming apparent on the ground. For example, there are more applications being made by women and there has been a rise in the number of apprenticeships going to females. What’s more, there are now youth voices on the ISG, so we’re seeing signs that NGN is making some good initial steps.” Business / supply chain

- “They are changing their strategic work that has historically been a 9-5 job, but we’ve been in talks with NGN about it becoming a 24 hour job. They are offering to the existing workforce first which is good.” Trade body / union
- “I saw on the presentation that there was a 472% increase in female applicants which I was surprised at and would like to know what NGN did to achieve that.” Local authority officer
- “We need to make our work more attractive to young people. Someone with a university education maybe has a higher status than someone studying to be an electrician. We need to level that up.” Business / supply chain
- “As NGN’s operations become increasingly digitalised, you are going to see greater competition around attracting and maintaining workers with those skillsets, so you really need to think about how you portray yourselves locally and how you interface with communities, in order to give off an appealing image for the business.” Business / supply chain

Electronic vote: “What more do you think NGN should do to address the social sustainability challenges facing the region?”



5. Are there any opportunities for NGN to collaborate with your organisation or any others you know?

- “There are some useful collaborations that spring to mind. For example, the Green Gas Taskforce is helping to develop skills for young people around green jobs, particularly in terms of getting green biomethane into the gas network. Building on this idea, it would be great if NGN could do some more school-outreach work to promote uses of STEM skills in future GDN careers. That could really embed the potential future job opportunities among younger people.” Trade body / union
- “My wider knowledge of the combined authority is that it works in building skills in certain sectors. I would encourage NGN to work collaboratively with us to build skills in the particular areas where there is a need for them. We work with those in colleges to build those skills and make the workforce fit for the future, especially in the net zero space. NGN’s needs won’t be wildly different to this, and so I’m sure that collaboration between our organisations would be fruitful here.” Local authority officer
- “At my council, we don’t really have a designated officer working with NGN, so establishing that link could be really useful in achieving a wide range of things, such as grants for new boilers for less affluent customers and school outreach. We want to see more engagement with NGN and would be keen to have a conversation to get the ball rolling.” Local authority elected member
- “Collaboration for us is across public private and third sectors. You’ve got communities and charitable organisations that understand what’s happening on the ground, and the combined authorities that are already doing good work in those areas. The private sector can do more collectively than we can on our own, so the link between us is crucial here.” Charity, 3rd sector

SESSION 2: ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Hannah Jewison returned for the session on environmental sustainability. She explained that stakeholders have consistently asked NGN to reduce its environmental impact while supporting a lower-carbon transition that remains fair and affordable while maintaining resilience. She discussed NGN's GD3 environmental commitments: cutting gas leakage by a further 24%, rolling out leak detection technology, decarbonising its vehicle fleet, cleaning up contamination at former gasworks sites, doubling biomethane by 2031, and supporting the East Coast Hydrogen programme.

Sajalu Greenall, Energy Strategy Manager, then set out NGN's approach to the energy transition. She said NGN will continue to run a safe and reliable network while making 'low-regret' investments that keep options open, given the uncertainty on future energy policy. She described NGN's growing role in regional energy planning, including on National Energy System Operator's Regional Energy Strategic Planning boards, and an AI-powered modelling tool to support those discussions. She also highlighted the growth of AI and data centres in the region, arguing that their energy and water needs should be considered as part of a whole-system plan. She closed by asking attendees for their views on regional energy planning, and what role gas networks should play in supporting AI and data centre growth.

REGIONAL ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

Stakeholders identified the **slow pace of heat and transport decarbonisation** as the biggest environmental challenge. They pointed out that the region's old housing stock and civic buildings need extensive retrofitting and insulation, and that increased, long-term investment in heat networks and heat pumps was a necessity. **Infrastructure barriers** were a related issue. Stakeholders noted that terraced housing makes electric vehicle charging difficult and that gas disconnection costs could make heat pump installation harder.

Stakeholders also pointed to **rising pressure on energy supply from data centres** and demographic change, with a risk that NGN is asked to help power them if electricity networks lack capacity. **Cost and understanding** were seen as barriers for customers. It was felt that environmental ambitions are put aside when gas prices are high, and many people do not know which low-carbon option suits them or feel empowered to act. **Climate impacts** such as flooding, drought and excess heat were also raised, particularly in Yorkshire's steep-sided valleys. **The challenge of coordination** was also highlighted, with stakeholders asking NGN to work with other utilities and public bodies to demystify the regional energy planning process and make it easier for time-poor partners to engage.

ADDRESSING THESE CHALLENGES THROUGH GD3 ACTIVITIES

The stakeholders that responded to this question were **uncertain** whether NGN's GD3 activities will be enough to address these challenges. This muted view was reflected in the Slido voting, where although 59% agreed, a sizeable minority, 28%, remained neutral and 10% disagreed. In the discussions, stakeholders questioned whether energy efficiency advice resonates with clients who are worried about affording their next food shop. This suggests that environmental messaging may need to be **linked to cost savings** and delivered alongside affordability support to be effective. Another view was that the VCMA remit needs to widen to cover issues such as heat resilience and cooling measures.

MOST IMPORTANT ASK OF NGN OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

Stakeholders gave specific answers with little crossover. One stakeholder wanted NGN to take a visible and proactive role in shaping how consumers use gas, with action to meet demand, improve system efficiency and reduce the carbon intensity of the gas in its pipes. This was seen as a way to cut the carbon impact of NGN's operations and to help homes and businesses play their part. Another asked for a **regional energy strategic plan** that works for the region and its stakeholders. A related question was raised about who would lead this across the wider picture, and whether there should be a designated leader. Other asks were brief: reducing carbon, reducing waste and addressing data centres.

WHERE CAN NGN DO MORE

Stakeholders felt NGN could do more, most often on **green gas and on reducing leaks**. Biomethane was seen as a major opportunity, and stakeholders asked for a clear biomethane strategy and for NGN to look outwards, working with other companies in the UK and abroad. Countries such as France and Germany draw a much larger share of their gas from biomethane, and stakeholders felt NGN could learn from how they have handled the cost challenge. Stakeholders also saw leakage as the biggest source of carbon in NGN's operations. They felt that reducing it would have a large impact on its carbon footprint and noted a growing shift towards treating emissions monitoring as an environmental issue rather than only a safety one.

The second theme was **communication and inclusion**, and this was clearly reflected in the word cloud on this topic where the most frequently cited phrases were: 'support heat networks', 'challenge fuel poverty more' and 'help people understand more'. Stakeholders cited many people feeling **alienated from the net zero agenda**, with the support available not meeting the needs of lower-income owner occupiers and tenants. They asked NGN to be more open about what it is doing and why, including how much green gas will cost per kilowatt hour and why the gas network is involved in data centres.

NESO AND REGIONAL ENERGY PLANNING ENGAGEMENT

Stakeholders were **positive about NGN's current approach** to regional energy planning and asked for continued engagement. It was noted that this is a fast-moving area, and that NGN should keep communications flowing and make sure suitable data-sharing arrangements are in place, along with a commitment to open forums for interested stakeholders.

THE ROLE OF GAS NETWORKS IN AI AND DATA CENTRE GROWTH

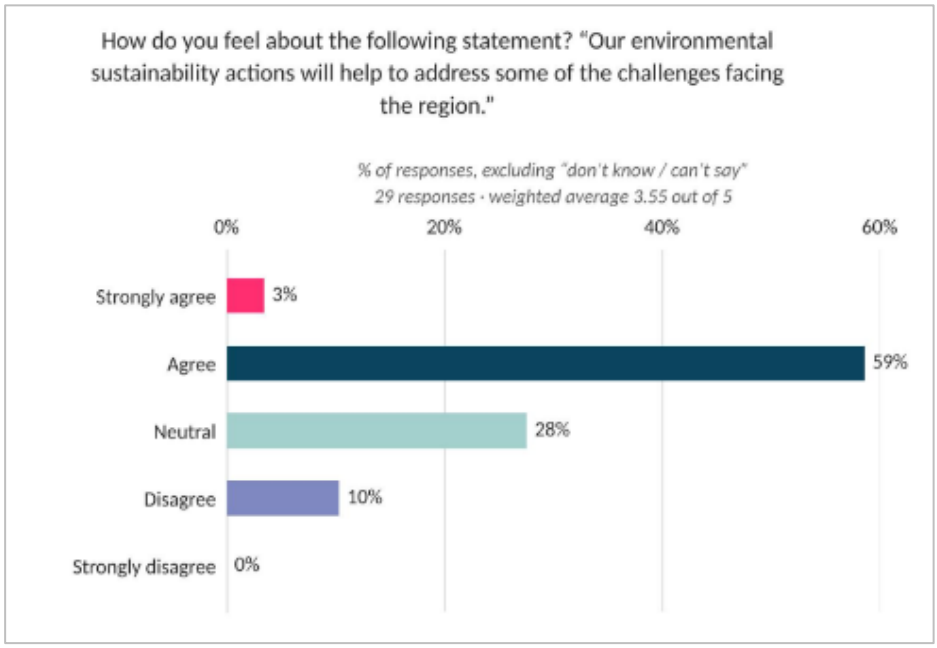
Stakeholders were cautious about gas networks supporting AI and data centre growth. The most common view was that gas could play a **limited, short-term role as a bridge** while electricity grid connections are slow, and that NGN could help get data centres online. Many doubted it was the right long-term answer. They pointed to the environmental cost of importing more gas, the likelihood that on-site power would not be low carbon, and the tension with Clean Power 2030 targets. The huge energy and water demand of data centre cooling was also raised, including the risk of worsening drought. Stakeholders noted that national policy on AI is undecided and that the picture is changing quickly. They therefore asked NGN to **proceed with caution**, and suggested making use of opportunities such as waste heat.

The other key thread in the discussions was **planning and communication**. Stakeholders urged integrated planning, given the scale of connection applications. They wanted NGN to **engage early with planners** and NESO, and to join a cross-utility forum so that partners have single conversations. Strategic plans often do not say when or where data centres will cluster, so stakeholders asked NGN to tap into spatial plans as early as possible and to stay flexible as policy changes. It was also noted that many customers are not aware of these issues and are focused on the cost of gas. Stakeholders asked NGN to explain the impact in terms that are relevant to them and to reassure households that cost and supply will not be put at risk.

1. What are the biggest issues and challenges facing NGN's region?

- "While the UK is doing well with progressing towards national statutory Net Zero targets, decarbonising heating systems is going far more slowly. I would like to see increased investment for heat networks and heat pumps as part of a gradual long-term strategy, as decarbonising the heating system of every single building will take a huge amount of time." Utility / infrastructure group
- "The housing stock and business and civic buildings in our region are very old and will need lots of retrofitting to make green heating systems effective within them. This improved building insulation measure will be key as the most sustainable unit of fuel is the one that you don't use in the first place." Utility / infrastructure group
- "Progress has not been particularly great around decarbonising transport either, and NGN could definitely go further in supporting that agenda." Utility / infrastructure group
- "It's about making the infrastructure available to enable people to make the transition. Many houses in Wakefield are terrace houses which make it difficult to put electric vehicle charging in. I applaud your plan to buy a fleet of 500 electric vehicles, but they need to be more easily chargeable. The current charging network is not set up to handle this." Customer / consumer body
- "When you look at how to install things like heat pumps, the role of a gas distribution network could be to make this more challenging because it causes the cost to be higher of disconnecting from the network." Customer / consumer body
- "The move to build data centres and the demographic shifts across licence areas will mean greater pressure on energy supplies, which will impact on sustainability. NGN could be asked to help to support powering them if electricity networks do not have the immediate capacity for them." Business / supply chain
- "For a lot of customers and stakeholders, they're very keen to get involved environmentally until cost becomes an issue. We're dealing with a really high cost of gas but we've got so many people focusing on cost that environmental aspects have to wait." Customer / consumer body
- "The challenge around moving to carbon neutrality is the barrier that individuals have in understanding what is the best option for them. Most of us are not particularly well enabled and empowered to make these changes, so it's about how we empower people to make this change." Specialist consultant
- "The flooding, drought, excess heat. With climate change we're seeing more extreme events, we have a lot of steep-sided valleys in Yorkshire which is not only a risk to domestic homes. We've seen increasing temperatures which is clearly a high risk moving into the future." Charity, 3rd sector
- "The challenge there is who are the organisations that NGN need to work with to deliver a meaningful plan. You have to recognise that it's a hugely complex process and there are a lot of stakeholders with incredible insight but they're time poor. NGN need to demystify it and translate it." Utility / infrastructure group

2. Do you think NGN's activities in GD3 will help to address these?



- "I'm not sure to be honest, as we operate at such a grassroots level. While we do offer energy-efficiency advice, I'm not sure how much our clients take it in. When you are stressed about whether you are going to be able to afford your next food shop, I don't think that energy efficiency is at the forefront of your thoughts." Charity, 3rd sector
- "The VCMA project is to be able to tackle problems, the remit needs to widen a bit, if you're looking at the heat and cooling measures, but I don't think that's part of the VCMA remit." Charity, 3rd sector

3. If you could ask one thing of NGN over the next five years to address these challenges, what would it be?

- "I want NGN to take a visible and proactive role in shaping and taking decisions on how we consumers use gas. I want to see measures taken around ensuring that customer demand is met, system efficiency is improved and the carbon intensity in the pipes is reduced. If NGN took these kinds of measures, the carbon impact of its operations would be reduced, and this would empower homes and business premises to play their part in the sustainability agenda." Specialist consultant
- "Carbon." Utility / infrastructure group
- "Reduce waste." Business / supply chain
- "I guess it's got to be data centres. Everything we've discussed around them." Specialist consultant
- "A regional energy strategic plan that works for the region and its stakeholders." Utility / infrastructure group
- "Who would be leading this across the wider piece? Should there be a leader." Charity, 3rd sector

4. Is there more NGN should be doing?

- “Definitely I think biomethane is a huge opportunity for all the gas networks, NGN in particular. I think NGN is already thinking about this but could be doing more.” Specialist consultant
- “75% of biomethane produced is connected to the grid, which means 25% isn’t, so it’s not going into the grid. There’s an opportunity there. I’d be interested about what NGN want to do with their strategy around biomethane. I’d welcome NGN working with other companies here or abroad on this. In the UK only 1% of gas comes from biomethane. In France and Germany it’s more like 5% so maybe we can learn something from them and how they’ve addressed the cost challenge. I’d encourage NGN to look more outwardly at this.” Specialist consultant
- “The biggest carbon impact is leakage from the system. If you can reduce that it’ll have a huge impact on your carbon footprint as a business.” Customer / consumer body
- “It’s something we’ve seen a lot of recently in terms of a change in focus. It’s not a safety issue only but an environmental monitoring issue.” Business / supply chain
- “The government changed its tack and announced yesterday that we can start drilling again at Jackdaw. The message there is we’d rather keep people warm and fed than focus on the environment.” Customer / consumer body
- “I think it’s complicated, it’s almost as if some people feel so alienated from the carbon / net zero agenda, air source heat pumps. Many of our owner occupiers are also on lower incomes. The support is out there but it’s not meeting the needs of many people. I think there’s an opportunity for NGN to communicate to reach these people.” Charity, 3rd sector
- “Information, education and transparency, let people know what they’re doing and why they’re doing it. My job still comes down to how much it costs the person, is green gas going to be more expensive per kilowatt hour. That’s what I mean in terms of information and education, like for me why is the gas network involved in development of data centres.” Charity, 3rd sector

Electronic vote: "What more do you think NGN should do to address the environmental sustainability challenges facing the region?"



5. How should NGN engage with you on matters relating to NESO / regional energy planning?

- "NGN is already doing this, so please just keep it up. This is a fast-moving area, so make sure that communications continue and that the appropriate data-sharing arrangements are in place." Utility / infrastructure group
- "Send out emails to people who express an interest, have a forum or meeting to get people involved. Myself or someone from my organisation would like to attend." Charity, 3rd sector

6. What role should gas networks play in supporting national ambitions such as in the AI / data centre growth?

- "The role gas can provide is as a short term solution to constraints on the electricity system. For them to be a long term energy provider for energy hungry things like data centres isn't the right solution." Local authority officer

- “The bottleneck with powering data centres is the electricity grid connection. These things are so profitable they’re now looking to the gas grid because it’s quicker. NGN can help get data centres online but I’m not sure it fulfils the UK’s ambitions.” Specialist consultant
- “From an environmental point of view we’re importing gas from all over the place, so just increasing the gas demand doesn’t seem the right thing to do.” Specialist consultant
- “The north east is one of these AI growth zones, and there is an imperative for these centres to produce their own power if the grid can’t produce that itself. This is very unlikely to be based on low carbon technologies, so the AI growth zones do seem to go against the Clean Power 2030 targets.” Customer / consumer body
- “Getting these online is great but the amount of energy that they use in just keeping the servers cool is absolutely huge. We should be thinking about how much it’s costing our country and our environment to run these data centres.” Customer / consumer body
- “We need to think about areas where there is drought then that will exacerbate conditions, and be careful about getting the balance right.” Charity, 3rd sector
- “One of the biggest areas for growth is going to be data centres. There needs to be some foresight into emissions from data centres, they offer a lot and take away a lot of resource.” Business / supply chain
- “It’s interesting as on the whole, the national level ambitions for AI are undecided at the moment. The government needs to decide its policy first.” Local authority officer
- “I think that gas networks should be exercising caution in deciding the role that they will play in supporting these national ambitions, as the picture will likely change.” Utility / infrastructure group
- “There’s a lot of confusion about policy and to what extent do we want these. It’s an uncertain picture for where they will be but it’s also happening incredibly quickly.” Utility / infrastructure group
- “Wherever they’re built industrial symbiosis is factored in and we use the energy they generate, we should optimise opportunities with things like waste heat.” Local authority officer
- “Ofgem shared some data about gas networks but there were 171 unique applications to connect to data centres. We’d like to see integrated inter-planning as you’re looking at a big impact on the system.” Customer / consumer body
- “The strategic plans don’t always tell us when or where there’s going to be a clump of data centres. It’s about us as service providers hooking into those spatial plans as soon as possible. I think NGN should be doing something similar to make sure they’re listening to where things are coming.” Utility / infrastructure group
- “We need a cross-utility forum that will help collaboration and allow single conversations instead of having multiple separate ones.” Utility / infrastructure group
- “How does the gas network issue connect. Are NGN a player in these boards or will they have a practical impact?” Charity, 3rd sector
- “I suspect, like me, that most of our community is very lay when it comes to this kind of thing. People are really just concerned about the cost of gas supplies and don’t understand the implications of these data centres on them.” Charity, 3rd sector

- “Most people don’t have the capacity to think about this. It’s about how we make the impact relevant to them when we’re supporting people who are struggling with everyday life.” Charity, 3rd sector
- “You have pipes through the ground, anything that can be turned off. How do you safeguard those things that are not going to happen and how can we reassure people, and not be left out in the cold.” Charity, 3rd sector

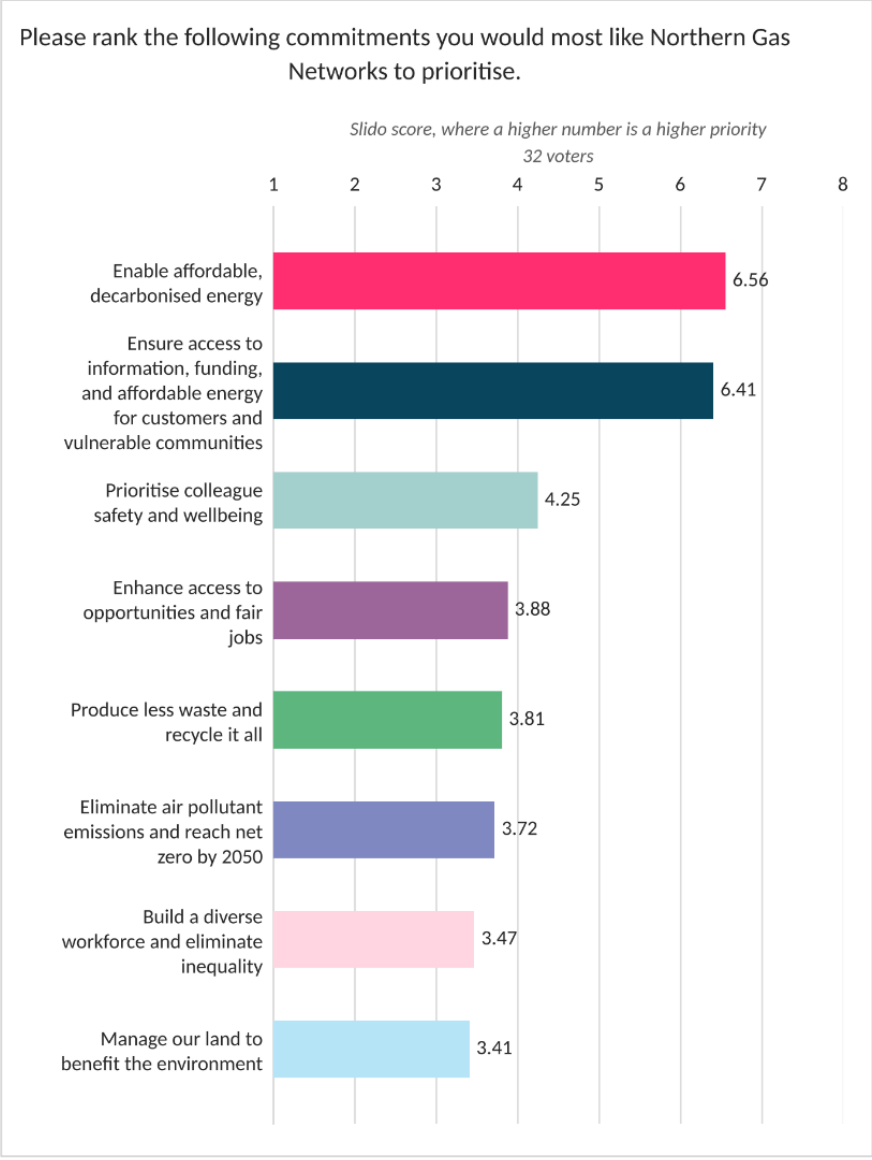
STAKEHOLDER PRIORITIES

Attendees were asked to vote on two questions after the discussion sessions. The aim was to understand where stakeholders felt NGN should focus its efforts during GD3.

The first poll asked them to rank NGN’s eight People and Planet commitments, which bring together its social and environmental sustainability goals.

Two commitments clearly ranked above the rest: “Enable affordable, decarbonised energy” came first (6.56), closely followed by “Ensure access to information, funding and affordable energy for customers and vulnerable communities” (6.41).

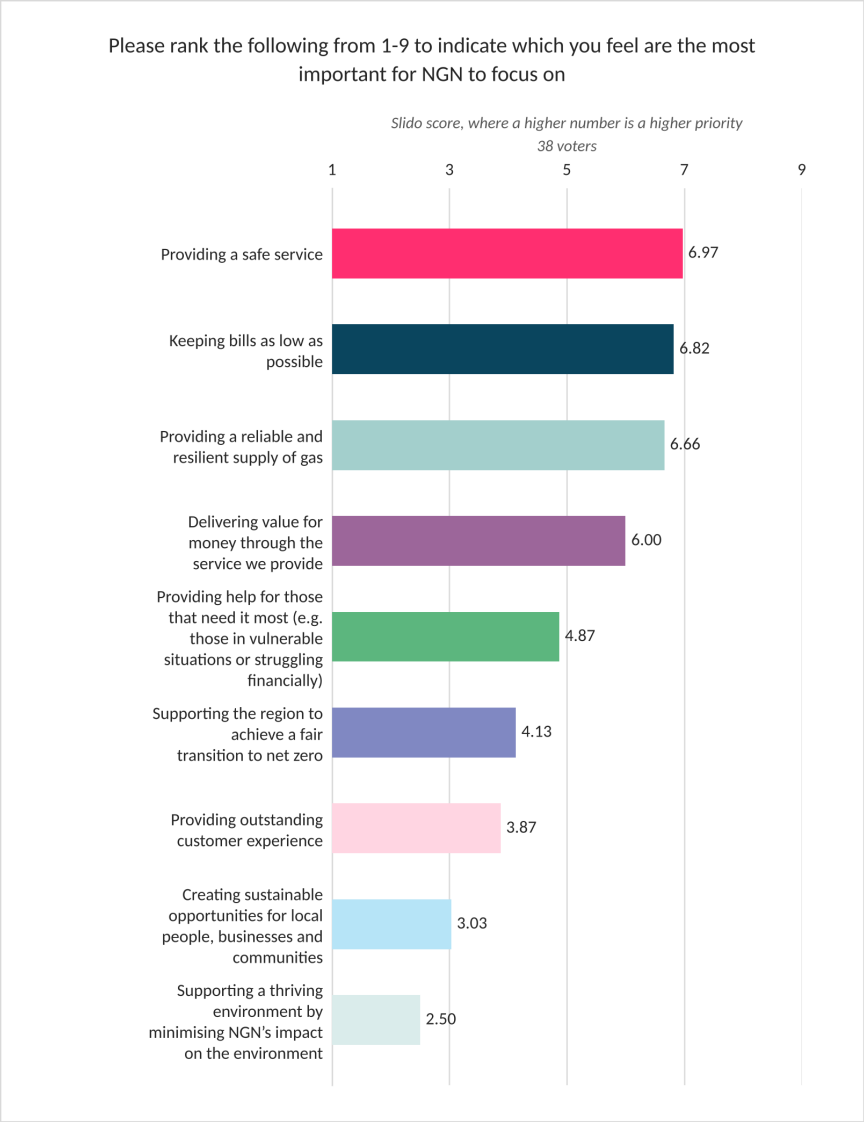
“Prioritise colleague safety and wellbeing” ranked third (4.25) and “Enhance access to opportunities and fair jobs” fourth (3.88), with the remaining commitments scoring similarly to these.



The second vote sought to understand stakeholders' priorities on nine areas of NGN's business.

The first four priorities were significantly higher-ranked: "Providing a safe service" ranked highest (6.97), followed by "Keeping bills as low as possible" (6.82), "Providing a reliable and resilient supply of gas" (6.66) and "Delivering value for money through the service we provide" (6.00).

There was then a noticeable gap before the next priority, "Providing help for those that need it most" (4.87).



PANEL Q&A

The event closed with a panel Q&A compered by James Garland of EQ Communications, with Ioan Williams (Citizens Advice), Olivia Porteous (Business in the Community), Tim Myatt (Yorkshire Water), Brian Matthews (NGN's ISG) and Greg Dodd (NGN).

Q: What could NGN do to get more biomethane injections into its network? How are the cost barriers being addressed? If you could get these biomethane injections working, it would help the farming community, would reduce emissions and would improve resilience.

"It's a really big priority for us. We've formed a Green Gas Taskforce with other GDNs and industry partners through the Future Energy Networks in order to focus on how we maximise the levels of injections into the grid at both national and regional levels. We're also pushing the government hard on making incentives available for biomethane producers, which we view as essential, as we want to double the amount in the network. While we do not produce biomethane ourselves, we do have a £20 million pot to facilitate biomethane connections. This can support projects such as reinforcement works to enable capacity for bringing green gas onto the grid or providing connections for biomethane producers. This drive will bring down emissions, and we think that it will act as a holistic Net Zero low-cost solution paired with hybrid heat pumps." Greg Dodd, NGN

Q: I was aware of the £20 million support fund for biomethane injections. It's good that NGN is trying to double this biomethane rate, but that ambition is far behind Europe, where green biomethane makes up 5% of the gas mix. I'm here today representing Technica and we would be very keen to help you to further your agenda.

"We would be happy to work with your organisation on this too. Another issue that I did not address is the availability of feedstock. We've done some work on how or if we might be able to coordinate that and on the difference between individual large-scale injection plants and smaller ones on different points along the network. That's also something that we're looking at from an affordability point of view." Greg Dodd, NGN

Q: We've discussed many challenges today, such as social and environmental, many of which cannot be solved by a single organisation. Where do you see the greatest opportunity for utilities, charities, community organisations and businesses to work together more effectively?

"There are three particular areas that come to mind. On the planning side, you have the Regional Energy Strategic Plans as a prime example, which is bringing in new voices who are not normally involved in this kind of process. Given the complexity of newer energy systems, we believe that it is important that support is provided to create clear routes for communities to provide that input and create solutions that will help everyone. We have also long advocated for a multi-sector PSR and, while progress has been good, we want more utilities, local authorities and charities to share referrals and create a real single touchpoint for vulnerable people. Finally, collaboration will be needed to minimise disruption as far as

possible for all customers on streetworks, by coordinating with other utilities on doing multiple projects in a single trench." Ioan Williams, Citizens Advice

"We have taken steps towards a multi-sector PSR, but there is definitely more work to do. Lots of utilities have their own individual registers, but we have recognised that we are likely not the only organisation to which a vulnerable customer owes money, and that a debt charity would actually be their main support point. Therefore, we have created partnerships with these charities and have viewed these partnerships as a big opportunity to shift how we support these customers towards something more holistic which centres customer needs and experiences, rather than regulatory targets. From an operational perspective, there is still a lot to be done on streetworks to reduce disruption and increase efficiencies. Companies are pursuing these efficiencies themselves, but they are being incentivised by lane rental charges, so that's a direction that we're heading in." Tim Myatt, Yorkshire Water

Q: Building on that, given Olivia's role at BITC, what are the biggest benefits that can be delivered for customers and communities through greater collaboration?

"At BITC we take a place-based approach. We have a pride of place model: we look at local and regional challenges, bringing the key people together to really understand the place and work with the people on the ground. Then we use the power of public, private and third sector organisations to respond to that. One key benefit is the removal of duplication. That builds trust through the community. A scattergun approach can only have so much impact. But we also build trust through working with community groups and customers. They've got the networks but they don't have the resource and funding they might need to make the impact they want to have. The best approach is looking to those individuals you want to impact and ensuring you can build trust with them." Olivia Porteous, BITC

Q: If you could ask organisations like NGN if they could only do one thing to improve things for customers, what would it be?

"ISG's recommendation would be focusing on helping vulnerable people, identifying them and doing what we can either directly with NGN through their different funding schemes like vulnerability and carbon monoxide schemes we have in place but also passing them on to people like Citizens Advice, the water companies, where a specific need has been identified. NGN have an opportunity that very few people have to get into people's houses. Taking advantage of that opportunity to identify risk and push people in the direction they need to be pushed, it would be really good to see that grow in all areas. That's where the ISG would be in GD3." Brian Matthews, ISG

"I'm going to be cheeky and package one big thing. I think it's very well-known this could be the last steady state price control for the gas grid. As the domestic connections start to fall, NGN need to work with us to ensure vulnerable people are supported through that process and that it's as fair and pain free as possible. We want to ensure fairness is embedded in it. This issue is more salient than ever. Ofgem yesterday released a gas connections report and today DESNZ asked for transparency regarding cost

recovery. We need to ensure it's as fair as possible to protect people from those price hikes." Ioan Williams, Citizens Advice

"I'm also going to be cheeky as well and wrap several things into one. For me it is investing in that long term resilience, investing in the places NGN operate. That can be everything from the energy transition, really everything we've covered today wrapped into that one point. The point Brian made around having that opportunity to be in people's homes is a great asset as well. The insight NGN can get from that role on the ground in communities is something they can share with other utilities and organisations to highlight those issues as well." Olivia Porteous, BITC

"I was going to say I mentioned earlier that at Yorkshire Water we're trying to put Yorkshire first and trying to make sure that we're supporting that through our regulated activities and the targets we need to meet. It's taking those place-based plans that already have stakeholder buy in to ensure that we have what we need and are supporting that. I suppose it's putting the northern or the Yorkshire plans as the primary aim and putting those first. Our ambitions should be supporting those regional ambitions." Tim Myatt, Yorkshire Water

Q: What has changed in terms of customer expectations?

"They expect accountability, when we go through a planning process, we're obligated to take account of their needs and we need to reflect those in our business plan and then be accountable. That's what Brian and the ISG help facilitate. They expect instant gratification. When something goes wrong, they want it fixed. The pressure on response times and what we need to provide is increasing. Five years ago, if your internet goes down, it wasn't too much of a problem. Now if it goes down it's a disaster and people expect instant resolution. As we do move from steady state to the different steady state, those expectations will become greater. The challenge we have is how we move everybody at the same rate to that. Some move faster than others and the ones that are left behind are the least able to pay." Greg Dodd, NGN

"It was interesting to remember chatting to Jenny Wilkinson (Head of Customer and Stakeholder Strategy at NGN) who organised this session about trust and accountability. She phrased it as a 'low trust and high expectation world'. As we work through the price control period over the next 5 years, all we can do is hold them to account over expectations. But the big bit is this vulnerability funding. We'll be really interested to see how the projects are funded, it's easy to see how many, how many households are better off as a result, that's one of the areas from an accountability point of view we're going to be focusing a lot on. Making houses warmer, making them less damp, it's all really important. A lot of people, particularly in the types of homes that are in the North East will find it difficult. It's hard to decarbonise a 1930s terraced street." Brian Matthews, ISG

APPENDIX 1: ATTENDEE LIST

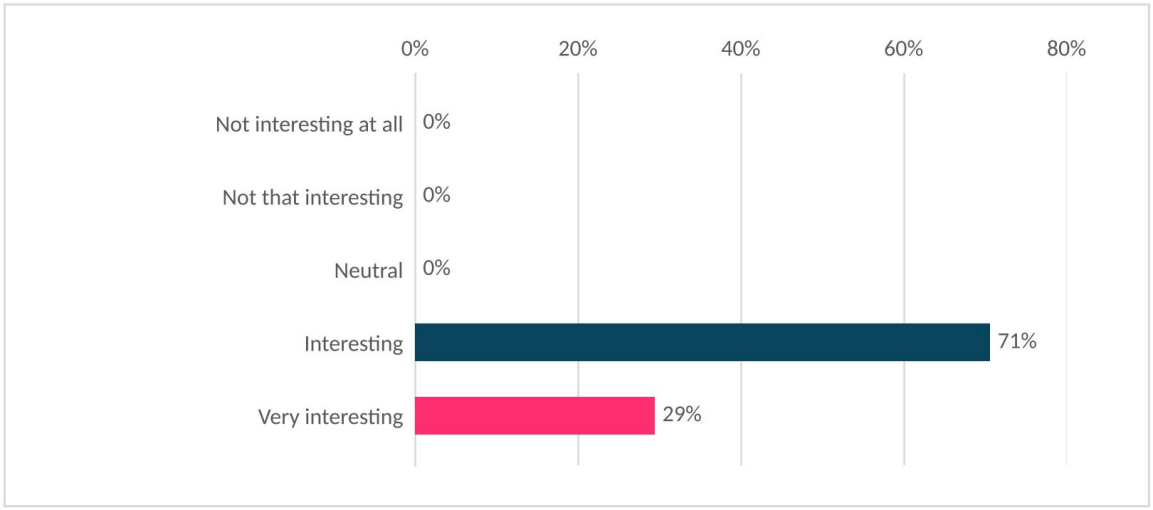
A total of 71 stakeholders attended the workshop, representing 46 organisations. The organisations represented are shown below:

Beamex
BFY Group
Business in the Community
Calisen
Carents
Citizens Advice
Citizens Advice Northumberland
CO-Gas Safety
Communitas Energy CIC
Community Action Northumberland
Create Clarity
Crofter Consulting
Darke Engineering
Decisio
DNV
Energy & Utilities Alliance
Explain Market Research
Frazer-Nash Consultancy
Gas Safe Charity (Think CO Programme)
Glacier Energy
Groundwork Yorkshire
Hispec
LCP Delta
Local Services 2 You
National Energy System Operator
North East and Yorkshire Net Zero Hub
Northern Cancer Voices
Northern Powergrid
Northumbrian Water Group
Persimmon Homes (Lancashire)
Pipeline Technology (Pipetech)
Radius Systems
Rayden Engineering
Score Group
Sembcorp Utilities UK
Simply Learning
SP Electricity North West
Steve Vick International
Technica
Teledyne Gas Measurement Instruments
TG Pipelines
TUSC (The Utility Solutions Company)
ULC Technologies
Wakefield Council
York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority
Yorkshire Water

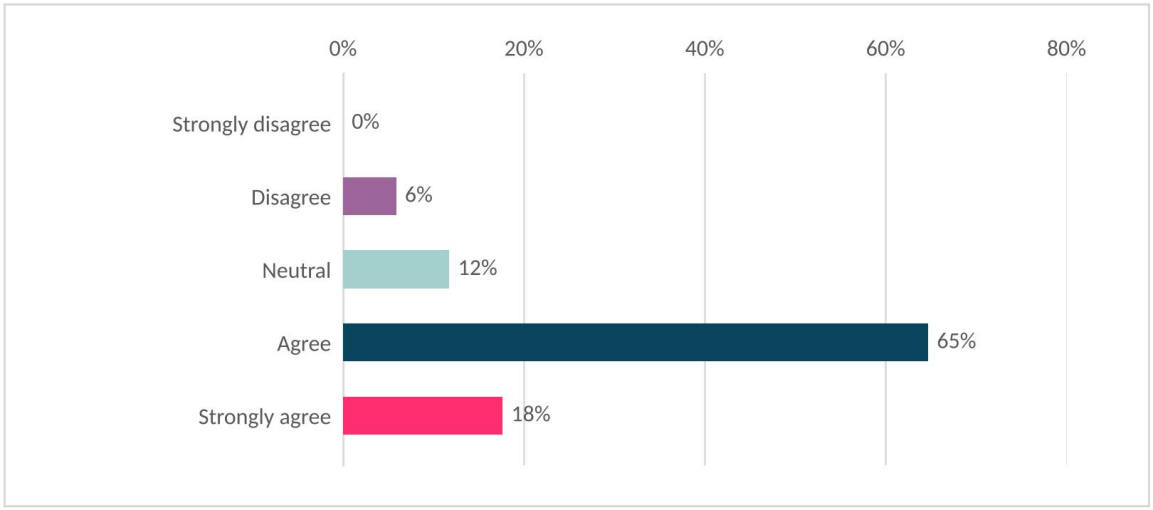
APPENDIX 2: WORKSHOP FEEDBACK

After the workshop, stakeholders were asked to complete a short feedback form. Some of the key findings are shown below.

1. Overall, did you find this workshop to be:



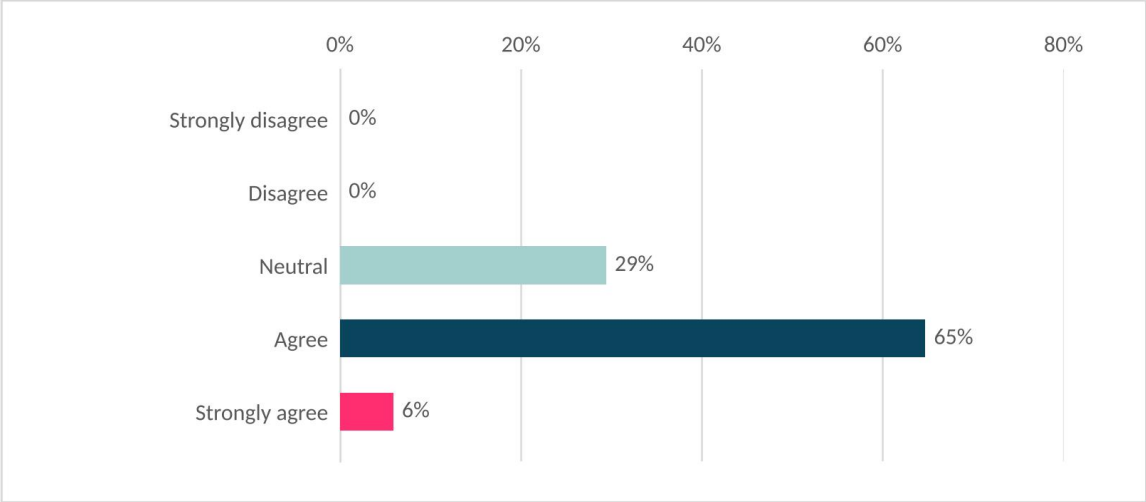
2. Did you feel that you had the opportunity to make your points and ask questions?



Comments:

- "Open forum, plenty of chances to speak. Loved the breakout sessions with smaller groups to encourage more people to speak."

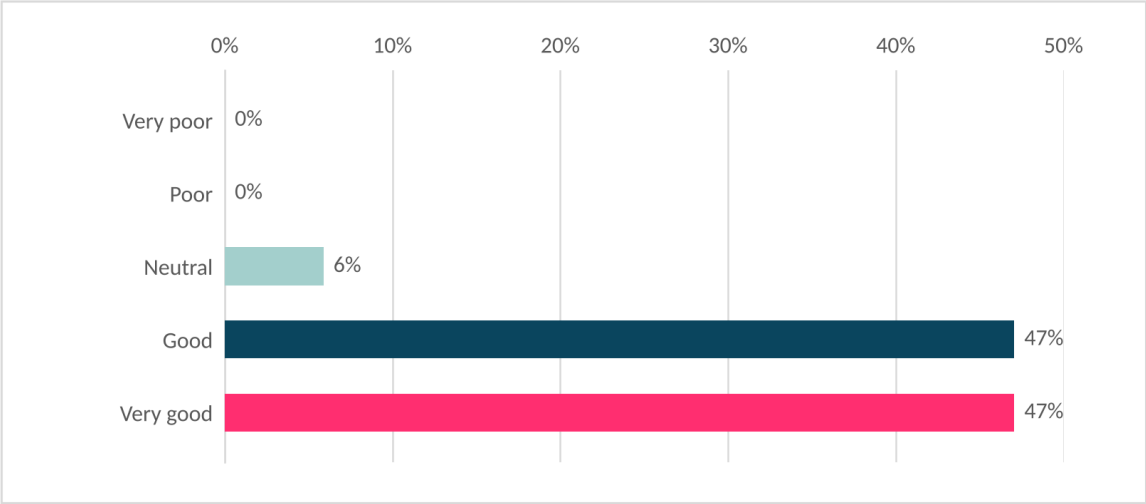
3. Did we cover the right topics for you on the day?



Comments:

- "Yes, very comprehensive, thanks."

4. What did you think of the way the workshop was chaired by your facilitator?



Comments:

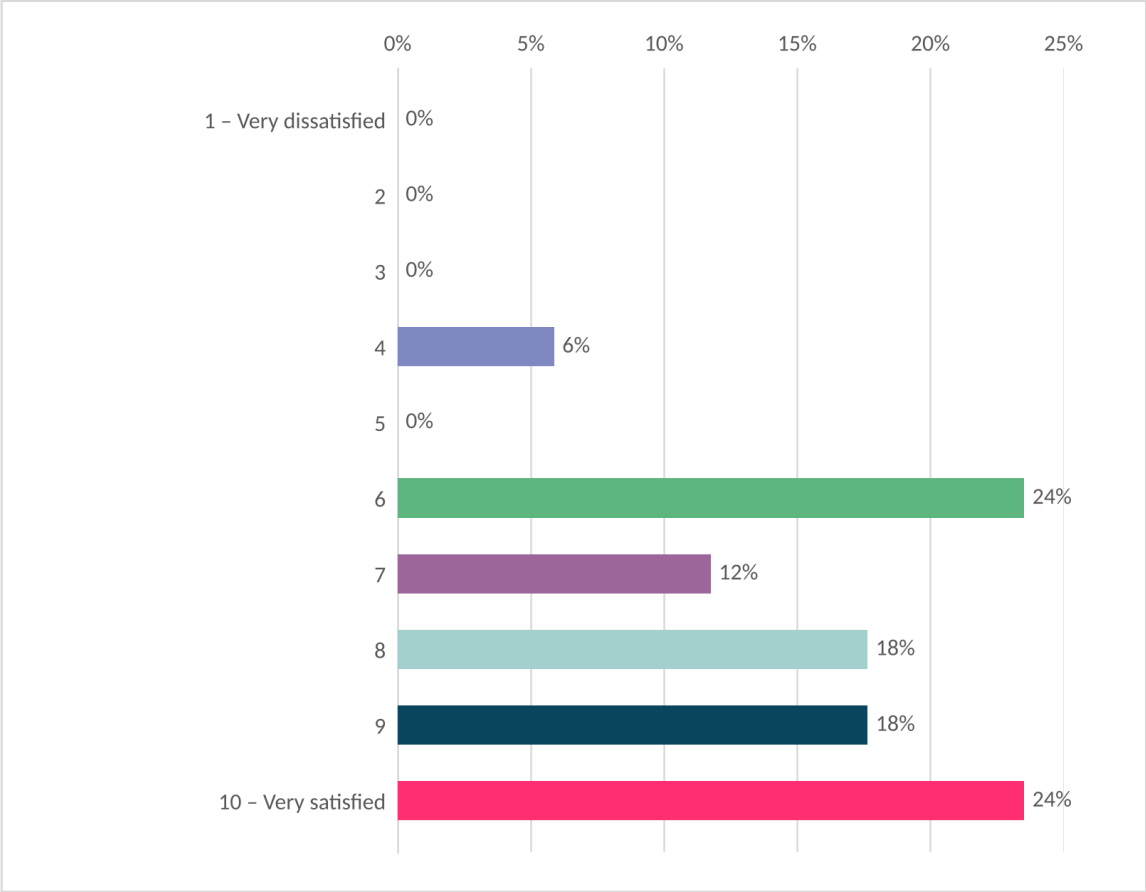
- "The workshop was chaired well."

5. Do you have any other comments on the session?

- "That type of session should be repeated more frequently!"
- "Very interesting to hear from other NGN stakeholders too."
- "Always good to be with NGN and their love of the North."
- "There were a lot of points to try and cover in the breakout session. The mix of people in those sessions was really good."

- “Online is always hard. I appreciate not everyone can travel, but it would have been great to do it in person.”

6. Thinking of yourself as a stakeholder of NGN, how satisfied are you with the relationship that you have with it on a scale of 1–10, where 1 is very dissatisfied and 10 is very satisfied?



Average score: 7.82 out of 10, where 10 indicates ‘very satisfied’

7. What topics or areas would you like to engage with NGN on in the future?

- “Biofuel; the gas network as power for data centres, and how NGN intends to balance the latter with how intensively data centres drain resources and pose challenges to developing a sustainable network.”
- “Specifics on how the charities are able to support vulnerable customers, and signposting that can be filtered down to operational staff.”
- “Project development under both VCMA and innovation funding to progress NGN’s priorities.”
- “News on what was VCMA funding, please? The voluntary sector is keen to continue to flex to address your and your customers’ needs.”
- “Education and apprenticeship collaborations, and further targeted VCMA programmes for families with children.”
- “Delivery efficiency and long-term partnerships.”

- “AI and safety.”
- “Community engagement.”
- “Energy affordability.”
- “Future projects.”
- “CO.”

EQ Communications Ltd.
The Dock, Tobacco Quay,
London, E1W 2SF

020 3617 6359
info@eqcommunications.co.uk
eqcommunications.co.uk