

NEWS RELEASE

29th November 2013

£11.5m 'Smart Street' trial for North West power network

The region's power operator, Electricity North West, is set to launch a new pioneering trial to help meet the future demand in electricity without the need to build costly new infrastructure.

The trial, which has secured £11.5m funding, including £9m from the government's energy regulator, Ofgem, will help make sure that customers in the North West continue to get the power they need as efficiently as possible.

As the demand for electricity is set to double by 2050, the Smart Street trial aims to test innovative technologies to ensure the network is fully prepared for the increase in solar panels, electric vehicles and heat pumps. It will lead to lower bills for customers by helping appliances run more efficiently.

Steve Johnson, CEO of Electricity North West, said: "The Smart Street trial will allow us to explore new cutting edge technologies and get more from our existing network ensuring customers continue to get the power they need, without us having to invest in new expensive infrastructure. And by using technology to regulate voltage, regardless of where power is being added or taken from the network, customers could see lower bills."

It's estimated that the cost of upgrading the UK electricity network by building more infrastructure to meet future demand could be as much as £1.8 billion by 2025 in the North West alone and £15 billion across Great Britain – the equivalent of almost £600 for every household.

Electricity North West will work on the project with partners including Siemens, TNEI and the University of Manchester.

Siemens quote

ENDS

Editors Notes:

Electricity North West owns, operates and maintains the North West's electricity distribution network, connecting 2.4 million properties, and more than 5 million people in the region to the National Grid.

Partners

The 'Smart Street' trial is a joint scheme by Electricity North West and its partners, Siemens, Kelvatek, TNEI, The University of Manchester, Queen's University Belfast, Impact Research and the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research.

Interviews with Electricity North West spokespeople are also available on request from the Press Office.

For further press information, please contact: Nicole Kenny or Jonny Morgan on 0844 209 1957 or email PressOffice@enwl.co.uk

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