1613 ENWL CoolDown	Depth Discussion Guide 04/12/2024	Chris Ralph Alice Broomhall Emma Gray

2 x 90 minute focus groups (one with air con users, one with air con considerers). Recruit 8 for 6
6 x 45 minute depth interviews with vulnerable consumers (minimum 3 users)

AREA OF DISCUSSION	TIME STAMP
1. Introductions	2 mins
2. Current cooling behaviour	3 mins
3. Air con usage / consideration	10 mins
4. Impact of air con on the electricity network	5 mins
5. Commercial arrangement evaluation	20 minutes
6. Wrap up	5 minutes

Introductions (2 minutes):

- Introduce yourself.
- Explain that the research is being conducted on behalf of Electricity North West who may, or may not run the electricity network in their area. If they are not an ENWL customer, explain that they will have a different network operator that performs the same role for their region
- Explain the purpose of the discussion: Part of a wider programme of research into how the electricity network will manage increased demand on the network as more people use air conditioning in their homes
- Confidentiality is guaranteed, with no right/wrong answers**.**
- Explain audio and video recording.
- Any questions?
- Please introduce yourself: Where do you live? Who do you live with? What type of building do you live in?

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Current Cooling behaviour (3 minutes):

- How does hot weather affect you and your family?
- How do you manage at home when it is really hot? What methods do you use to cool down?
    - Daytime
    - Nighttime
- Do you feel that these current methods work well?
    - What are the pros and cons?
    - How the current methods be improved?
- Where do you get ideas for how to stay cool in hot weather?
    - Online research, word of mouth, press articles, medical advice etc

AIR CON USERS ONLY: Air con usage (10 minutes):

- For how long have you had air con?
- Why did you choose to have air con?
    - And what was the single most important reason / benefit?
- What type of air con do you have?
    - Fixed vs portable vs reverse heat pump with outlets
    - Why did you choose this?
    - Which room/s do you have air con in?
- Tell me about how you set your thermostat and control your air con
    - Thermostat temperature – does this vary by time of day / outside air temperature?
    - Do you use a timer? What schedule? Does this very by day?
    - How long do you tend to keep your air con on for?
        - Quick strong blast vs keep it on for longer controlled by thermostat / timer
        - How long do you turn it on for in hours / minutes day vs night?
- How do use your air con at night?
    - Timer controlled? For how long?
    - Leave on all night and control with thermostat? What temperature at what times?
    - Usage / thermostat temperature at bedtime vs sleeping time vs waking up time
- Do you have any concerns about the impact of your air con use on the environment?

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  - Why / why not?
- Do you have any concerns about the cost of electricity for your air con?
  - Why / why not?

AIR CON CONSIDERERS ONLY: Air con planned usage (10 minutes):

- You said you were planning to get air con in the next couple of years. Tell me about why you have decided this?
- Have you done any research or planning yet?
  - When are you planning to buy aircon?
  - Where will you look for research? (specialist websites, general web search, recommendations, reviews, discounts etc)
- How will you decide what type and what model to buy?
  - What will be most important to your decision? E.g. cost, reliability, performance etc
- Which room/rooms are you planning to get air con in?
  - Why this / these rooms?
- When do you think you will use your air con?
  - Times of year / times of day or night
- Do you have any concerns about the impact of air con use on the environment?
  - Why / why not?
  - Do you think this impact will change in the future?
- Do you have any concerns about the cost of electricity for air con?
  - Why / why not?
  - Do you think this impact will change in the future?

Impact of air con on the electricity network (5 minutes):

READ OUT:

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In the future, it is predicted that more homes will in the UK will have air conditioning due to environmental reasons such as climate change. This will increase the demand for electricity during hot weather.

The electricity network operators will need to manage this extra demand for electricity to ensure households have the electricity they want. The network operators may need YOU to make adjustments to the amount of power you use for air con and the times during which you run your air con to make sure that all households energy needs are met. In exchange, you will receive a financial incentive depending on how much you turn down or shift your air con consumption when requested.

To make small changes to your air conditioning power usage, you would need to opt-in to this service. This would not happen without your permission.

- What do you think about this?
- Do you think it is acceptable that people should be asked to change the way they use electricity to help the electricity network manage demand?
    - Why / why not?
- What would make you more amenable to changing the way you use electricity during hot weather? What could the electricity companies do to encourage you to use less electricity for air con at peak times?
    - Probe for: financial incentives e.g. rebate vs 'for the greater good' / for the environment reasons

Commercial arrangement evaluation (20 minutes):

READ OUT:

- We are researching a number of different ways that households, businesses and the electricity companies can work together to ensure there's enough electricity for those that need it for air con on hot days in the summer.
- I'd like to ask you about two financial incentives: Rebates and Tariffs.

CHANGE ORDER OR TARIFF AND REBATE ACROSS RESPONDENTS

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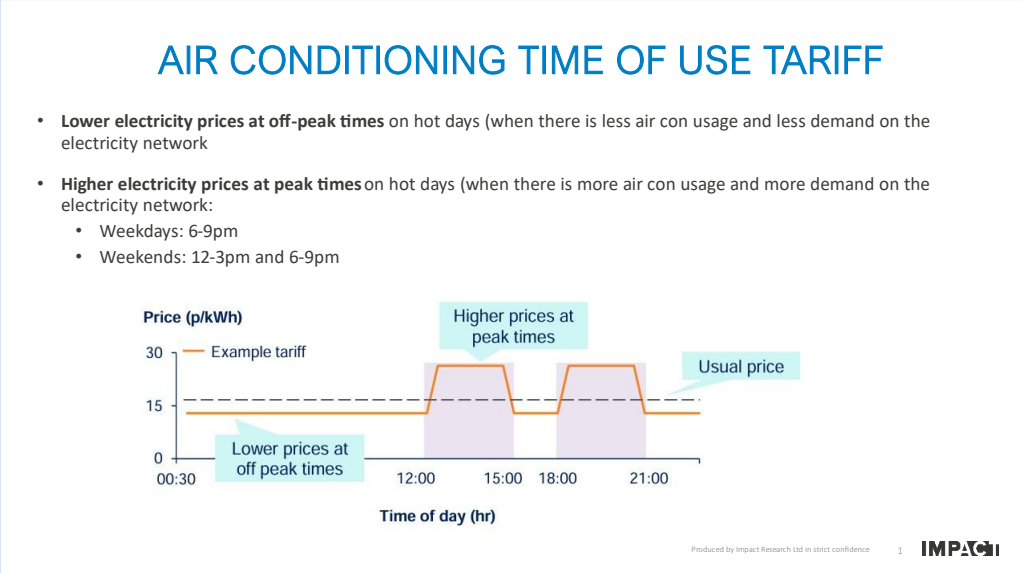
SHOW TARIFF SLIDE:



- **Moderator info – use if needed:** Currently, off-peak energy tariffs mean it is cheaper for people to use electricity during the afternoon, from 12-3pm (OVO) or 1-4pm (Octopus / EDF). However, this tends to be the hottest part of the day and, in the future, more and more people will want to put their air con on during this time. This could cause a strain on the electricity network.
- The electricity networks are looking at other type of tariffs that would encourage people not to put their air con on so strongly at peak times.

- Do you understand this? Any questions?
- How appealing is this tariff to you?
- Would you sign up to a time-of-use tariff and actively shift your air con usage to off-peak times to benefit from lower prices?
    - Note that this may mean you run your air con less/turn off your air con during the hottest time of the day
- Is there any other information you would like to know to help make a decision?
- What is the maximum time you would be willing to reduce your air con use on a hot day to help the network?
    - What would influence this? E.g. consecutive days of a heatwave, extreme temperature, illness etc
- What would make you more or less likely to sign up for a tariff like this?

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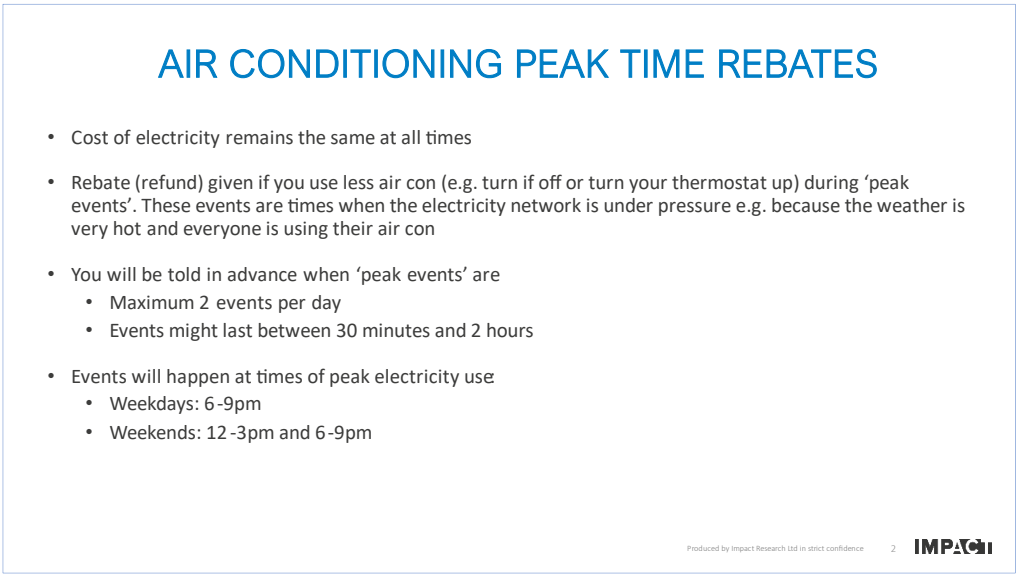
- How would you trade off cost savings vs the inconvenience of not using your air con as much as you might like?
    - Are there any changes or additions you would want to make this easier for you?
- What is the maximum number of variable price windows in the tariff structure you would accept before it becomes too confusing for you to follow/adhere to?
    - How low would you want the off-peak energy cost to be?
    - How high would you accept the peak energy cost to be?
- How would you remember to use less electricity for cooling at peak times?
    - Smart meter data? Air con timer settings? Note on the fridge? Would you want notifications from your electricity company?
- How would you deliver flexibility to the network? Would you turn off your A/C during the peak times and turn it back on at off peak times or would you turn up/down your thermostat?

SHOW REBATE SLIDE:



- How appealing is this rebate scheme to you? Do you think you would sign up for it?
- Is there any other information you would like to know to help make a decision?
- What is the maximum event duration (time you would be willing to reduce your air con use on a hot day to help the network) you would find acceptable?

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  - What would influence this? E.g. consecutive days of a heatwave, extreme temperature, illness etc
- What is the maximum number of events you would feel was acceptable in a week during the summer?
- How much notice would you want to get of a peak time event?
  - Morning of the event vs a few hours ahead vs days in advance vs weeks in advance
- How would you like to be notified of an event?
  - Email, app notification, letter, SMS etc
  - What information would you expect to receive?
    - E.g. amount that will be paid, time you would need to reduce your usage from and to, amount that you need to turn your thermostat up by etc
- What would make you more or less likely to sign up for a scheme like this?
  - Cost savings vs inconvenience, too many events etc
- What is the minimum rebate level that would make you participate?
  - **Prompt after they've given an answer:** Does £1 rebate per kWh appeal to you?
  - **Moderator info – use if needed:** (Average cost of energy in the UK is around 24p per kWh plus 40p per kWh daily standing charge – data from Octopus website)
  - How much do you think this would save you?
- How would you deliver flexibility to the network? Would you turn off your A/C during the peak event times and turn it back on at off peak times or would you turn up/down your thermostat?

Wrap up (5 minutes):

- Now you have seen both the tariff and the rebate scheme ideas, which (if any) would you be more likely to sign up for?
  - Why is that?
  - Would you sign up for both?
- What would make you more likely to sign up?
- What would make you less likely to sign up?

Thank you, that is the end of the interview. Is there anything else you would like to add?

Thank and close.

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