



Department for  
Energy Security  
& Net Zero

# Act now on Transitional Regional Energy Strategic Plans

## Enabling network investment



*Publication 1 from the Ready for RESP series*

Programme delivered by

**CATAPULT**  
Energy Systems



The creation of Regional Energy Strategic Plans means **local needs and priorities will directly influence how energy networks are developed**, resulting in a more democratic, low carbon, energy system.

**Local Authorities should act now** to ensure their strategic priorities are submitted to the NESO so they can inform the transitional Regional Energy Strategic Plan.

# The Ready for RESP Programme

The Catapult has been awarded the contract to deliver a programme of work called Ready for RESP. The programme will help ensure all English regions—regardless of where they are starting from in energy planning—have the tools, data, and expertise needed to shape future energy investment and decarbonisation strategies. It has been designed to support local authorities and regional partners to understand how the RESP process can benefit them and what they should do to make the most of this opportunity.

This guide, focusing on the transitional RESP, is the first in a series aimed to help local authorities navigate this new policy, and ensure they benefit from spending time engaging and providing input.

## About Energy Systems Catapult

Energy Systems Catapult is an independent, non-for-profit innovation centre established by Innovate UK to accelerate Net Zero energy innovation. The Catapult provides expert support to innovators, local authorities, and policymakers to design, test and scale low-carbon solutions across the UK energy system.

## About Net Zero Hubs

There are five Net Zero Hubs in England, which provide free strategic and technical support to local authorities and public sector bodies to develop and deliver decarbonisation projects.

Funded by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ), the Hubs help turn local Net Zero ambitions into investable projects by offering expertise in project development, funding, and stakeholder engagement.

# One page takeaway

## What is a Transitional Regional Energy Strategic Plan (tRESP)?

Regional Energy Strategic Plans (RESPs) will help ensure that local areas get the energy infrastructure they need to meet local net zero and growth ambitions, and help communities to access reliable, clean and affordable energy.

tRESP outputs provide an opportunity for local and regional priorities to be considered in the next price control period for network investment. This will demonstrate the benefits that a whole system approach to regional and local energy planning can bring in our path to net zero.

Outputs, due early 2026, will include regional pathways and specific strategic investments for 11 regions and nations.

## Why is this important for me?

Network upgrades can be directed by the needs of the local area, ensuring your priorities are considered.

This will help improve the certainty of projects going ahead, therefore providing a more attractive investment opportunity.

Resulting in the accelerated development of projects that are needed for economic growth, development and decarbonisation.

## What can I do as a Local Authority member?

- Join your [regional RESP forum](#)
- Develop your understanding of the RESP process and the role of a local authority within it – [useful resources linked here](#)
- Familiarise yourself with the [Request for Information](#) template from NESO
- Identify relevant colleagues and create internal comms/governance structure to ensure coordinated and comprehensive input and feedback
- Define your economic development priorities for your area and prioritise projects and [strategic investment priorities](#)
- Submit strategic investment priorities to [NESO by 25<sup>th</sup> July](#)
- If your organisation is unable to meet this 25<sup>th</sup> July deadline, please contact your [RESP regional team](#)
- Consider these other [suitable actions you can take](#) to prepare

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Ready for **RESP**

# 1. Summary

*What is tRESP, how can it help me, what should I do and when do I need to do it?*

# What is a Transitional Regional Energy Strategic Plan?

Ready for **RESP**

The Transitional Regional Energy Strategic Plan (tRESP) is the first formal output of a new strategic planning process for energy infrastructure in England, Scotland and Wales.

The tRESP is being developed by the National Energy System Operator (NESO) to align regional energy needs with national investment priorities.

The tRESP will:

- Provide an initial view of regional energy conditions and priorities.
- Include a modelled single short term (10 years) energy pathway, to guide local priorities in shaping their infrastructure plans and aligning with national decarbonisation ambitions.
- Identify areas of strategic investment needs to inform electricity and gas network upgrades.

It is designed to support the next electricity distribution price control period by informing Distribution Network Operators' (DNO) business plans

The tRESP is expected to be released in quarter one of 2026, with preparation and engagement beginning in Summer 2025

The tRESP will represent the first step in a longer-term process, laying the groundwork for the enduring RESP.



**NESO**  
National Energy  
System Operator

More details on RESP, strategic planning and the regional forums are available on NESOs websites [here](#) and [here](#)

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# Why is it important for me?

For local authorities to deliver their strategic priorities – whether that's housing developments, industrial growth, renewable generation and/or decarbonisation a viable grid connection is vital, and often a blocker.

To have any chance of delivering Clean Power 2030 ambition; network upgrades need to be quick, and targeted.

The Regional Energy Strategic Plan (RESP) is a new strategic planning framework to ensure network investment is made when and where it is needed, to unlock a faster and better planned energy transition which aligns with spatial planning policy and at the lowest cost to consumers.

It is also about ensuring energy planning considers all energy – electricity, gas and hydrogen, and the whole energy system.

The RESP team need data and inputs from local leaders to ensure both democratic legitimacy and that the RESP is shaped by a place-based understanding.



# What will the tRESP provide and how will it help me?

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## Regional Energy Context

The tRESP output will include a section on Regional Context. This will capture the unique energy landscape, priorities, and ambitions of each region. It is informed by engagement with stakeholders and local authorities and draws on local plans and datasets.

Local Authorities can use this report to ensure priorities and ambitions are reflected at the regional level

## Modelled Short- and Long-Term Pathways

Spatial models of future energy supply and demand, including a short-term pathway detailing interventions over the next 10 years, and long-term pathways extending to at least 2050 will be created.

Local Authorities can refer to these pathways to understand future energy needs and constraints, inform local energy plans, and guide infrastructure investments

## Spatial Context Analysis

Geospatial mapping of supply and demand projections against current and future network capacity. The output provides an accessible, visual representation of where energy interventions are likely to be needed.

Local Authorities may use these maps to help visualise priorities and developments

## A Specification of Strategic Investment Needs

A clear identification of areas within the region that require investment in energy infrastructure.

Local Authorities can use these outputs to give certainty to local projects, and advocate for investment in their area

# What should I do?

This is your opportunity to influence the key strategic investment priorities in your area and make the case for network upgrades to ensure they can be delivered.

The Request for Information to capture strategic priorities should have been sent to a senior member of your authority from NESO. This will feed into the tRESP and inform network investment planning for period 2028-2033 (RIIO-ED3).

[Regional RESP teams](#) are available to support you.

## Recommended actions

### Within your Local Authority

- Your CEO or Director will have been sent the RFI.
- Consider setting up internal governance and communication channels to ensure coordinated and comprehensive input and feedback to NESO.
- Consider how information you and your team have may be relevant, and collate the relevant documents.
- Review current plans and strategies to extract relevant information to determine what are the key strategic investments and what evidence is available.

### Engage with NESO RESP team

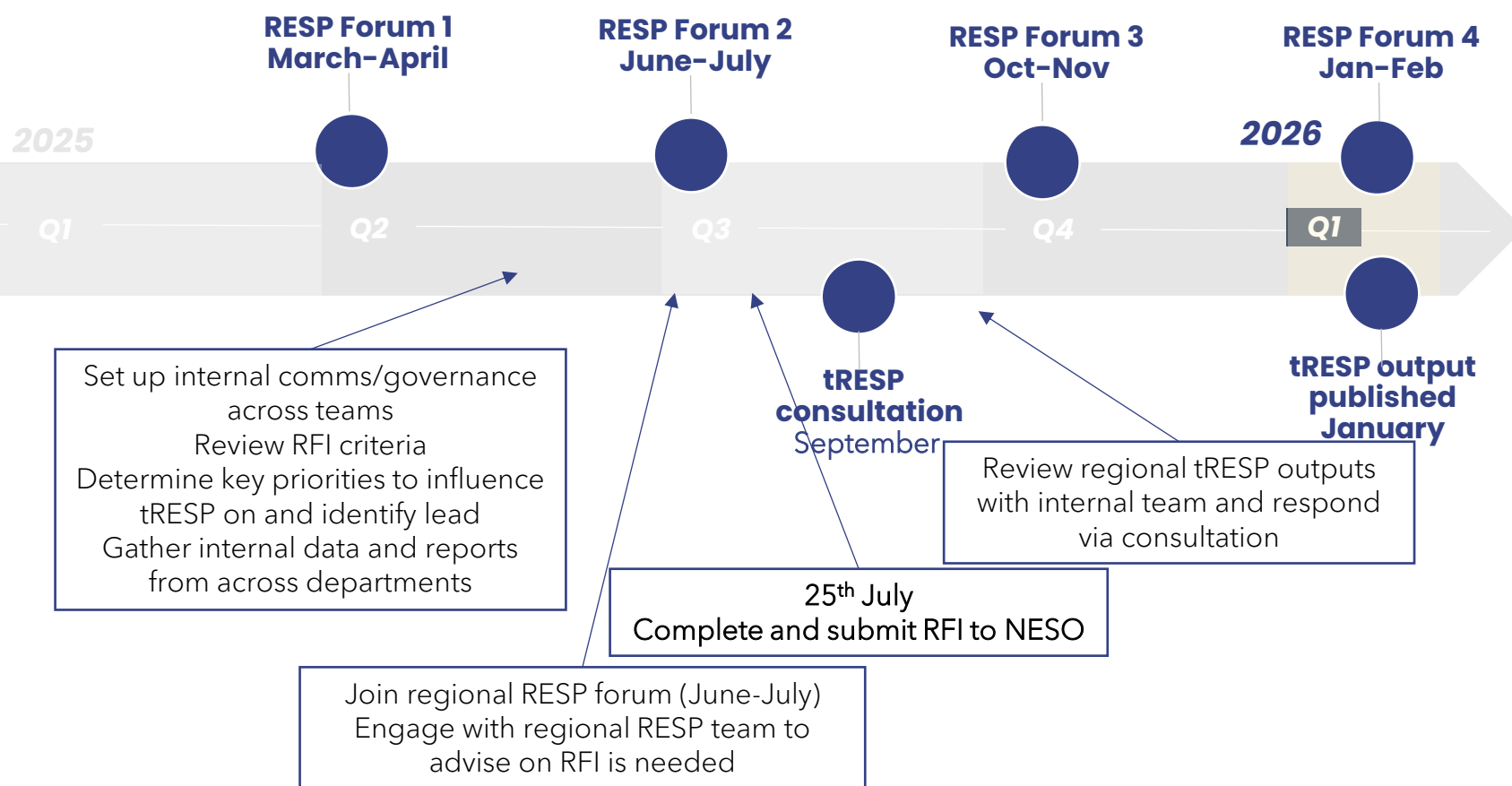
- [Regional teams](#) are available to explain and answer questions about the RFI.
- [Join your regional RESP forum.](#)
- Find out more [here](#).

### Engage with local stakeholders

- Your Distribution Network Operator (DNO), large industry, and commercial sites have been asked to submit responses. To help identify which areas to prioritise, it is worth understanding what is already being submitted by others.
- Find your DNO contacts and resources [here](#).

# When should I do it

## Transitional RESP



## Key dates

- 25<sup>th</sup> July 2025 – submit Request for Information (RFI) to NESO
- September 2025 – public consultation on tRESP outputs
- Early 2026 – tRESP will be published

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## 2. Strategic Investment Need

By 'strategic investment need' NESO are identifying areas for investment into the network in advance of certain need - and that which has value across social, economic and environmental factors, and is necessary to the delivery of key priorities across the regions and nations of Great Britain.

This process looks to drive additional investment into the electricity network, help to accelerate delivery of projects, and mitigate prolonged connection timelines.

# Prioritising RFI submissions

NESO has recently issued the Request for Information (RFI) to Local Authorities, DNOs, GDNs and other relevant stakeholders to capture project details. The RFI is a spreadsheet to be completed by stakeholders, and the RESP regional teams are available to help explain and respond to queries.

Project examples could include motorway service areas, sustainable aviation fuel manufacture, data centres, freeports, industrial clusters, AI growth zones

If something is submitted and not deemed a regional strategic investment, it may become part of an 'in development register' for future assessments. There will be future opportunities to submit further projects to this in future.

The following documents and underlying data are likely to contain relevant evidence. NESO have suggested key decision documents should be made a priority.

## Local Authority Key Decision documents

- Cabinet/full council/joint committee approvals

## Energy and Climate

- Climate Action Plans
- Renewable generation feasibility assessments
- Local Area Energy Plan
- Local Power Plans – ongoing work to align these with existing reports
- Local Infrastructure Development Plans

## Housing

- Council Development Plan
- Neighbourhood Plans

## Heat Networks

- Heat network zone development plans
- Heat network feasibility studies

## Data Centres

- Data centre feasibility studies

## Economic Development and Local Growth

- Investment or Development Zone Plans
- Industrial Cluster Development Plans
- Ports and Freeport Plans
- [Local Growth Plans](#)
- Local Industrial Strategies
- Strategic Economic Plans
- Sector Growth Plans

## Transport

- Local Transport Plans
- Transport Decarbonisation Plans
- Fleet Decarbonisation Plans

## Planning

- Strategic Spatial Plans
- Major Growth Zones

# Project Examples

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NESO has not published the scale/size of projects that would be considered 'significant' to avoid limiting the scope of inputs provided. Relevant credible inputs will be considered for an 'in development register' that NESO will be developing for the enduring RESP. Further details on this will be consulted upon in the enduring RESP consultation late this year

However the following guidance has been published that the following will be considered:

- Large decarbonisation initiatives;
  - Housing developments,
  - Significant EV charging infrastructure,
  - Multi-vector coordination – such as gas/hydrogen and electricity.
- Future generation such as onshore wind.
- Projects due to be connected before 2040.
- Large load growth projects;
  - New housing developments,
  - industrial/commercial clusters.

It has been stated that the tRESP September consultation, NESO's formal process for gathering feedback on the draft transitional RESP, will exclude supply/generation/storage projects as the connections reform is not due to be completed. They still would like these projects to be submitted via the RFI however and the final tRESP output will consider and show these.

The Strategic Investment framework incorporates strategic value, certainty and matrix here indicates what is in and out of scope

Strategic value	Higher	<b>Group 1</b> In scope, direct e.g. HV investment to enable industrial decarb or housing development, clear network need and certain project cost	<b>Group 3</b> In scope, direct e.g. programme of investment to enable capacity for heat demand with significant uncertainty on when demand will increase
	Lower	<b>Group 0</b> Out of scope e.g. routine secondary network investments tracking demand growth	<b>Group 2</b> In scope, inform e.g. higher uncertainty due to dependency on another vector or long-term pathway
		Lower	Higher

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## 3. Actions you can take now

# Prioritising Economic Development

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Identifying growth zones that are likely to need new grid capacity should be a priority in the council's response, and NESOs strategic investment framework.

Delays in grid investment could hold back growth of these sites and therefore any evidence that indicates certainty of investment should be provided as part of the submission.

*You may have already provided information about your growth areas to your DNO as part of their evidence gathering for their DFES last year.*

*The DNO will also submit data to RESP about the need to expand capacity in its network*

*However plans may have matured since this time, and therefore it is still important for the local authority to submit. A separate submission for key sites might provide additional information about just how important a particular area is as evidenced through local policy and investment plans.*

*Local authorities can also provide evidence of the social impact including potential for jobs.*



# Priorities

*What are the things you want to influence?  
Based on recent policy and funding announcements the following may be high priorities for local authorities that may not be provided through DNO DFES submissions.*

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## Heat Networks

Do you have areas outside of the heat network zones that are under consideration or at early-stage development? The tRESP is incorporating heat network zones however will require input from authorities on advanced zones or potential sites outside of these, and other high priority areas for development.

## Solar and onshore wind generation

GB Energy funding has indicated there will be a scale up of solar and onshore wind. If there is a cluster of generation projects, potentially with community energy involved, it is probably worth sharing with NESO and the potential impact could result in it being classified as a strategic investment.

## Transport

[Further LEVI funding](#) has been announced for 25/26 therefore future plans for significant charging infrastructure may be of interest to NESO for tRESP.

This document is marked as confidential

## Housing and retrofit

£13.2 billion has been announced for Warm Homes programme and therefore upgrades will be made to domestic properties and social housing. If you have areas where a high density of improvements is likely to occur, should be submitted if significant impact is expected to the network.

## Affordable housing and spatial planning

Do you have strategic housing sites coming forward with known connection issues?

Authorities' housing targets have increased. If there are known locations where new developments are likely, these should be shared with NESO. The potential impact of the Future Homes Standard on the network should also be incorporated in this analysis.

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# Completing the RFI – 25<sup>th</sup> July deadline

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The RFI asks for data relating to the categories in the blue box via an excel spreadsheet. An RFI needs to be completed for each project.

NESO can provide illustrative examples, and LAs are welcomed to engage their RESP teams on questions about the RFI process. However NESO are not able to complete it on behalf of a local authority.

The process of reviewing and determining the regional strategic investment needs has not yet been made available and is currently in development.

It has been stated that the tRESP September consultation will exclude supply/generation/storage projects as the connections reform is not due to be completed.

NESO would still like these projects to be submitted via the RFI however, as these together with LA and other stakeholder RFI submissions, will be considered and shape the tRESP output early next year.

## Energy Need Detail

- This sections includes data on year of connection required, value, whether a connection application has already been made, and energy requirements

## Regional Significance

- What are the wider benefits associated with this project such as number jobs, and the alignment with current policy

## System Value

- What are the energy vectors and needs, will it be flexible, what are social, environmental and economic impacts

## Certainty

- Consenting status
- Policy stability
- Technology maturity
- Funding status

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# Actions to help complete RFI for tRESP and enduring RESP

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## Local Authority internal governance

- ✓ Identify who has received RFI and briefing document from NESO within your authority (likely to be Director/CEO).
- ✓ Prioritise activity based on potential value to LA and ensure people have time and responsibility to complete.
- ✓ Consider setting up cross department/intra-authority working group to agree on strategic investment priorities.
- ✓ Define review process for short listing priority projects to submit as each requires a separate RFI to be completed.

## Internal knowledge development and data gathering

- ✓ Familiarise yourself with the RESP process and purpose.
- ✓ Encourage others to do the same – share this guide, and [NESO materials](#).
- ✓ Identify existing data to support completing the RFI for projects relevant to your team.
- ✓ Look for external resources for future upskilling (i.e. to support ongoing future engagement with the RESP).

# Engagement actions to help complete RFI for tRESP and enduring RESP

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## NESO Engagement

- ✓ Find out the latest news from NESO and who your main contact is in your region.
- ✓ Ask for advice on completing RFI.

## DNO Engagement

- ✓ DNOs have dedicated local authority teams to support.
- ✓ They may already be submitting project information from your local area so engaging and finding this out may help prioritise what more you can add.

## General Stakeholder Engagement

- ✓ Businesses and organisations with a local or regional strategic view of investment priorities will also be asked to submit projects.
- ✓ Promoting RESP to your stakeholders such as community energy groups, academia, landowners etc may help ensure regional priorities are representative.



**Ready for RESP**

## 4. Summary and Supporting Resources

# Summary

- The tRESP has short timescales to ensure the outputs can be used to inform the next round of network investment (2028-2033).
- This represents a great opportunity for local needs and priorities to influence where network investment is used.
- It is a new policy and approach, that is integrating with other new policy developments, and therefore full details on all the stages are not yet available.
- The RESP role has been set up to develop regional plans that span across all energy vectors – electricity, gas, and hydrogen networks – as part of one integrated energy system.
- These different energy systems are currently planned separately. By moving to a joined-up whole-system approach, this will ensure investment is targeted where it's needed, and that progress towards net zero can be accelerated.
- Regional RESP teams have been created by NESO to help support local authorities to take part.

If you would like more information, feel free to reach out and get in touch with us:

[Anna.Stegman@es.catapult.org.uk](mailto:Anna.Stegman@es.catapult.org.uk)

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# Glossary of Terms

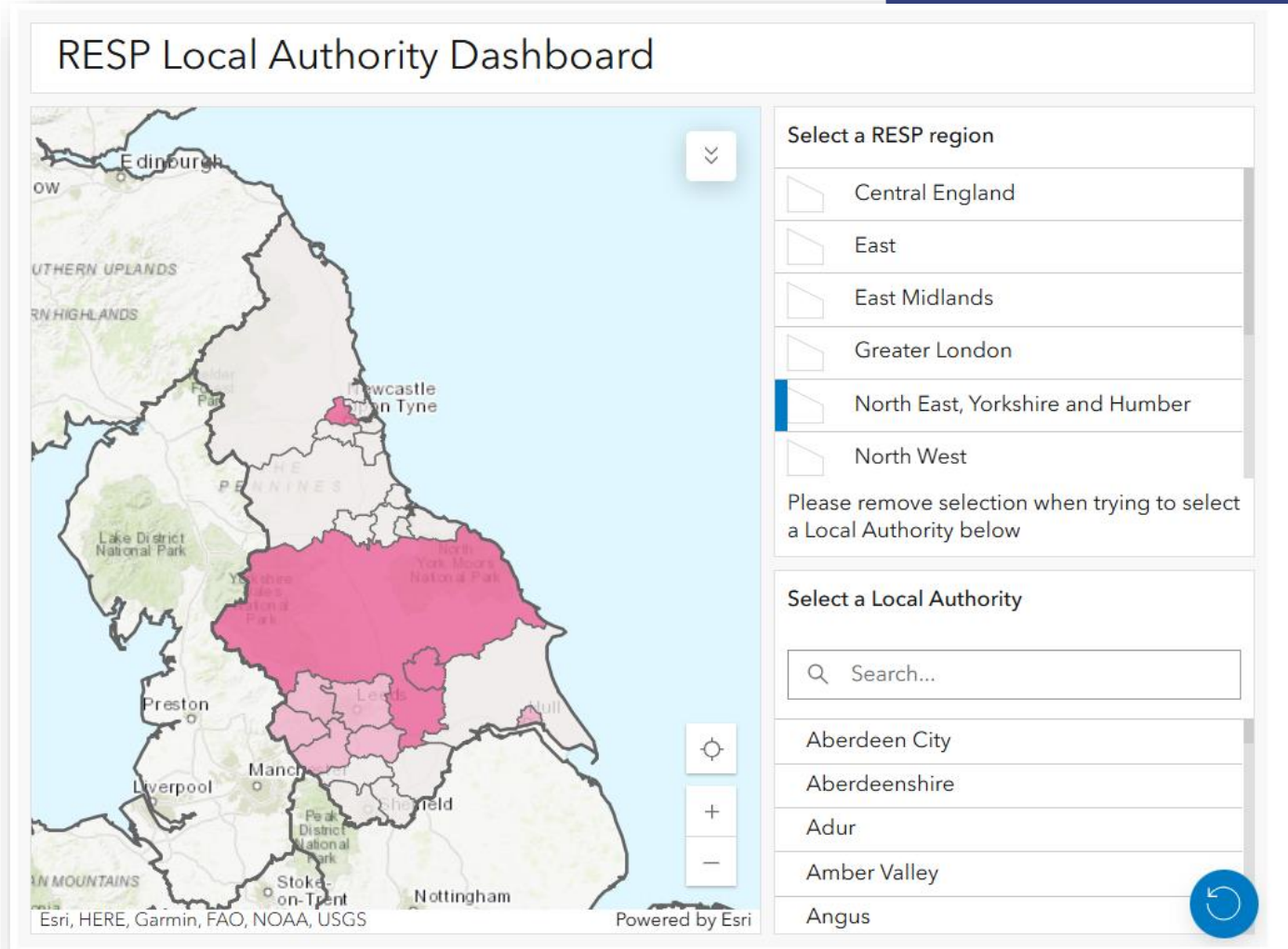
- DNO – District Network Operator – responsible for operation and development of distribution electricity system
- GNO – Gas Network Operator – responsible for operation and development of gas network
- LAEP – Local Area Energy Plan – approach to help local areas understand what interventions are required to reach net zero
- NESO – National Energy System Operator – responsible for strategic energy planning across UK
- RFI – Request for Information – template from NESO for submitting strategic investment needs
- RESP – Regional Energy Strategic Plan(s) – name of the policy framework being led by NESO, and regulated by Ofgem
- tRESP – Transitional Regional Energy Strategic Plan(s) – short term output from the process to inform network investment for the RIIO-ED3 phase
- RIIO-ED3 – Regulatory framework for the next electricity distribution price control period in Great Britain, running from 2028 to 2033. (Revenue = Incentives + Innovation + Outputs, Electricity Distribution 3)

# Unsure on your RESP region or DNO?

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We have put together an [online dashboard](#) to help each local authority see what RESP region they are in and who their main DNO and GNO is and how they can access planning tools and data to help.

It also shows areas that have completed (bright pink) or are progressing (light pink) a Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) to help identify where that data will exist and to what extent each RESP region is covered.





# Who to contact for support on tRESP

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For further support, the RESP teams are the key point of contact. If your local authority would like full guidance on Strategic Investments, or would benefit from a tailored briefing, the RESP teams are your key point of contact. They can provide comprehensive documentation and deliver briefings to senior officers.

- Scotland, Fergus Tickell – [Fergus.Tickell@neso.energy](mailto:Fergus.Tickell@neso.energy)
- North West, Tom Worthington – [Thomas.Worthington@neso.energy](mailto:Thomas.Worthington@neso.energy)
- North East, Yorkshire and Humber – [Thomas.Worthington@neso.energy](mailto:Thomas.Worthington@neso.energy)
- Wales, Huw Lewis (interim) – [Huw.Lewis@neso.energy](mailto:Huw.Lewis@neso.energy)
- West Midlands, Toby Thornton – [Toby.Thornton@neso.energy](mailto:Toby.Thornton@neso.energy)
- East Midlands, Faye Relton (interim) – [Faye.Relton@neso.energy](mailto:Faye.Relton@neso.energy)
- Central England, Sarah Hassenpflug – [Sarah.Hassenpflug@neso.energy](mailto:Sarah.Hassenpflug@neso.energy)
- London, Catherine Bock – [Catherine.Bock@neso.energy](mailto:Catherine.Bock@neso.energy)
- East, Catherine Bock (interim) – [Catherine.Bock@neso.energy](mailto:Catherine.Bock@neso.energy)
- South East, Rhiannon Mundell de Calado – [Rhiannon.Calado@neso.energy](mailto:Rhiannon.Calado@neso.energy)
- South West, Kieran Highman – [Kieran.Highman@neso.energy](mailto:Kieran.Highman@neso.energy)

# Other sources of information

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## Distribution Network Operator (DNO) Support

The deadline for DNOs and GDNs to submit data for tRESP was 11<sup>th</sup> June. Input from LAs on the same project may provide NESO with a fresh perspective; and provide value in us following up with relevant parties to better understand the proposed Strategic Investment need, and therefore it is encourage to still submit.

Through doing Distribution Future Energy Scenarios (DFES), DNOs have teams to support local authorities and data available;

- If your local authority is within **UK Power Networks** you have free access to energy system visualization data through LAEP+ tool [here](#).
- West midlands also offers a similar service via the PRIDE project with **National Grid** [here](#).
- **Scottish and Southern Energy Networks** also offer a similar free tool, LENZA, for local authorities [here](#).
- **Electricity North West** have a dedicated team and details can be found [here](#).
- **Northern Power Grid** LAEP+ tools and support can be accessed [here](#).
- **SP Energy Networks** have a Local Authority Network Insight Tool (LANIT) due soon and details can be found [here](#).

A full list of available online tools and resources from DNOs can be accessed [here](#).

## Advice and support

For a major strategic investment the authority may want to consider advice to ensure relevant information is gathered.

- NESO RESP Teams are the first point of contact for support.
- NZ Hub teams are keen to have sight of your submissions and can provide support as a critical friend.
- [Net Zero Go](#) has resources available to help develop and build knowledge in all stages of project development.

## Energy system data

For easy to use datasets Energy Systems Catapult have created [Net Zero Data](#) that has ready made bundles to address certain needs of Local Authorities. This can be accessed quickly if needed.

Other data visualisation providers such as [Als - LAEP+ tool](#) (available to local authorities for free in some areas) and City Science has created a visualization platform, [Cadence](#), to extract insights from multiple sources of data.

# Useful Resources and References

- Open Letter regarding the scope of the transitional Regional Energy Strategic Plan  
<https://www.neso.energy/document/356186/download>
- NESO Request for information – Strategic Investment for regional energy planning  
<https://www.neso.energy/news/request-information-strategic-investment-regional-energy-planning>
- NESO RESP details <https://www.neso.energy/what-we-do/strategic-planning/regional-energy-strategic-planning-resp#Further-information-and-contact-details>



For more on the Ready for RESP  
programme visit the website by  
clicking the QR code below



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