

# HEAT NETWORK ZONING UPDATE – JANUARY 2026

THE NORTH EAST AND YORKSHIRE NET ZERO HUB HOSTS SUPPORT FROM THE DEPARTMENT FOR ENERGY SECURITY AND NET ZERO HELPING LOCAL AREAS PREPARE FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF HEAT NETWORK ZONING. THIS REGULAR UPDATE SETS OUT THE LATEST POLICY, FUNDING AND BEST PRACTICE RELATING TO HEAT NETWORKS.

## POLICY & FUNDING UPDATES

**Just a quick one this month to say Happy New Year and welcome back to the wonderful world of Heat Networks 😊**

### FairHeat and HNTAS

FairHeat has now been officially appointed by the **Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ)** to deliver the HNTAS Interim Technical Support contract, continuing their role as the Lead Technical Author for the **Heat Network Technical Assurance Scheme**.

This follows three years of close collaboration with DESNZ and industry stakeholders to develop the technical foundation of HNTAS, including the draft Code documents, TS1, metering & monitoring frameworks, guidance materials and key governance structures. Under this new contract, FairHeat will support DESNZ in finalising and expanding the technical requirements of the scheme ahead of its introduction in 2026.

**If you have any questions about HNTAS or any of the associated document, you can reach FairHeat here: [Contact us | Fairheat](#)**

### Heat Network Efficiency Scheme (HNES) – Round 11 open for applications

HNES provides funding to public, private and third sector applicants in England and Wales, to support improvements to existing district heating or communal heating projects for customers and operators.

**Round 11** of funding is now open for applications until **Friday February 6<sup>th</sup>**. Updated [guidance](#) for applicants has also been published and includes updates to the Heat Network Metering and Billing Regulations (HNMBR) requirements and new references to the Ofgem digital service.



A HNES Application Seminar and Q&A for Round 11 will be held on **Tuesday January 13<sup>th</sup>** – you can register your attendance [here](#).

### Requirement to Connect

A question many of you have been asking over recent months is when we might have some more detail on the potential 'Requirement to Connect' to Heat Networks, where there are HNs available to connect to. It remains at the top of Zoning Implementation team's FAQ list and we recently received some official lines from colleagues at DESNZ. Here's what we know so far:

*From 2026 heat network zoning will identify areas of England where heat networks are the lowest cost, low-carbon heating solution.*

*As a result, we expect heat network developers to engage proactively with building owners to encourage connections to the heat network.*

*However, there will be a legal backstop allowing for certain types of buildings to be required to connect to a heat network within a zone. These buildings must connect to the network within a specific timeframe.*

*Building owners will be able to apply for an exemption from the requirement to connect, if they meet certain criteria. For example, if a low carbon heating technology is already installed or if there are structural incompatibilities with connecting the building to a heat network.*

Details of the types of buildings required to connect will be provided in the zoning consultation, which is anticipated to be released early this year. As soon as we know more, I'll make sure that the information is disseminated as quickly and clearly as possible. **In the meantime, if you have any queries or concerns you'd like adding to our FAQ list, please do get in touch.**

## IN PERSON & TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

### Connecting Women in District Heat

Connecting Women in District Heating 2026 will be a week-long festival of interesting and engaging content and networking, taking place from Monday 12th – Friday 16th January 2026, organised by the District Heating Divas. The festival is open to everyone, women and allies alike.

On **Thursday January 15<sup>th</sup>** an in-person event will be hosted in London, delivering a programme of talks covering a range of different topics, whilst still allowing time for networking and break-out sessions.

I'll be there and it would be great to see some familiar faces.

**For more information, or to get tickets, please click the link to the right.**

Select tickets –  
Connecting  
Women in  
District Heat  
2026 – Events  
@ No 6

### Commercial Readiness for Heat Networks

The Carbon Trust are an official training provider under the government's Heat Training Grant and are continuing to deliver a comprehensive series of webinars around how different stakeholder groups can best prepare for Heat Network Zoning.

The '**Commercial Readiness for Heat Networks**' course will be taking place on the dates shown below. The course is fully online and covers the full lifecycle of a heat network project from feasibility and zoning, through delivery models and funding, to long-term operation and governance and has been specifically designed for public sector organisations operating in England.

- Wednesday January 28<sup>th</sup> 2026, 9:30am-1:30pm
- Wednesday March 4<sup>th</sup> 2026, 9:30am-1:30pm

**To register your interest or simply to learn more about what's on offer, please click the link to the right.**

Commercial  
readiness for  
heat networks  
training | The  
Carbon Trust

## KEEP IN TOUCH

For more information about Hub support for Heat Network Zoning please contact: [lauren.kemp@westyorks-ca.gov.uk](mailto:lauren.kemp@westyorks-ca.gov.uk) or [enquiries@neynetzerohub.com](mailto:enquiries@neynetzerohub.com).

Don't forget, the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero have their very own Heat Networks newsletter. You can sign up here: [DESNZ – HN Bulletins](#)