

HEAT NETWORK ZONING UPDATE – APRIL 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

Heat Network Zoning Pipeline

DESNZ is now looking to develop its future pipeline of prioritised potential zones, in advance of the statutory formation of the Zoning Authority. They are therefore inviting strategic and local authorities in England to help inform the development of the future pipeline of heat network zones and to identify the next tranche of zones to be brought forward for implementation.

Once the pipeline has been reviewed, funding and technical assistance may be offered to a limited number of areas to conduct initial or full implementation of zoning in their area.

You can find more information on the [Heat Networks Delivery Unit webpage](#). However, DESNZ are now inviting authorities to respond with information on zone opportunity areas in their local areas by **May 29th 2026**. DESNZ will welcome responses at any time as part of a continuous process of pipeline monitoring but only those responses received before the deadline will be reflected in this initial pipeline review exercise.

The pipeline review will consider, for each zone opportunity area; evidence on strategic alignment with zoning objectives and confidence in deliverability (including readiness, viability, feasibility).

If you are interested in responding, please contact HNDU at hndu@energysecurity.gov.uk to receive a response pack, which will include response guidance and maps of the zone opportunity areas in your local area.

HNES Website Now Live

The Heat Network Efficiency Scheme (HNES) is a £107million Government grant support programme that opened to applicants in February 2023. The scheme provides funding to public, private and third sector applicants in England and Wales, to support improvements to existing district heat network projects or communal heat network projects for customers and operators.



**HEAT NETWORK
EFFICIENCY SCHEME**

A new website for the scheme has been launched, meaning that all future HNES updates and application support will now be hosted in one place. The website includes scheme guidance, eligibility information, case studies and upcoming webinars. Please update your bookmarks and saved links.

You can access the homepage by clicking the following link: [HNES website](#)

All official HNES guidance documents, including applicant guidance, scheme rules and funding information, will continue to be hosted on the [GOV.UK HNES page](#).

Supporting colleagues in the NHS

The Heat Network Zoning Leads in all 5 Hubs have been working closely with colleagues across the NHS to support numerous Trusts in their decarbonisation journeys.

As well as producing a comprehensive slide deck outlining key information from the Government's HNZ consultation response and the potential implications of upcoming legislation on trusts around the country, myself and colleagues from the Public Sector Decarbonisation team presented an overview of policy, along with support that the Hubs can offer to the North West and North East and Yorkshire NHS Estates Delivery Group on **March 30th**.

Please reach out if you have questions about your Trust and potential Heat Network Zones in your area.

A SNAPSHOT OF HEAT NETWORK ACTIVITY ACROSS THE REGION

Latest news on the Bradford Energy Network

Having secured £20million of Green Heat Network Funding, planning permission, and their first confirmed off-takers, 1Energy have started building their first low-carbon heat network in Bradford. When completed in **Summer 2027**, the £75million project will generate heat using one of the largest air source heat pumps in the UK.

2026 is proving to be a huge year for the network with the **Thornton Road energy centre** (which sits on the site of Bradford's former 19th-century gasworks) nearing completion and customers preparing to receive low-carbon heat for the first time when the network goes live in Autumn of this year.

The first round of customers includes Bradford College and the University of Bradford, who 1Energy are also working closely with to develop opportunity, local skills and future talent in Bradford. This is being done through guest lectures, site tours, placements, apprenticeships and work experience - with **1Energy** and their delivery partners **ThermaMech** and **FairHeat**.



If you're interested in finding out more about the Bradford Energy Network, or even want to look into connecting, you can contact the team at 1energy here: [Bradford Energy Network | 1energy.uk](https://www.1energy.uk)

Advanced Zoning Programme Updates: Sheffield

Sheffield City Council have now launched their procurement to select a Development Partner to undertake heat network development services within its **AZP Opportunity Area**.

The submission deadline for Clarification Questions is **Friday May 15th at 17:00**, with tender submission deadline of Friday May 29th at 17:00.

The Tender Notice and key information can be found at the following link: [Heat Network Development Partner for the Sheffield AZP Opportunity Area - Find a Tender](#)

Advanced Zoning Programme Updates: Leeds

The next phase of Leeds' low-carbon heat network is set to move forward with senior leaders having approved the appointment of a new delivery and funding partner.

Building on the huge and on-going success of **Leeds PIPES**, Hemiko has been appointed to develop a new low-carbon heat network in the city centre, with the initial phase planned for the South Bank and expected to reach up to 8,000 more residents.

PIPES has already installed over 30km of pipework so far with over 7,000 tonnes of carbon saved in 2025 alone. **You can learn more about the scheme here:** [Leeds PIPES District Heat Network: The future of heat is here](#)

KEEP IN TOUCH

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