

Strategic  
Infrastructure

# North London Reinforcement- Community Fund Workshop

Waltham Abbey  
30 April 2026

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The  
Great Grid  
Upgrade

# Agenda

<b>Welcome and introduction</b>	<b>10 mins</b>
<b>Our approach to community funds and social value</b>	<b>10 mins</b>
<b>Breakout 1:</b> understanding local needs and priorities	<b>20 mins</b>
<b>Breakout 1:</b> feedback and reflection	<b>10 mins</b>
<b>Breakout 2:</b> from priorities to action and engagement	<b>20 mins</b>
<b>Breakout 2:</b> feedback and reflection	<b>10 mins</b>
<b>Close and next steps</b>	<b>10 mins</b>



# Who are National Grid?

- We run the high-voltage electricity network and keep electricity flowing across the country
- We need to modernise the electricity network so it can carry more clean, renewable energy and meet growing demand reliably.
- We upgrade older equipment to keep supplies reliable
- We don't generate or sell electricity
- Our work is regulated by Ofgem



# What is the North London Reinforcement project?

- A major upgrade of existing electricity infrastructure
- It will allow more electricity to flow safely and reliably
- We will be upgrading and modernising substations
- These substations have supported the area for over 60 years and need updating to meet future demand
- Permission was approved for this project in 2014.



# Why is the North London Reinforcement project needed?

- NLR is part of The Great Grid Upgrade, a national programme to modernise the electricity network.
- The grid was originally built for fossil fuel power, but demand for electricity is growing as we move to cleaner energy.
- Electricity demand is increasing
- To maintain reliability, a stronger network is required.



# Why are we here?

- Hear from local leaders about your needs and priorities for community funds
- Understand what initiatives exist, and where funding is needed
- Identify who else we might need to engage with, and the best way to reach underrepresented groups

These insights will shape the development of a **Community Fund**, that will bring lasting benefits to people who live and work in and around Waltham Abbey

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01

Investing in  
communities-  
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# Investing in communities

**Communities are central to the transition to clean energy, and those hosting new infrastructure should benefit.**

Following UK Government guidance published in March 2025, we are working with local residents, community and charity groups, and elected representatives to shape community funds around local priorities.



# Our Community Benefits approach



# What this means for your community

**We're pleased to share that communities near Waltham Cross will benefit from a local fund of £530,000**

This investment aims to improve the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the community and deliver benefits that endure over the long term.

**Starting point:** National Grid would seek to develop a local community grant fund whereby local groups, including parish councils, would be able to apply for funding for projects that benefit the local community.

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# What this means for your community

**As part of the wider North London Reinforcement Project, there will also be ~£2m in Strategic Funds invested across the region**

These funds will be invested in strategic partnerships that can deliver long-term, significant impact to multiple communities along the route

# Community engagement so far

- Careers advice, skills outreach and CV support with local FE colleges
- Local authority engagement via Construction Employers Forum
- Schools engagement, promoting green infrastructure awareness
- Community engagement on local National Grid works
- Partnership working with local charities and trusts



# Social value – working with our contractors

**Social value is the social, economic and environmental benefits conferred to communities *over and above the core deliverables of a project.***

We regard the ability to create positive legacy outcomes in our communities as a privilege. As such, we aim to be ambitious in delivering social impact, collaborating with stakeholders and partners to create meaningful and lasting outcomes.

We support local communities through practical, sustainable initiatives such as carrying out remedial and gardening works at community centres, planting new greenery and providing benches built by our skilled workforce using recycled materials from our projects.

We also work closely with schools, delivering lasting benefits including sensory equipment, vegetable gardens for children to grow and maintain and mud kitchens constructed from recycled timber

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# Our Social Value Pillars

## Fair Work

We will support under-represented groups through improved access, targeted development programmes and collaboration with organisations that celebrate and promote diversity.

## Economy

We will support sustainable growth by strengthening local skills and employability, while boosting the economy through local procurement.

## Environment

We are committed to enhancing our shared environment by supporting biodiversity and promoting sustainable solutions.

## Community

We will work closely with stakeholders to promote health, wellbeing and social inclusion, with a focus on both physical and mental health. Through strong local partnerships and multi-partner collaboration, we will support greater community integration



**Above photos show before and after. Our teams delivered four mud kitchens and transformed the outdoor play area at a local Primary School.**

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02

Understanding  
local needs and  
priorities

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# On your tables...

**Introduce yourself and who you work with/represent**



## Group discussion:

- From your perspective, what are the key areas of need in your community?
- Do these needs look different for different groups (e.g., age, background, geography)?

# On your tables...



**Agree the three priority issues you feel are most important to focus on**



Capture:

- What the priority is
- Why it matters locally
- Who is most affected

# Group feedback

## Each table shares:

- Key areas of need in the community
- Do these needs look different for different groups (e.g., age, background, geography)?
- Three priority issues that are most important to focus on

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03

From priorities  
to action and  
engagement

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# On your tables...



## Use the top three priorities identified earlier

- Are there existing local initiatives that could help address these priorities?
- Are there regional or thematic programmes?
- Which types of projects or activity are hardest to fund in this area, and why?
- Where could non-financial support (e.g., volunteering) make a difference?

# On your tables...



**We want to identify who else we should engage with to help shape community funds in your area**

Where do people come together locally (places, events, networks)?

How can we best reach a diverse range of people?

Are there voices missing from the room that we should actively engage with?

# Group feedback

## Each table shares:

- Key project or activity ideas
- Gaps in current funding
- Suggestions for further engagement

# Event close

## Key emerging themes

## Next steps

- Gather insights from this evening and share back with you
- Update elected representatives about themes and this session
- Open and publish a survey to the public. This will be available online.

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