

Heat Network Efficiency Scheme (HNES): Frequently Asked Questions

This document contains additional Q&As to the 8.4 Application Questions section in the [Guidance for Applicants document](#).

Q: How long left do I have to apply for the next round?

A: Round 10 closes at midnight on Friday 19th September 2025. Please note that for Round 10, you must request access to the online portal no later than Friday 5th September 2025.

Q: How can I access support with my application?

A: All applicants wishing to receive bespoke guidance about their particular project and application has access to a dedicated Relationship Manager. To access these services, please email hnes.support@gemserv.com.

Q: Where can I find the latest guidance documents?

A: The latest [Guidance for Applicants document](#) can be found on the gov.uk website.

Q: Can I catch up on past events I have missed?

A: Yes, slides and recordings of past HNES events can be found on the [Gemserv HNES page](#). You can also sign up to our mailing list from this page, so you don't miss any future events or deadlines.

Q: Is there funding for Zoning?

A: No, funding for zoning is not available through the Heat Network Efficiency Scheme (HNES).

Q: How are customers in need defined? Is there an Income/Means testing element?

A: For the purpose of HNES, residential “customers in need” are defined as: “Dwellings supplied with heat/energy by a heat network, in which a resident or residents are considered financially vulnerable and will therefore benefit significantly from reduced costs for heating or service improvements through HNES support. This includes any of the following categories (or equivalent) of status or accommodation type: social housing; low-income housing; customers in fuel poverty; extra care housing; low-income care homes and supported housing”.

Q: Have you published a list of grant recipients?

A: We have published press releases so far for each funding round, detailing the individual funding recipients. These have all been sent to our mailing list and shared on the HNES LinkedIn and X pages. Press releases can also be found on the [Gemserv HNES website](#).

Q: Can ineligible costs be covered by our match funding or does our match funding only apply to eligible costs?

A: Match funding must only cover eligible costs – HNES will fund up to but not including 50% of eligible measures.

Q: How many components of the infrastructure can be replaced before it is considered to be a replacement of the actual heat source?

A: HNES is unable to fund the replacement of the primary heat generation source, however we can fund other elements within the energy centre such as reconfiguration or replacement of pipework, removal or replacement of pumps and updates to controls. Further detail can be found in our [Guidance of Applicants](#) document. If your project is particularly complex, or you are unsure what is and isn't eligible, then we would recommend reaching out to our

relationship managers by emailing HNES.Support@gemserv.com to discuss individual projects in detail. They will be able to advise, review and discuss your proposal and inform whether it does or does not meet the HNES criteria.

Q: Does the team have a list of suitable consultants or are we expected to find our own?

A: We do not have a recommended list of consultants and would expect applicants to find their own.

Q: What is the largest award to date?

A: The largest award provided to a single project is £7.4 million, which was for a project in Wolverhampton. The [press releases](#) include details of the amount of funding awarded to each project.

Q: Where potential recommendations are outside the scope of what HNES would fund (e.g. a scheme requires replacement of heat sources, or new radiators/pipework on the tertiary system) would you expect these to be costed in the same way as items which would be within the scope of HNES capital funding?

A: The recommendations included in an Optimisation Study report should cover all measures that could be undertaken to improve heat network efficiency and not just those that are eligible for HNES capital funding. While it may be beneficial for a project to submit a capital application after receiving findings from a revenue study, applicants may also choose to fund measures themselves so all relevant measures should be recommended. Only eligible measures should be included in an HNES capital application.

Q: What percentage have you been typically funding for capital? How many are at 49%?

A: The percentage of funding provided for capital improvements varies significantly. Some projects are requesting 49% of funding, however others have requested lower levels.

Q: Is there a specific band for revenue grants? (min/max on the amount that we can apply for).

A: Yes. Projects can apply for revenue grants ranging from £15k - £24k depending on the size of the network and the extent of the study required. If a project is claiming VAT, this needs to be included within the banding, not additional to it.

Q: What should I do if I'm submitting multiple applications?

A: Applicants can submit multiple applications, however they will be required to justify why multiple applications are required and why learnings from one application cannot be applied to other networks in their portfolio.

Q: Can we spend any money on projects or studies before the grant funding is issued? Does this somehow invalidate any or all of the grant funding?

A: HNES funding can only cover work that is undertaken after the funding award has been made. If you are a non-local authority, you can only claim grant funding retrospectively. We need to see evidence that works have been paid for as part of your grant claim before we can issue payment. Local authorities can claim the funding upfront but have claw back options in their Memorandum of Understanding if the grant isn't spent in line with the Funded Activities.

NOTES TO EDITORS

HNES can provide up to, but not including, 50% of eligible project costs for capital grant applications and up to 100% of eligible project costs for revenue (Optimisation Study) grant applications. Applicants will need to submit a completed application form along with supporting evidence – and will be assessed and scored against criteria.

Those interested in applying for the scheme can express their interest by emailing HNES@gemserv.com.

The Heat Network Efficiency Scheme Guidance is available on the [gov.uk website](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/heat-network-efficiency-scheme-hnes). <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/heat-network-efficiency-scheme-hnes>

General enquiries and expressions of interest can be sent to HNES@gemserv.com.

More information about HNES including upcoming events can be found on [Gemserv's website](#), the delivery partner for the HNES Scheme.

Gemserv, a Talan company has been appointed as the Delivery Partner for HNES supported by [Ramboll](#) who provide technical assessment, [Gleeds](#) as applicant support and [Lux Nova](#) as legal support.