

# District heating and consumers



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The Association for  
Decentralised Energy

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Combined Heat & Power  
Demand Side Services  
Energy Efficiency  
Heat Networks

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The paradox of choice



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The Association for Decentralised Energy is setting the vision of a local, efficient, low carbon energy system which enables energy users to make the choices which work for them.

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# Consumers at the heart

## **It is critical to put consumer at the heart of the energy system**

- ⦿ This is particularly true in the context of decarbonisation – we need consumers making active choices that support this agenda
- ⦿ Irony is that, in the UK to date this has been most characterised by switching (of supplier), which district heating doesn't allow for

# Choice: how important is it?

- ⦿ The inability to switch has become one of the most important arguments made against district heating in the UK
- ⦿ However it seems less prevalent elsewhere – standardisation of build and customer experience has meant people care less about ability to switch

# From choice to decarbonisation

- ⦿ Despite this, in the UK we still want and need consumer understanding and acceptance of district heating, so it's critical to involve them!
  - ⦿ Whether they can choose supplier or not, whether they can choose to live on district heat networks or not – we want them to wish they could choose it
- ⦿ If customers do not embrace district heating then they will not get built at the scale needed to fulfill government ambition

**...and this will mean we don't meet decarbonisation targets.**

# How do we do this?

- ⦿ Particularly challenging in a non-standardised market!
- ⦿ Critical to consider and agree what the customer outcomes should be at the very beginning of the project
- ⦿ Make everyone that works on the project aware of the necessary outcomes
- ⦿ Continue to deliver minimum standards (and above!)
- ⦿ Have a competitive price offering





Question remains:

What matters more:  
choice, or quality of service?

*Feel free to contact me with any thoughts!*

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