

# The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall open London's new £1bn energy superhighway

07 Feb 2018

- **The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall visit National Grid's flagship London Power Tunnels project**
- **32km of tunnels carry 200km of electricity cables deep beneath the city streets**
- **Seven year project to rewire the capital will meet growing demand and keep Londoners connected to safe and reliable supplies**

HRH The Prince of Wales took a stroll down London's new energy superhighway today (Wednesday 7 February) when he descended deep beneath the capital's streets to visit National Grid's London Power Tunnels project.

Whilst The Prince was deep underground, Her Royal Highness was shown around the substation and was able to see down the 32 metre deep shaft leading into the tunnels.

National Grid has recently flicked the switch to energise over 200km of high voltage electricity cables carried inside a network of 32km of tunnels as part of a seven year project to rewire the capital.

The £1bn project has been delivered on time and under budget; and is the most significant addition to London's electricity system since the 1960s.

The tunnels, running from Hackney in the east to Willesden in the west, and from Kensal Green to Wimbledon in the south also house some of the local electricity network company's cables too. This is a first, and has saved both money and disruption for the capital's motorists.

**John Pettigrew, National Grid's Chief Executive said:** "We are delighted to have been able to show The Prince of Wales how this £1bn project has enabled us to rewire London to make sure the capital and those living in it have the electricity they need to rise to the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century."

**Greg Clark, Business and Energy Secretary said:** "The £1 billion London Power Tunnels is exactly the type of investment and innovative infrastructure project that the Government wants to encourage through our modern Industrial Strategy.

"This important infrastructure will help increase productivity by cutting the number of road works needed for maintenance, as well as powering London with the safe and reliable electricity supplies it needs for the future."

HRH The Prince of Wales and HRH The Duchess of Cornwall arrived at Highbury substation, one of two new substations built as part of the project, to begin their tour.

While the Duchess heard more about the project from construction workers and had a chance to meet local school children, The Prince of Wales climbed down 16 flights of stairs into the tunnel to see the some of the cables which, stretched out, would run the length of the M25.

His Royal Highness has a longstanding interest in STEM (Science Technology, Engineering and Maths) subjects and helping get young people into engineering, and also set up the Industrial Cadets scheme in 2010.

National Grid worked closely with communities and schools and with the charity City Year to promote science and engineering along the 32km route of the tunnels. During the visit, Her Royal Highness met local school children who were enjoying a special science lesson.

Over the past seven years, National Grid has helped promote STEM to over 30,000 school pupils.

The ten new 400kV transmission circuits inside the tunnels will initially carry up to 20% of the electricity needed in London, more when older parts of the electricity network, built in the 1950s, are decommissioned.

National Grid's decision to place the new cables in tunnels underground helped avoid major disruption on the city's streets. During construction, workers used electric cars above ground and bicycles in the tunnels below to reduce traffic emissions too.

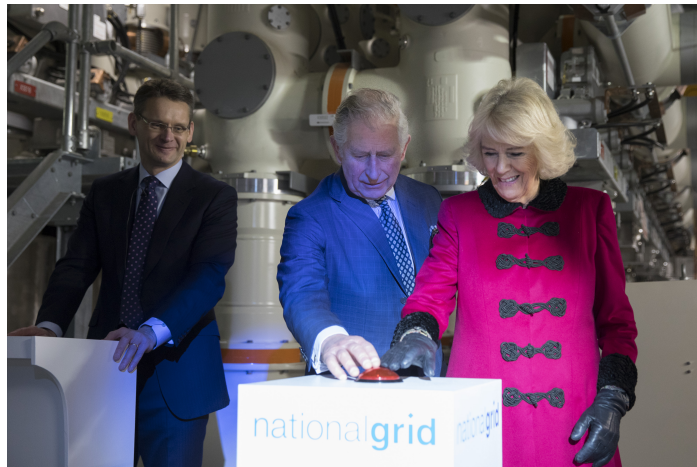
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Notes for editors





### Notes to Editors:

National Grid is pivotal to the energy systems in the UK and the north eastern United States. We aim to serve customers well and efficiently, supporting the communities in which we operate and making possible the energy systems of the future.

### National Grid in the UK:

- We own and operate the electricity transmission network in England and Wales, with day-to-day responsibility for balancing supply and demand. We also operate, but do not own, the Scottish networks. Our networks comprise approximately 7,200 kilometres (4,474 miles) of overhead line, 1,500 kilometres (932 miles) of underground cable and 342 substations.
- We own and operate the gas National Transmission System in Great Britain, with day-to-day responsibility for balancing supply and demand. Our network comprises approximately 7,660 kilometres (4,760 miles) of high-pressure pipe and 618 above-ground installations.
- As Great Britain's System Operator (SO) we make sure gas and electricity is transported safely and efficiently from where it is produced to where it is consumed. From April 2019, Electricity System Operator (ESO) is a new standalone business within National Grid, legally separate from all other parts of the National Grid Group. This will provide the right environment to deliver a balanced and impartial ESO that can realise real benefits for consumers as we transition to a more decentralised, decarbonised electricity system.
- Other UK activities mainly relate to businesses operating in competitive markets outside of our core regulated businesses; including interconnectors, gas metering activities and a liquefied natural gas (LNG) importation terminal – all of which are now part of National Grid Ventures. National Grid Property is responsible for the management, clean-up and disposal of surplus sites in the UK. Most of these are former gas works.

Find out more about the energy challenge and how National Grid is helping find solutions to some of the challenges we face at <https://www.nationalgrid.com/group/news>

National Grid undertakes no obligation to update any of the information contained in this release, which speaks only as at the date of this release, unless required by law or regulation.

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