

NIE Networks increasing support for vulnerable customers

NIE Networks has launched a new public information campaign to raise awareness of the specialist services the company offers to help those customers who may have vulnerabilities or require additional support.

The campaign comes just a few months after NIE Networks launched its new Vulnerable Customer Strategy which defines how services will be increased for those customers needing extra support. This includes customers with

communication barriers, translation requirements, the elderly, those who are visually impaired or those reliant on life saving medical equipment.

A key offering from NIE Networks is the company's Medical Customer Care Register which offers a telephone information support service to customers who are dependent on life supporting medical equipment in the event of a power cut. Currently, over 10,000 people are registered but the company want to increase that number significantly over the next 5 years.

NIE Networks is also an accredited JAM Card friendly organisation, with over 90 per cent of staff trained to provide the highest standard of service to those customers with a learning difficulty, autism or communication barrier.

The NIE Networks Customer Helpline service operates 24/7 all year round and employs a core team of customer service agents who process in excess of 20,000 calls per month. Under the new strategy the company is developing a specialist team so those customers who may have a vulnerability can speak to specially-trained agents, something Mr McKeown (Customer and Market Services Director for NIE Networks) says is crucial to keeping every customer connected.

To register for the NIE Networks Medical Customer Care Register or to find out more about the other tailored support services available visit nienetworks.co.uk



Winter Preparedness

As we go into the Christmas holiday period, ensure your home is prepared for the winter weather.

NIE Networks has responsibility for the electricity transmission and distribution networks. Northern Ireland Water (NIW) provides water and sewerage services in Northern Ireland. There are three gas networks Phoenix Natural Gas for Greater Belfast, firmus energy for the Ten Towns area and SGN for the West licensed area.

Listen to weather forecasts regularly and check your emergency supplies, including your emergency food and water supply, whenever you are expecting a winter storm or extreme cold. Even though we can't always predict extreme cold in advance, weather forecasts can sometimes give you several days of notice to prepare. Bring your pets indoors.



here are a few numbers you may need incase of an emergency;

- Flooding incident line 0300 2000 100
- Northern Ireland Electricity 0345 7643 643
- Northern Ireland Water 0345 7440 088
- Phoenix Natural Gas 0345 4555 555
- Firmus Energy 0845 6080 088
- SSE 0345 9005 253
- Power NI 0345 745 5455
- NI Housing Executive 0344 8920 900

Wholesale electricity and gas price trends

Actual electricity system demand across November increased when compared to last month by 8% and 5% when compared to November 2020.

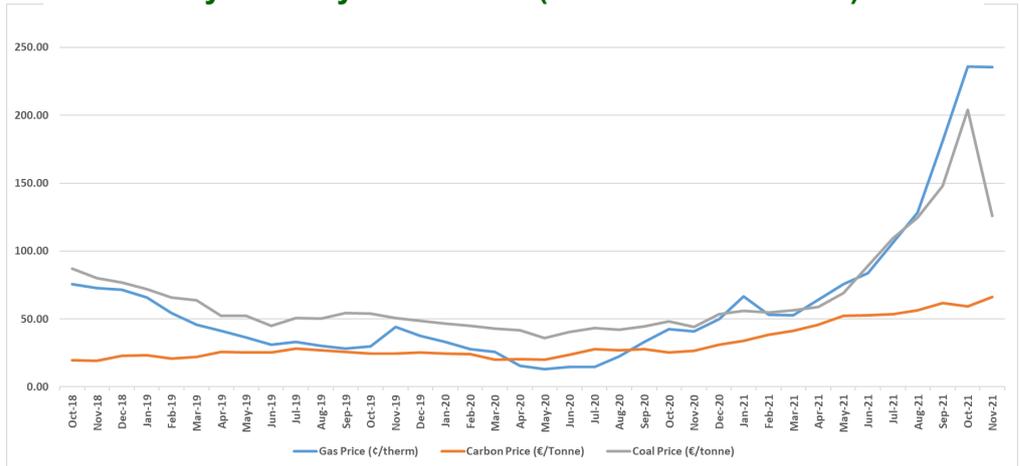
In November 2021, the average DAM price was €204.72/MWh, a 347% increase when compared to November 2020, and a 5% decrease on October 2021.

Gas fired units continue to provide the largest portion of fossil fuelled generation. This means the price of gas has a significant impact on end market prices. Across November the average price of gas was 199.57p/therm. This is a similar price to last month but an increase of 442% on November 2020. Coal also continues to provide a notable portion of fossil fuelled generation. The average coal price for November 2021 was \$143.61/tonne, an increase of 174% on the same month last year and a 39% decrease on last month.

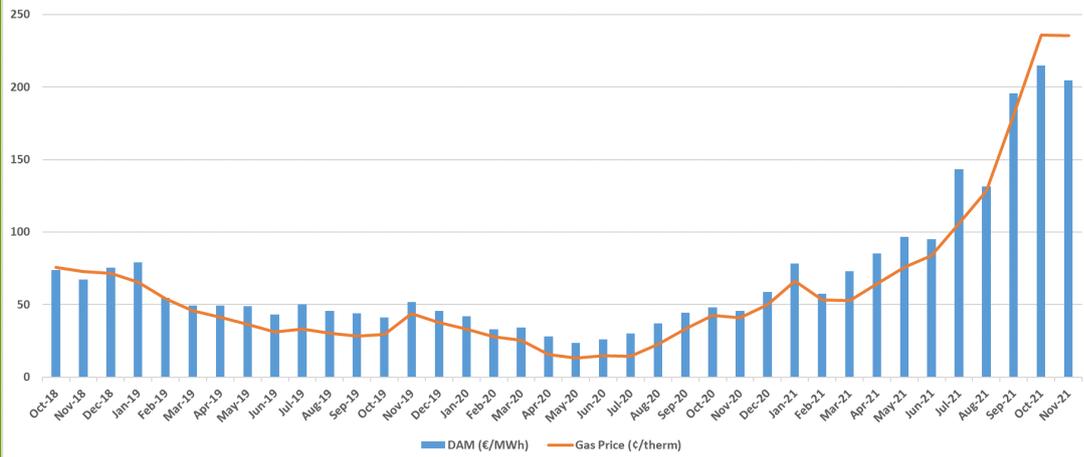
In November 2021, the average price of carbon emissions was €66.22/tonne. This was an 11% increase on October 2021 and a 150% increase than that seen in November 2020.

DAM prices continue to be impacted by the level of forecasted wind on the system. Average wind forecast for this period is 1744 MW an increase of 2% from October 2021.

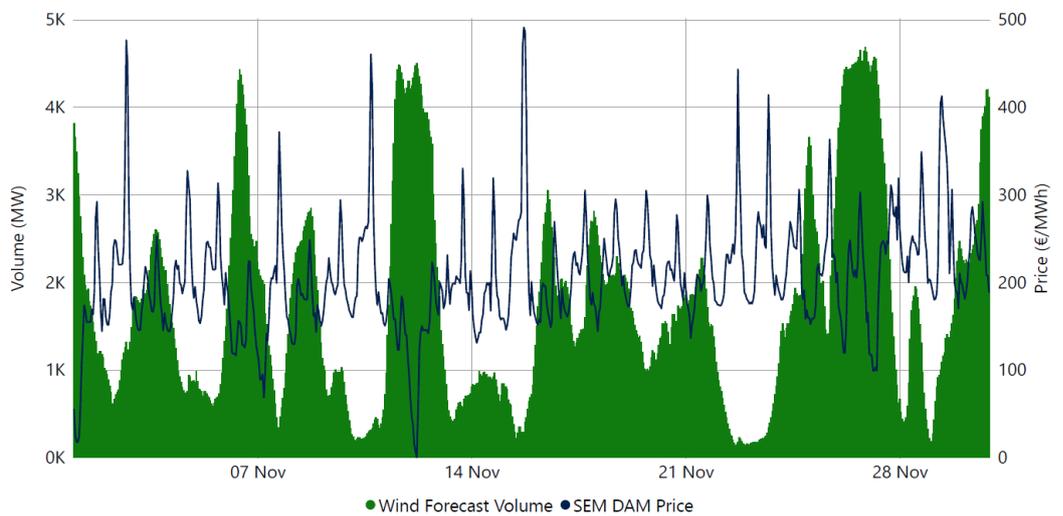
Key Monthly Fuel Costs (October 18 - Nov 21)



Day Ahead Market (DAM) and Gas Prices (October 18 - Nov 21)



Wind Generation (November 21)



STAFF PROFILE

Kenny McPartland Analyst in the Networks Directorate



I have worked as a Networks analyst since joining the UR in October 2019. I have had the opportunity to work across various areas of Networks, but mainly within Electricity Connections and Network Codes.

I have had the opportunity to work across various areas within the Networks Operations, such as the SONI price control and SONI governance teams, which has been a great experience. However, today my work today focuses mainly on all things electricity connections and Network Codes

I hold a BSc in Environmental Planning and MSc in Spatial Regeneration from Queens University. Like a lot of people, I had absolutely no idea what I wanted to do career-wise after leaving university. I moved to Boston MA, as I was given an opportunity to play for a local Gaelic football team, to make ends meet I worked with a plasterer. I lasted 6 months Stateside (I realised I was a home bird and an awful plasterer) before coming home to Belfast and joining a graduate programme in PwC, working in the Technology Consulting department. I worked in PwC for 5 years before seeing the light and moving to the UR. As you would imagine, there is very little overlap between plastering/tech consulting and energy regulation, which made for quite a steep, but very enjoyable learning curve.

Home for me is currently in Lisburn, where I live with my fiancé and our 10 year old pug, Frank (the tank). I am a keen sports fan, and am a long suffering Tottenham Hotspur supporter, spending more money that I wish to think about travelling to watch them play. I also enjoy watching American Football and still try to play GAA for my local club, when injuries permit!

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Job Opportunities

As an economic regulator, our role is to enable, incentivise and hold electricity, gas, and water companies to account for providing the best levels of service to consumers in Northern Ireland.

We're recruiting for [new analyst roles](#) that will help us play out part in delivering Government's commitment to achieve net zero carbon.

Details about more [job opportunities](#) within the Utility Regulator are on our website.

Consultations/News Update

During December we published the following consultation.

Please click on the link for further details:

- [Consultation launched on draft determination for the gas transmission price control \(GT22\)](#)
- [Electricity Tariff Reform – Call for Evidence Responses Report](#)
- [Latest Quarterly Retail Energy Market Monitoring report on NI's retail market published](#)