

Local Authority Common Ask Electricity

Guide – General Information



Technical guidance for assembling data for your local network operator's forecasting from a Local Area Energy Plan for General Information

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

Name	Description
LAEP	Local Area Energy Plan
LSOA	Lower Layer Super Output Areas
DFES	Distribution Future Energy Scenarios

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1. OVERVIEW

1.1 Introduction

This guide was written to accompany version 2 of the LAEP input for Local Authority Common Ask. The purpose of this guide is to explain the reasoning behind providing a Local Authority Common Ask, how to use it and address frequently asked questions. This document does not override the requirements of the Local Authority Common Ask definition itself, and wherever there is a perceived difference between this guide and the Local Authority Common Ask definition, the Local Authority Common Ask definition is to be taken as the authoritative definition.

This guide specifically covers the compilation of general information data. Other guides are provided to support the compilation of data for specific technologies.

The Local Authority Common Ask is intended to help in the formatting of inputs to be used in your local network operator's network modelling. The requirements of the data are designed to allow for like for like comparison between different LAEP outputs, and to ensure that the data can be processed effectively by the network modelling tool. It should not require additional outputs to be produced but may require existing outputs to be transformed or reframed in a different way.

The Local Authority Common Ask consists of the Local Authority Common Ask definition in Microsoft Excel format (named Local Authority Common Ask Definition - General Information) this guide and the associated checklist in Microsoft Word and PDF format, a series of example sheets filled out with data demonstrating the format that data should be returned in using CSV UTF-8 (Comma delimited) and Microsoft Excel Workbook format, and a series of templates in both CSV UTF-8 (Comma delimited) and Microsoft Excel Workbook format. The Local Authority Common Ask definition consists of a sheet describing the inputs required for the relevant technology. The document(s) to be returned are defined in the Local Authority Common Ask definition, which also specifies column naming, data types and includes a description of the data required for the column with examples. The Local Authority Common Ask definition itself does not need to be returned. Where templates are to be provided, these have already been partially filled out, and should be completed and returned in the same format as they are provided in. Apart from custom geographic area shapefiles, all documents returned should be in either CSV UTF-8 (Comma delimited) or Microsoft Excel Workbook format. The Local Authority Common Ask Questionnaire should be returned in Microsoft Excel Workbook format.

Note that where names are used for categorisation, then we ask that names match exactly with standard definitions, allowing no room for interpretation. This includes correctly matching the spelling, capitalisation and spaces present in the official definition of the name.

2. FILES TO RETURN: GENERAL INFORMATION

2.1 Local Authority Common Ask Questionnaire

A questionnaire is included to be completed and returned alongside the templates. It includes questions on the units used for the relevant technology data CSVs, the geographical area used to index the technology data within the CSVs, the effective day of the year which forecast data applies to, if values are cumulative or in-year, and some technology specific questions. To answer the questions, an answer should be selected from the dropdown list in the "LAEP Answer" column to the right of the list or entered in the format specified. Where an answer must be selected from a dropdown, note that answers are listed in order of preference; more granular data is preferred for geographical areas (down to LSOA level), and units that most closely mirror the modelling inputs are preferred for the units. Wherever possible, we request that the data be processed to bring it as close as possible to the preferred state before it is provided, as the data providers are best placed to manipulate the data correctly with the context of how it was prepared.

When providing geographical area information, please note that the “General information” folder contains two files named “List of relevant 2011 LSOAs” and “List of relevant 2021 LSOAs”, which list the relevant LSOAs to consider when providing technology specific data.

In the case of the questions on the effective day of the year which forecast data applies to, a date must be entered in the format DD/MM. This option will mainly of interest to plans where rapid uptake is forecast over short timescales, and for longer timescale plans (such as reaching net zero by 2050), this information does not need to be provided if you are confident that the impact is minor. If you are not able to provide a date of the year for your data, then by default the DFES start date will be assumed for that technology. If you are not able to provide any of the options in the dropdown list for any other question, then contact the distributor of this dictionary to discuss the approach for your LAEP.

A free text box is also provided to enter relevant context and metadata for each technology. This context will not significantly influence the processing of the data, but can help us to understand how best to handle the data and interpret results. Examples of context could be the relevant DFES scenario which modelling is based on, the intention of the modelling, such as a sensitivity study or a most likely scenario prediction, or overall technology volumes in 2050 for technologies where percentage uptake is provided, such as heat pump uptake.

Data question	LAEP Answer (Answers listed in order of preference)
Please use the dropdown lists to complete the orange boxes with answers to the questions about the LAEP data.	
Note that there is a restriction on the types of answers that are accepted, such as restricting the levels of geographical output to ensure that no IP sensitive data is given. To understand these restrictions for each question, please refer to the LAEP data dictionary.	
For questions on the day of the year of uptake values, note that these are optional and will be more significant if your LAEP forecasts rapid uptake in the short term. For longer term LAEP plans, such as those for Net Zero in 2050, these are not required.	
When compiling data, you may need to make decisions about the resolution of data provided, for example whether to provide data at a higher geographical resolution or for more individual years in the modelled period. In this case, please provide the relevant information in the context box.	
DFES Pathway	
Which pathway does this LAEP align with?	
Domestic Building Thermal Efficiency	
What unit does this LAEP use?	
What type of geographical area does this LAEP use?	
[OPTIONAL] What is the day of the year on which the uptake values apply? (Give your answer in the format DD/MM.)	

Figure 1: The top of the Local Authority Common Ask questionnaire including the first questions on the metadata for domestic building thermal efficiency data.

There is an additional area that should be completed with the metadata about any custom area shapefiles that are provided. Custom geographic area shapefiles can be optionally provided if any technology data is indexed by a non-standard geographical area. The requirements of the geojson files are listed fully in the Local Authority Common Ask definition and should be provided separately. Each geojson provided should be listed here with the name in the column labelled “geojson name”, with the technology data file(s) that it applies to listed to the right in the relevant cell of the column “Technology data CSV name”.

If you have provided custom geojsons, please list the names of the files below and which input CSVs each applies to:	
geojson name	Technology data csv name
example_geojson_name	example_technology_csv_name

Figure 2: The custom area shapefile metadata question at the bottom of the Local Authority Common Ask questionnaire.

There is an additional sheet labelled “DFES Scenario Selector” which can be used to indicate the DFES scenario that best represents your LAEP for domestic building thermal efficiency if your data for this forecast cannot be easily quantified and presented in the format required by the LAEP.

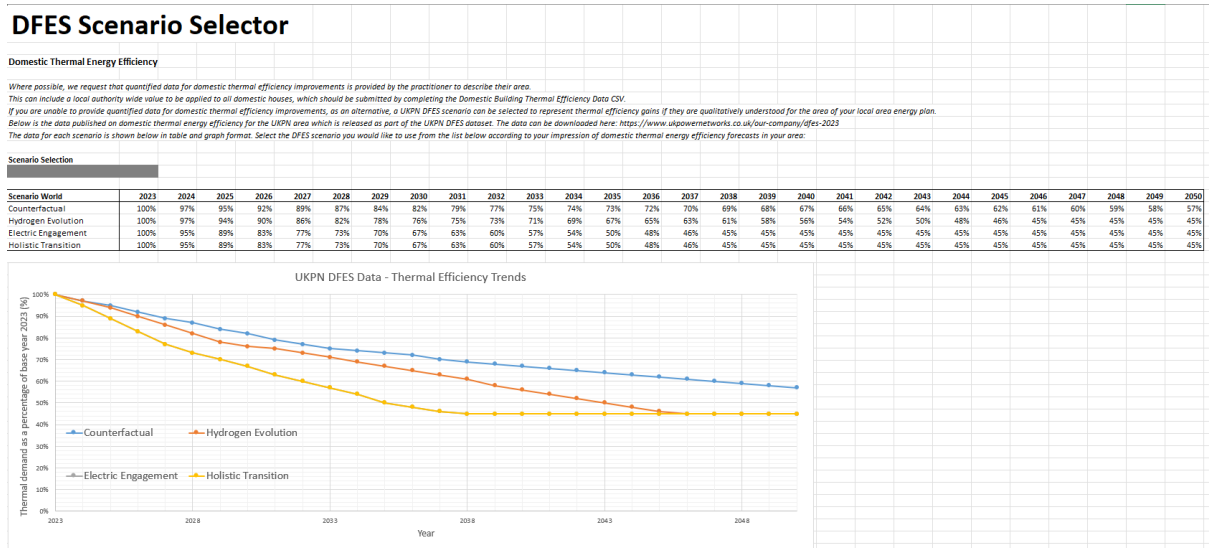


Figure 3: The DFES scenario selector tab to be used in domestic building efficiency cannot be provided in the preferred format.

The file should be returned in the same format as it was provided in.

3. CUSTOM GEOGRAPHIC AREAS [OPTIONAL]

The standard geographical areas that are accepted for the technology data CSVs are LSOAs, MSOAs and local authorities, as defined on the [ONS Open Geography Portal](#). If geographical areas with boundaries that differ from these are used to index data in the technology data CSVs, then a custom shapefile or completed non-standard area LSOA definition CSV should be provided to define these boundaries. With all factors being equal, a non-standard area LSOA definition CSV is a preferable way to define your LAEP area rather than a geojson shapefile, but the information should be provided in the format that is most convenient for you depending on the format of your LAEP data.

3.1 Non-standard area LSOA definition

If a shapefile cannot be provided, then the template “non_standard_area_lsoa_definition” can be completed to indicate the areas covered by your LAEP. This should include the following two columns:

- “LSOA”: this column should contain a complete list of all of the LSOAs that are affected by your LAEP and present in the technology data files. The definition of LSOAs used should be specified in the LACA questionnaire if using this approach.
- “Percentage of LSOA covered by data”: this should specify the fraction of each LSOA that you believe is covered by your LAEP. In the case that an LSOA is completely covered by your LAEP, the value should be 100. If any LSOA is not covered by your LAEP, meaning this value would be 0, then it should not be included in this sheet. The percentage covered should be calculated using what you feel is the most relevant metric for your LAEP. As the same fraction will apply across all technologies, the recommendation is to use the percentage of the area covered by the LSOA. When providing data using this non-standard area, note that the data provided should only be representative of the fraction of the LSOA that is covered, and does **not** need to be scaled up to represent the whole LSOA.

3.2 Shapefiles (geojson format)

If providing a shapefile which specifies the boundary of your custom area, the data should be supplied in a standardised “geojson” format, to ensure correct interpretation of the file contents. Note that the

naming of the areas in the geojson file should match exactly with the naming used in the technology data files, including capitalisation, spelling and spaces.

Each set of boundaries only needs to be supplied once, and if the areas are used across multiple technology data CSVs, then the same set of boundaries can be referenced multiple times. Each geojson file supplied should also contain only one set of boundaries to avoid ambiguity in how they correspond to technology data CSVs. The correspondence between the shapefiles defining boundary areas and the technology data CSVs in which they are used is indicated by the relevant section of the Local Authority Common Ask questionnaire. Note that the shapefile should only include geometries which are referenced in the technology data files. Unused geometries should be removed before the Local Authority Common Ask is submitted. Each Feature should also have an assigned ID to have a consistent format between shapefiles where multiple areas are provided, and those where a single area is provided. The co-ordinate system for all shapefiles should be EPSG:27700, to avoid any room for misinterpretation when converting between shapefiles.