...these days of grave responsibility are also days of great privilege and opportunity. Never again shall we find the same mental and moral attitude which is necessary to bring such a scheme as outlined here to fruition. Let it not be said of us we failed...

Ernest T Williams 1916, addressing the Institution of Electrical Engineers on his vision of a national electricity supply system

Has connectivity of the grid disconnected people from energy generation and its effects?

Just 100 years ago heating, hot water and domestic chores were physically demanding tasks undertaken by the household itself. Today this is done through flicking switches and a proliferation of electrical devices.

Has the disconnect between fuel extraction and energy generation from the end consumer affected how we interact with the energy source itself, and its associated impacts? Can this connectivity be re-established and how should it be manifested in image, lifestyle and language?

The National Grid for electricity supply begins with fuel extraction and ends with consumption of power. The natural resources needed for this process are varied including coal, nuclear fuels, water, metals and impacts on every aspect of the environment from under the ground to the ozone layer.

Understanding the real impact of our increasing demand for electrical power on our environment means investigating the resources expended to extract, transport and use fuels, the aesthetics of the landscape, the infrastructure to transmit and distribute electricity and the growing societal dependence on a growing number of electrical devices.

Important dates in design, creation and continued development of the UK National Grid

1915-1925
Electric Power supply Committee established
Williamson Report 1919
Electricity Commissioners established
Electricity Supply Corporation established
Electricity Supply Act 1922

1926-1935
War Report 1926
The Electricity Supply Act 1926
Central Electricity Board created
Work begins on the National Grid
Government Scientist Committee established
Practical way to remove sulphar dioxide discovered
The 132kV grid begins operation in 1933

1946-1955
The Electricity Act 1947 enables nationalisation, mergers 682 electricity companies and vested supply in 12 area electricity boards
generation and the 132kV National grid vested in the British Electricity Authority
Electricity supply in nationalised 1948

1956-1965
The Clean Air Act 1956
The electricity Act 1957
The Central Electricity authority is dissolved and replaced by the Central Electricity Generating Board (CEGB) and the Electricity Council 1957
The Electricity and Gas Act 1963
Red 400 kV transmission line commissioned 1965

1966-1970
The Gas and Electricity Act 1968

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