

Supporting our customers in vulnerable circumstances

2020/21 Stakeholder Engagement and Consumer Vulnerability Incentive



7TH YEAR MAINTAINING
OUR BSI INCLUSIVE SERVICE
PROVISION VERIFICATION



FIRST DNO TO EMBED DISCREET
SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC
ABUSE ON THEIR WEBSITE



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE™
We invest in people Platinum



FIVE STAR RATING AND
15X MORE REVIEWS
THAN ALL THE OTHER
DNOs COMBINED



We're here to help, 24/7 Our performance over the past month



UK Power Networks is the country's largest electricity distributor, making sure the lights stay on for more than eight million homes and businesses across London, the South East and the East of England.

Every year we take the opportunity through the Stakeholder Engagement and Consumer Vulnerability (SECV) submission to summarise how we engage with our wide range of stakeholders and address key consumer vulnerability issues. This suite of reports aims to demonstrate how we embrace wider social and environmental objectives through our engagement activities while ensuring the ongoing delivery of an efficient network.

Our submission is divided into three parts:

Part 1

Outlines our strategic approach to engaging and working with stakeholders and supporting those in vulnerable circumstances

Part 2

Highlights the results and impact that we have delivered through engaging with our stakeholders

Part 3

Focuses on the initiatives and impact we have delivered to support those in vulnerable circumstances

Report contents and structure

This is Part 3 of our 2020/21 SECV Submission.

This year we expand on how we measure and deliver the greatest impact through our initiatives, as a result of the personal and passionate engagement of our employees.

Social Sustainability Manager's introduction

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We have included additional information on the low carbon journey of producing this report. Please turn to the back two pages if you would like to find out more.

Social Sustainability Manager's introduction

Helping customers who need extra support has been more important than ever this year. We have found new ways to identify, engage and support our customers, including people disproportionately affected by the pandemic. We are committed to breaking down barriers for customers who are at risk of being left behind in the transition to a smart, flexible energy system. From improving our priority services to tackling fuel poverty, we have been thinking outside of the box to deliver inclusive services and support our customers who need it the most. Please refer to Part 1 for our approach to vulnerability.



Dr Giulia Privitera

Applying real focus on Consumer Vulnerability

2020 saw an unprecedented impact on the communities we serve, with the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbating existing challenges with more people needing help for the first time. At the same time, the change customers are experiencing as the energy system moves towards Net Zero has not stopped. It has never been more important to review our Consumer Vulnerability Strategy with our stakeholders to sharpen where we focus.

As a local socially responsible business, we wanted to do more to help support customers that need it the most. So this year we continued to focus on four strategic priorities that were defined last year with customers and stakeholders. This enabled us to deliver the most value as a DNO and address some of our customers' most pressing wants and needs. Our resolve to keep focus on these priorities was strengthened by the results of our continued engagement and in-depth research.

As the depth and breadth of the challenges experienced by our customers increase, we recognise the true value of partnerships and the need to keep evolving our engagement approaches. That is why this year we significantly expanded the range of cross-sector collaborations and innovative approaches to identify, engage and support our most vulnerable customers. Additionally we have enhanced our measurement framework to evaluate the impact delivered in a more consistent, transparent and comparable way, refreshing the proxies we use and embedding financial, social and wellbeing benefits together into one industry tool.

The in-depth research and engagement that we have conducted this year has deepened our understanding of customers' changing needs, driving the four strategic focus areas that form our social sustainability programme.

1. Maximising partnerships and training our staff

To deliver support where it is most needed, we focused on understanding the impact of COVID-19 on our customers using data and engagement. We expanded our range of partnerships and training to address emerging vulnerabilities, while maintaining existing services for those already in need (see partnership mapping).

We delivered our highest level of cross-utility collaborations (14).

2. Managing and developing our Priority Services Register (PSR)

We focused on understanding the drivers behind low PSR take-up volumes (28%) in under-represented regions such as London. This ensured we continue to expand our PSR reach and impact to support those hard-to-reach and seldom heard. We launched a strategic initiative to investigate and address London-specific PSR uptake challenges. Throughout these critical times we are proud to have achieved a PSR customer satisfaction score of 93.5%.

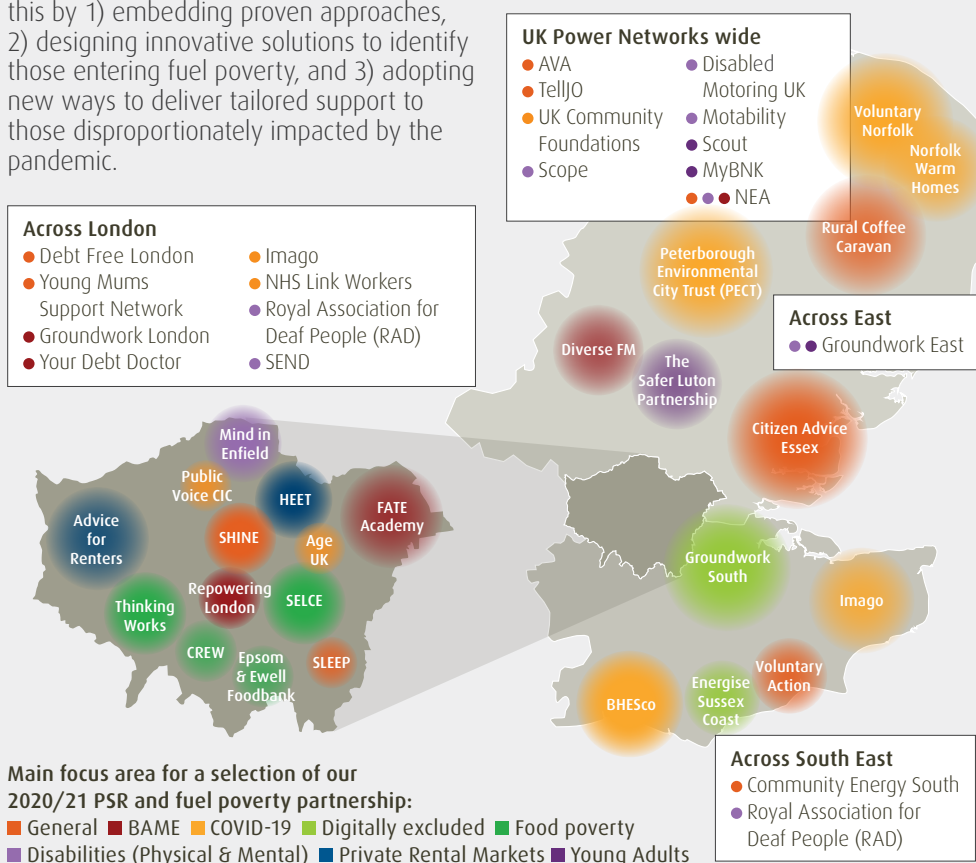
3. Tackling fuel poverty

Fuel poverty, affecting nearly 760,000 households across our regions, is on the rise due to the pandemic. Building on last year's programme, we continued to focus on the scale of support we provide by quickly refreshing our partnerships and adapting our delivery models, providing fuel poverty advice to 841,205 customers and delivering in-depth personalised support to 13,845 households to tackle fuel poverty in hard-to-reach communities. We achieved this by 1) embedding proven approaches, 2) designing innovative solutions to identify those entering fuel poverty, and 3) adopting new ways to deliver tailored support to those disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.

4. Ensuring no one is left behind in a changing world

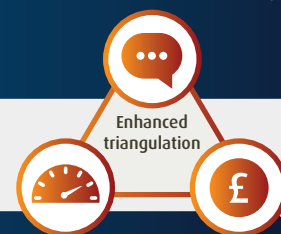
For us this means removing the barriers our customers may experience in relation to energy, whether they are excluded from services today or from accessing the benefits of the Net Zero transition tomorrow. Learning from the social model for disability, which says people are disabled by barriers in society, not by their impairment, we evolved our understanding of customer barriers, moving from a static model focused on customer circumstances to a dynamic model which considers the drivers of exclusion caused by system failures. We also considered the unique needs of SMEs: our SME customers have informed our definition of SME vulnerability allowing us to widen our focus beyond domestic customers.

It is my privilege to lead these social programmes in a business that believes in truly impactful support, working alongside caring colleagues and partners. Throughout this report we demonstrate our strategy in action, grounded by practical examples and highlighting the positive outcomes delivered for our communities.



Maximising value and measuring overall impact

Our approach to measuring the impact of our engagement is set out in Part 1. Below we highlight the specific enhancements made to the approach for Part 3 initiatives, driving our actions in this area.



Selecting and prioritising initiatives to deliver maximum value

Continually improving our value forecasting process allows us to determine the best course of action to take.

EMBEDDED – This year we more than quadrupled the number of Part 3 initiatives assessed through social impact valuation (SROI). Across this document we highlight the social value created by the 36 initiatives assessed this year. To facilitate comparisons across different organisations, we have not only adopted the industry standard social value framework co-developed with the other DNOs, but we have also shared the main drivers which have shaped our modelling for each value, publishing them on our [website](#) for transparency.

EVOLVED – The Willingness To Pay (WTP) industry-wide research has clearly indicated that supporting people in vulnerable circumstances and tackling fuel poverty is important to customers. However, WTP research is not sufficiently granular to be used as a quantitative differentiator to prioritise individual initiatives. WTP remains a key part of our wider approach to provide an indication of our customers' relative priorities, however SROI valuation is then used to estimate and compare the impact of similar initiatives.

ENHANCED – Previous trials of Simetrica's Social Value Bank (SVB) tool proved successful in showing the additional wellbeing benefits of our initiatives.

This year we embedded the SVB wellbeing measures representative of our areas into the common industry SROI framework to complement financial and social values. Being able to forecast additional benefits such as 'feeling in control over things at home' for certain interventions allows us to assess their impact on our customers' wellbeing.

NEW – We identified mental health value validation as a gap and are working with Simetrica to develop bespoke mental health wellbeing measures (proxies) that are consistent, and compatible with the industry wide SROI framework. We will share these additional measures across all DNOs for consistency.

Our enhanced social value framework guides our decision-making on the selection and prioritisation of the actions we take in response to stakeholder feedback (three illustrative examples are provided below):

Vulnerability impact area	Stakeholders said	Initiative (projects have been anonymised)	Cost of service	1 year SROI ¹	Proceed
A) Emerging vulnerabilities from COVID-19 e.g. those recently leaving hospital	We should put great focus on those with emerging vulnerabilities e.g. COVID-19 survivors.	Project A1 in Sussex	£20,000	£3.09	✓
		Project A2 in Sussex	£20,000	£0.85	✗
B) Supporting those recently facing unemployment	More services are required to support those at risk of fuel poverty following the rise in unemployment since the pandemic.	Project B1 across East of England	£21,840	£1.56	✓
		Project B2 across East of England	£15,292	£0.32	✗
C) Supporting those at risk of domestic abuse²	We should do more to safeguard and protect those who are facing domestic abuse.	Project C1 in East London	£19,780	£10.35	✓
		Project C2 in East London	£20,000	-£0.46	✗

¹ Including financial, social and wellbeing benefits (Net benefit per £ spent)

² Example C: Our stakeholders were concerned at the rise in domestic abuse during lockdown. We gathered two potential initiatives, projects C1 and C2, both including safeguarding interventions against domestic abuse and fuel poverty support within East London. Using stakeholders' feedback, WTP priorities and costs of the potential initiatives alone would have suggested good reason to progress with both. However, our SROI assessment indicated Project C1 will deliver significant financial and social values exceeding Project C2, allowing us to select the most impactful initiative.

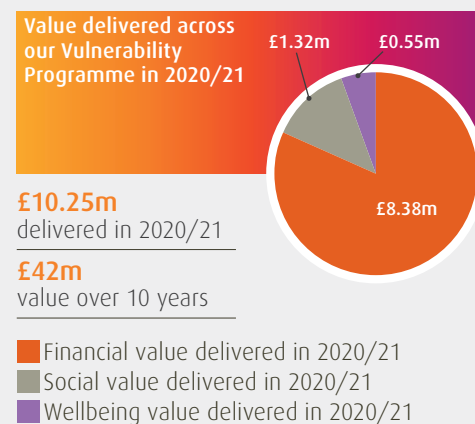
Measuring the benefits delivered by our initiatives today and tomorrow

This year we enhanced the transparency and consistency of our approach to measuring impact.

Our ambition is to maximise the value delivered to our customers in vulnerable situations. To do so, we must assess the value of possible initiatives holistically. Recognising this, we have expanded our value measurement framework to assess financial, social and wellbeing benefits in a consistent and comprehensive way.

Our enhanced measurement framework estimates the benefit of our actions for vulnerable customers and society at large by using 'proxies' – monetary values attached to each unit of support we deliver – gathered from reputable sources such as an industry-wide database or research carried out by expert partners or academics. Where market prices are not applicable, we commission bespoke wellbeing valuations in line with HMT Green Book guidance and the industry-wide SROI tool.

ENHANCED This year we refined our approach to measuring impact (aligned to last year's panel feedback), using the common industry SROI tool (see Part 1). For interventions that have an enduring impact such as in-depth support, we now additionally measure the value created over a 10 year horizon. In addition to new wellbeing measures, we **enhanced our existing proxies to provide increased rigour in the assessment of benefits stemming from our fuel poverty programme**. We recognise fuel poverty is complex and not all customers are reached in the same way. We reflected this complexity in sophisticated financial saving proxies taking into account 1) the weighting of different interventions received, 2) the likelihood of the savings being delivered, 3) the different ways customers receive advice. To do this we sourced the latest data from expert provider



Parity Projects on the energy bill and CO₂ emissions saving tied to more than 30 efficiency measures for over 1,000 energy inefficient households in the areas we serve, and we used our partners' data to inform the weighting of different interventions.

1 Maximising our partnerships and training our staff

Our ambition is to provide more support for more people in vulnerable situations, and we recognise we cannot do this alone or without a suitably trained workforce. We achieve this ambition through forming and embedding effective partnerships, and providing tailored training to both our staff and partners.

✓ 223

active partnerships in 2020/21
65 newly formed in 2020/21

✓ 54

partnerships refocused to deliver
in COVID-19 times

✓ 12,617

COVID-secure training hours for our
teams and partners

Understanding our customers' changing needs

Stakeholders said:

At our Partners Forum in June 2020, members advised us to understand the impact of the pandemic on fuel poor communities and customers on our PSR (e.g. those with disabilities), to ensure we address their changing needs. They identified financially affected households, BAME communities and domestic abuse as potential priorities for tailored support, however, also encouraged us to consider the broader impact of the pandemic on our customers.

Leveraging joint utility strengths to support disabled customers **ENHANCED**

What we did:

- As part of our Scope Utilities Membership (SUM), a cross-utility group including Scope, SGN, Anglian Water and energy suppliers, we engaged with 1,179 customers to understand the experience of people with disabilities dealing with utilities during the pandemic and how experiences differed from those without disabilities. As a SUM founding member, we shared the insights with over 260 stakeholders at a 'How we can help' cross-utility event to drive better support for disabled customers beyond the regions we serve.
- We used this research to improve our own services, as the study revealed 20% of

disabled customers understood they were eligible for the PSR but had not registered. Investigating further we identified the accessibility of our registration forms could be a contributory factor. We took guidance from The Big Hack Team, Scope's digital experts, to enhance the accessibility of our online form.

- Expanding last year's 'End the Awkward' initiative, we provided additional training to our employees to better understand the concerns of disabled customers and support them through the pandemic. The research advised they were less likely to proactively sign up to the PSR over the telephone; so we revised our call centre conversation frameworks under Scope's guidance and tested it with our Inclusive Customer Panel.
- We did not stop there. Recognising many still require support to sign up, we formed a cross-utility partnership with SGN and Anglian Water to provide extra support to disabled customers to help them register on the PSR as part of Scope's holistic and accessible Disability Energy Support Extra service (also see Part 3 Section 3).

Understanding evolving regional vulnerabilities **NEW**

What we did:

- Partnering with South East Water, the

Centre for Sustainable Energy and Sustainability First we assessed the current and short-term impact of COVID-19 in the South East of England, mapping the related vulnerabilities at Middle Layer Super Output Area level. Understanding the pandemic-driven changing needs and associated geographical distribution helped us to channel our partnerships in the areas of most need.

- We developed 18 new partnerships addressing specific COVID-driven challenges as articulated across this document.

Stakeholder outcomes

- ✓ Improved call centre advisors' conversation frameworks and accessibility of online PSR registration form, with 8,795 additional PSR registrations in the first month alone
- ✓ Supporting 6,500 disabled customers to access support from our PSR via Scope's Disability Energy Support Extra service
- ✓ Identified new kinds of vulnerability risk factors and South East-specific challenges emerging as a result of COVID-19 through the analysis of 35 datasets

How we develop new and improved partnerships

Our approach to impactful partnerships

We partner with trusted local organisations to deliver targeted support to customers based on their locational needs. Each year we review our partnerships against our customers' changing needs, conducting a gap analysis against our existing offerings. To maximise the impact our initiatives deliver, we evaluate proposed partnerships against six criteria:

- 1 Aligns with our vulnerability principles
- 2 Has the ability to reach hard-to-reach and seldom heard communities (see definition in Part 1)
- 3 Maximises impact delivered to our customers
- 4 Delivers an innovative approach

- 5 Is scalable across wider geographic footprints

- 6 Offers reciprocal learning opportunities
- This led us to engage 114 organisations to address gaps on emerging vulnerabilities and low presence in areas of need, resulting in 34 new PSR referral partners, 39 PSR referral partners refreshed, and expanding our fuel poverty partnerships from 14 to 32 to reflect growing emerging needs.

Our partnerships are categorised into Delivery, Strategic, Industry and Referral partners depending on the role they play, and are organised into three geographical tiers: **T1** – partners that serve customers across our three licence areas, **T2** – regional partners that serve customers

across a single licence area, or **T3** – local partners that serve customers in local areas (see mapping on page 1).

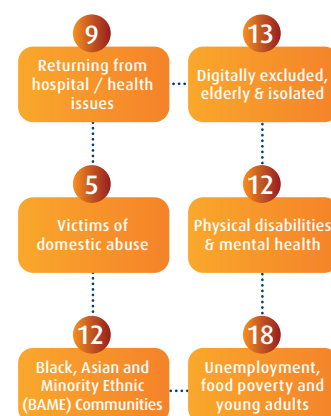
2020/21 Active Partnerships





Maximising partnerships and training	SCOPE <small>Equality for disabled people</small>	Helped us to understand the barriers faced by disabled people, making our service more accessible and inclusive	ENHANCED
	south east water	Joint partnership with Centre for Sustainable Energy and Sustainability First to understand COVID-19 impact	NEW
	DIVERSE	Upskilled to support hard-to-reach young generations through radio and digital engagement	NEW
Managing and developing our PSR	Young Mums <small>Support Network</small>	Co-developed and tested bespoke videos to engage with the PSR under-represented group of young families	NEW
	Policy in Practice	Embedded an automated PSR alert for those eligible in Policy in Practice's 'Benefits and Budget calculator'	NEW
	ageUK	Formed strong referral pathways with four key hospitals in East London to reach customers with respiratory needs	ENHANCED
Tackling fuel poverty	HEET <small>Helping Energy Efficient Towns</small>	Helped us tackle fuel poverty for victims of domestic abuse and across the private rented sector	EMBEDDED
	GREEN	Tailored approaches to support customers from working with faith leaders to engaging digitally excluded communities	ENHANCED
	CATAPULT <small>Energy Systems</small> UrbanTide	Co-designed an innovative solution to deliver proactive support to those entering fuel poverty	NEW
Providing inclusive services	Rural Coffee Caravan	Continued to deliver local fuel poverty support to rural communities in remote areas with Rural Coffee Caravan	EMBEDDED
	socialenergy	Worked together to co-develop engagement materials and increase customer trust in flexibility opportunities	NEW
	DMC <small>DISABLED MOTORISTS UK</small>	Informed our understanding of the specific needs of disabled motorists considering transitioning to an EV	NEW

Number of partnerships focused on customers disproportionately affected by COVID-19



Developing our staff and partners to tackle social issues

Stakeholders said:

Our CEO Panel encouraged us to evolve our social role by pushing the frontier of what utilities aim to achieve for their customers, looking at issues outside but related to the energy industry. Our Partners Forum advised us to deliver enduring support by maximising community resilience, ensuring small and new-to-energy charities are not overlooked.

What we did:

Built community resilience through feedback and upskilling **ENHANCED**

Oxfam highlighted the GB third sector saw an overall drop in income by £67m before the impact of the pandemic, therefore as part of our fuel poverty programme, we focused on upskilling delivery partners to improve their resilience. We engaged with partners with strong community trust, who are new to providing fuel poverty support or have limited grant application expertise, enhancing their capabilities in this space and leveraging the strength of their community links.

Case Study: We formed a partnership with Diverse FM, a multi-cultural community radio station operating in areas with a disproportionately high representation of BAME customers and serving the top nine most deprived wards in Luton. Diverse FM are well regarded for delivering local outreach activities. To help them widen their service offering, together with the NEA we provided training on energy efficiency activities. They are now using places of worship, radio shows and digital engagement to engage with hard-to-reach communities (particularly younger generations) and offer in-depth energy efficiency support that can be provided in different languages.

Identifying and supporting victims of domestic abuse **NEW**

With one in five offences registered as domestic abuse during the first lockdown and the national domestic abuse hotline recording a 65% increase in calls from April to July 2020, domestic abuse has been highlighted as an 'epidemic within a pandemic' by a range of stakeholders.

- Through learning from a similar scheme with Citizens Advice at our Summer Partners Forum we partnered with AVA (Against Violence & Abuse) to train our frontline staff to identify and refer victims of domestic abuse to national abuse helplines and local support services in their county or local areas.
- Learning from Thames Water, we partnered with Royal Mail and charity Hestia to adopt the 'Safe Spaces' initiative on our website (400k views per month) creating a digital button that, when clicked, provides easy to understand, discreet and localised advice for victims of domestic abuse, leaving no trace on any search history on the user's equipment and can be quickly and easily exited. **DNO FIRST**
- Realising the value, we then shared the benefit of Safe Spaces to over 6,300 of our local government and community stakeholders.

Reducing COVID-19 barriers for our customers and frontline staff **DNO FIRST**

Stakeholders said:

The Royal Association for Deaf people shared how the wearing of opaque masks during the pandemic has had a profound impact on nine million people in the UK who are deaf or live with hearing loss.

What we did:

We were the first utility in the UK to deploy transparent masks for frontline customer serving staff (see front cover).

- We researched which market-ready options offered the best protection. Engagement with our staff and contractors highlighted the gaps around a standard visor not offering suitable protection against COVID-19 spread.
- West Midlands Police were first to trial bespoke see-through masks. Through feedback on their prototype, we deployed a new bespoke type of face covering that provides greater protection, at the same time allowing improved communications with customers on the frontline.
- We quickly learned that transparent masks also brought additional benefits to customers with dementia or autism, being able to see friendly facial gestures.

"As a Deaf stakeholder, I am delighted to see UKPN use see-through masks to facilitate communication which could not have happened otherwise. These help in what is an incredibly lonely and isolating time for Deaf and hard of hearing customers."

CLlr Gary Harding, Gravesham Borough Council

Stakeholder outcomes

- ✓ 400K customers per month benefit from our website 'Safe Space' support
- ✓ Reducing communication barriers and increased wellbeing for 6,482 customers through transparent masks
- ✓ 289 frontline employees undergoing training to identify and support victims of abuse

2 Managing and developing our Priority Services Register (PSR)

Our initial RII0-ED1 PSR target of 1.0m is a distant memory. This year we continued to tailor our approach to PSR uptake driven by data and to make great strides towards our stakeholder-driven target of achieving 40% of eligible households registered across each of our 124 districts. To add a further stretch, we set out to close the PSR uptake gap in London versus our two other regions.

✓ **1.97m**

24% of total households in our regions registered on our PSR

✓ **3,996,799**

interactions with customers on the PSR

✓ **93.5%**

PSR customer satisfaction achieved during lockdowns (increased from 19/20)

Targeting 40% PSR uptake in every district

Stakeholders said:

We should increase support for customers in vulnerable circumstances as power cut impacts are now more acute with more people requiring support. Our Partners Forum advised us to make signing up to the PSR as easy as possible.

What we did:

- Continued to focus on achieving a minimum of 40% of eligible households registered across all 124 districts we serve (advised in 2018/19 by our CEO Panel and Partners Forum), focusing specifically on 42 districts <40%.

- By partnering with 27 trusted local organisations, we achieved 40% in 36 of the remaining 42, with only six of the 124 remaining districts requiring additional interventions.
- Expanded our 'Be Winter Ready' campaign using regional media to promote our PSR jointly in under-represented areas alongside the local water company's PSR, simplifying sign up for both.
- Launched a call for ideas via the Energy Innovation Centre, reaching over 6,700 SMEs, resulting in a solution called TellJO. Customers can enter their data into an

app; the TellJO digital service will check their PSR eligibility, and with their consent automatically sign them up to the PSR – making the experience easier.

Stakeholder outcomes

- ✓ 95% of districts now over 40%
- ✓ 44% increase in number of districts meeting the 40% target (118) compared to last year (82)
- ✓ 20% PSR registration rate with TellJO, 10x higher compared to traditional media campaigns

Tailoring our approach to PSR uptake

At our Summer Partners Forum, stakeholders encouraged us to better understand the drivers of under-representation and identify potential barriers to registering on the PSR in London, as data highlighted London to be particularly under-represented. We launched a dedicated three-step initiative to develop a bespoke data-driven approach identifying and addressing London-specific challenges.

Step 1 – Used research to identify where to focus

- Identified 14 best practice recommendations to address potential reasons for under-representation through our engagement with five Citizens Advice London offices and 14 relevant expert stakeholders.
- Learned from national energy suppliers, such as EDF Energy and water companies serving other large cities such as United
- Therefore, we investigated how the London demographics are different from

the rest of the UK and compared our needs codes representation across our three areas. We found that bespoke approaches were required to raise PSR awareness for certain groups.

- Using Scope's crowd-sourcing tool, we engaged with 1,198 customers across a range of vulnerable circumstances to better understand barriers and drivers for customers registering, and the most successful channels for reaching

customers. We published our research findings on [our website](#).

- We identified 12 potential blockers to 'virtual' sign-up, leading us to conduct an accessibility audit of our website, validating six key hypotheses on reduced sign-ups. Triangulating each hypothesis with our customer research evidence, we identified lack of PSR awareness and clear messaging as areas of focus.

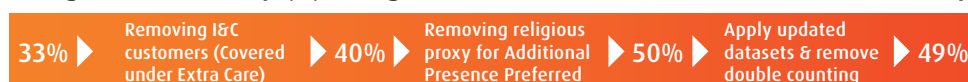
Step 2 – Used data and engagement to refine and validate our eligibility framework

- We conducted a thorough review of the methodology used to calculate eligibility for the PSR, reviewing all assumptions and cross-referencing our datasets against Census 2011 and the latest available data.

- As covered in the adjacent table, we identified and corrected three key factors leading to an overestimation of eligibility overall (January 2021 data).

- London was more affected by these eligibility anomalies than our other regions due to the high density of businesses and ethnic diversity. However there remained a 10-13% gap leading us to launch step 3.

Changes of PSR take-up (%) of eligible households in London at each refinement step



PSR take-up (%) of eligible households using the old and new eligibility framework

Region	London		East		South East	
Eligible measure	Old	New	Old	New	Old	New
% take-up of eligible households	33%	49%	52%	59%	57%	62%
% take-up of total households served	19%		27%		28%	

- We have ratified our new eligibility framework with independent experts at Citizens Advice and our Partners at the Fuel Poverty Forum, as this initiative highlighted that measuring actual PSR take-up versus eligible households can be a subjective measure.

- From engaging with EDF Energy and Thames Water we learned measuring registration versus total households served provides a consistent and comparable metric, with 25% regarded as an industry standard across suppliers.

Step 3 – Tailored our approach to PSR awareness and communication

- Refreshed our PSR website pages and registration forms, tailored our PSR messaging and benefits to London demographics and created testimonials with our Inclusive Customer Panel based on real customer experiences.
- Refocused ten and created eight new London partnerships and associated channels. For example, co-developing tailored social media promotional materials with 12 families through the Young Mums

Support Network to reach under-represented families with children under five.

- Delivered an innovative media campaign, ranging from Facebook advertising focused towards under-represented groups, radio adverts through several high-reach popular London radio stations, to using social influencers like TikTok's 'ThatPropertyGuy' and a Bengali community spokesperson to engage with carers and relatives of customers in vulnerable circumstances.

Stakeholder outcomes

- ✓ 17.7% increase in London PSR registrations with 50% eligible registered in London (as of end of March 2021)
- ✓ 12 new innovative channels launched with a potential of up to 269,000 additional registrations estimated

Making automated PSR data sharing with water companies a reality

DNO FIRST



Stakeholders said:

Our Utility Networks and Partners Fora advise that shared understanding of vulnerability needs and associated support across utilities is needed when serving customers regardless of which utility is providing the service.

What we did:

- Took the lead in driving cross-utility discussions to establish a consistent lawful basis for data-sharing across the

energy and water sectors.

- Highlighted the need for a Licence Condition change, resulting in Ofgem and Ofwat releasing a joint letter advising the importance of making progress on PSR data sharing. We then worked with Ofgem to draft amendments to the Licence Condition.
- Engaged with the eight regional water companies in our area to develop automated systems to scale up our data

sharing. We initially underestimated the effort and complexity required to engage and progress such change across our regions, however we persisted and co-designed an integration architecture to make it easier to accommodate their varied needs. Albeit later than we wanted, we will unlock automated datashare for 33% of our customers by August, sharing the insights with our Utility Networks partners to replicate nationally.

Adapting to support emerging vulnerabilities

Stakeholders said:

Our Partners Forum encouraged us to identify and support customers most impacted by COVID-19.

What we did: **ENHANCED**

Using research into the impact of the pandemic on vulnerability (see Section 1.1), we created eight local partnerships to identify and register customers for support.

Example 1: Helping COVID-19 survivors

- Supported 8,753 customers including those leaving hospital by registering them on the PSR, providing energy advice and ensuring they return to heated homes.
- We worked with healthcare referral organisations and NHS staff to increase support to customers recovering from health issues (8x more than 19/20) through partners like BHESco, Age UK, PECT, Imago and Public Voice CIC.

Example 2: Supporting mental health

- Our PSR data showed a 34.2% increase in mental health needs being registered on our PSR compared to last year.
- We changed our engagement approach with these customers, away from virtual mechanisms to in-depth telephone based befriending services providing increased time and privacy to customers. This swift adaptation resulted in £4,510 total customer savings and £23,513 wellbeing

value delivered over virtual methods.

- Partnered with mental health charity Mind in Enfield, an area with an increasing representation of BAME communities suffering from mental health challenges, we provided support to 62 households saving £4,023 across their energy bills together with befriending and in-depth mental health support referrals.

Stakeholder outcomes

- ✓ 10% increase in PSR uptake for targeted vulnerability categories impacted by the pandemic
- ✓ Delivered an increased well-being value of £31,770 across our mental health partnerships



£14.97 social value created by our healthcare partnerships in excess of every £1 spent over 10 years

Our PSR strategy in numbers

Understand	Data	Partners	Learn	Outcome
3,495,511 identified PSR eligible households 56% registered as per new PSR eligibility framework 118/124 districts met minimum target of 40% of eligible households registered (up from 82 last year)	 1,027,232 customers contacted and 314,470 information records updated on a 18-month contact cycle 149,061 (16%) customer details removed through cleansing	100% PSR need codes supported through our partnerships 100% geographical coverage with T1-T2 partnerships + 27 T3 location-specific partners covering most under-represented districts	Direct PSR registration channels 32% website 53% phone 15% post 10% increase in PSR uptake against categories most impacted by COVID-19	90% of PSR customers restored in 1 hour 34% reduction in cost for PSR eligible customers to make alterations supporting their needs 13,533 business customers registered on Extra Care Register (59% increase)

3 Tackling fuel poverty

Fuel poverty, health and wellbeing are linked in many cases, as living in a cold, damp home can cause stress and respiratory issues. This year we have built on previous performance by expanding our fuel poverty partnerships, ensuring we continue to drive value and deliver impact for those disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.

Fuel poverty advice		In-depth personalised support		Additional support through Community Foundations
841,205 customers reached		13,845 customers reached		20,996 customers reached
£3.05m saving via our partners	£10.38 avg. saving	£2.66m first year saving	£160.45 avg. annual saving for ten years	34 local organisations supported
£2.25m saving to new PSR customers	£10.30 avg. saving	£19.55m saving over following nine years		930 domestic abuse prevention initiatives
£380,067 saving to customers updating PSR details				

Stakeholders said:

Continue to expand your established fuel poverty programme to find new ways to deliver wider support in collaboration with other utilities, ensuring we respond in an agile way to changing needs, whilst at the same time supporting traditionally impacted and hardest to reach customers.

What we did:

- We refined our fuel poverty guiding principles (covered in Part 1), co-designed with our expert stakeholders in 2019, to focus on the elements which really impact our customers, then prioritised our programme against them.

- We quickly adapted our Power Partners fund to align with the evolving customer needs, enabling us to swiftly set up 17 new local fuel poverty partnerships across our regions. Combined with 22 existing fuel poverty projects, we delivered customers a £8.35 million saving this year alone through a combination of:

- general energy advice delivered to 841,205 customers, including at 96 community events;
- 13,845 in-depth one-to-one personalised consultations providing services such as income maximisation, energy efficiency interventions, benefit checking, tariff

switching, grant application support and time of use tariff awareness. 16% down on last year due to a partnership refreshing period between lockdowns;

- Fuel poverty training for 997 frontline workers and energy champions (from healthcare workers to community energy champions) building community resilience and long-lasting impact.

Our enhanced value measurement framework (see page 2) enables us to measure the value our projects deliver over time: 13,845 households who received in-depth support this year are expected to save seven times more over the next nine years.

Maximising support where customers need it most

Stakeholders said:

Our Summer Partners Forum highlighted that COVID-19 was exacerbating the challenges faced by those in fuel poverty, as well as seeing a rapid rise in the number of people falling into fuel poverty for the first time, guiding us to focus on individuals who have been disproportionately impacted, whilst ensuring we keep supporting those traditionally hardest to reach.

What we did:

- Early in the pandemic we took the lead to rapidly create a £500k cross-utility fund helping over 100 community charities with crisis support, with 20,996 more people supported by our funding throughout 2020.
- Refocused 70% of the Power Partners fuel poverty delivery programme on: **supporting those at risk of domestic abuse; BAME communities disproportionately impacted by the pandemic; and transitory vulnerabilities.**
- **Enhanced support for hardest-to-tackle private rented sector:** by working with Home Energy Efficiency Training (HEET) we liaised with local landlords and delivered energy efficiency upgrades to 162 private renters at risk of fuel poverty in North East London saving them on average £436.40 per customer.

We also trialled an energy efficiency education scheme with England's only advice service for private tenants, Advice4Renters, supporting BAME and refugee communities in the Brent area by educating renters on their rights on minimum energy efficiency and encouraging conversations with landlords to upgrade the EPC ratings of 3,000 properties with EPC F-G.

We recognise one size does not fit all when tackling fuel poverty, and different groups have different needs. Our local delivery model of partnering with trusted organisations operating on the ground enabled us to quickly deliver tangible outcomes in the most suitable way.

Supporting those at risk of domestic abuse **NEW**

Stakeholders said:

Domestic abuse has been highlighted as an 'epidemic within a pandemic' (see page 4).

What we did:

- Learning from our stakeholders that fuel poverty programmes could play a wider role in tackling other societal problems (such as domestic abuse), we created a referral route for domestic abuse support

workers to signpost victims who need not only home security support but also energy efficiency interventions, resulting in clear referral channels for organisations such as Women's Aid, Early Help, Haven and Stay Safe East.

- We trained 154 frontline workers on fuel poverty from different organisations including domestic abuse prevention networks, additionally implementing structures for them to refer their clients to HEET. Through HEET we then provided home security systems and energy efficiency support to victims of domestic abuse.

Stakeholder outcomes

- ✓ 50 domestic abuse victims received home secure measures such as door lock changes, and on average saved £297 per year through energy efficiency measures such as external wall insulation
- ✓ 154 frontline workers trained to refer people to fuel poverty support



£22.11 social value created by our support to victims of domestic abuse in excess of every £1 spent over 10 years

Supporting Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities **ENHANCED**

Stakeholders said:

Citizens Advice highlighted that BAME households are far more likely to be in fuel poverty, an inequality that has gradually increased in recent years.

What we did:

- Empowered single parents with young children living within BAME deprived communities and on low-incomes by partnering with Repowering London, Lambeth Council, and the Vassal & Coldharbour Coronavirus Response Consortium. We trained ten single parents on in-depth energy efficiency via a Community Energy Champion who was once living on low-income and facing fuel poverty challenges. The ten single parents are then provided paid roles to provide energy efficiency advice and support to

over 90 other single parents in the community.

- Learning the importance of obtaining endorsement from faith leaders to reach communities on important matters, we engaged with trusted advisors in the community (Ilays, ACAA, Sufra and Barnet Refugee Centre) to constructively challenge the suitability of our tailored energy efficiency materials designed for customers with limited English. We then sought endorsement from faith-based leaders in the community such as Ealing Christian Centre, Ghana Muslim Union and the Faith and Belief Forum to deliver support to 230 residents.
- Leveraged partners' networks of food banks, hospital discharge teams and social workers to develop a referral

model to upskill 153 frontline workers on basic energy efficiency advice and to refer those in need of energy support to Groundwork London.

Stakeholder outcomes

- ✓ 267 customers from BAME communities saved £12k in total through general advice
- ✓ 153 frontline workers upskilled to deliver energy advice
- ✓ 90 customers saving £17k through virtual home visits and in-depth consultations



£12.23 social value created by four projects supporting ethnic minorities in excess of every £1 spent over 10 years

Transitory vulnerability – recent unemployment, food poverty and recent hardship **NEW**

Stakeholders said:

The Trussell Trust told us that as a result of the economic impact of the pandemic, frozen zero-hour contracts and the furlough scheme, food banks had seen a 60% increase in use, with 50% being first timers.

What we did:

- Repurposed several delivery programmes, for example Energise Sussex Coast (ESC) were not able to use their mobile caravan service, so we swiftly adjusted the partnership to focus on food banks

providing food parcel support as well as energy efficiency advice.

- As the pandemic progressed, we adapted our approach by working with partners like Energise Sussex Coast to be more considerate of people's needs while collecting food parcels. We pivoted our delivery model into two stages, re-engaging customers days later to have a deeper conversation on their energy bills, saving 288 customers £33,768 in Sussex alone.

Stakeholder outcomes

- ✓ 211 families supported with food parcels together with energy advice and income maximisation
- ✓ 1,383 people benefited from £159,470 of savings across our food bank partnerships



£8.34 social value created by five projects addressing transitory vulnerability in excess of every £1 spent over 10 years

Delivering innovative approaches to tackling fuel poverty

Stakeholders said:

Partners and stakeholders close to our fuel poor customers encouraged us to develop innovative solutions to identify and help those on the verge of entering into fuel poverty and reinforced the importance of providing one-stop-shop advice for hard-to-reach groups.

What we did: **NEW**

- Citizens Advice noted that 600,000 people are entering fuel poverty in the UK as a result of the pandemic, which resulted in us approaching over 6,700 innovators to explore possible solutions. This resulted in a new innovation partnership with the Energy Systems Catapult and UrbanTide to co-design a solution that identifies those in and entering fuel poverty. It maximises Artificial Intelligence (AI) and machine learning opportunities from smart meter meta data and other indicators to deliver proactive and preventative support.

- Created a cross-utility partnership with Scope, SGN and Anglian Water providing accessible support for people with disabilities to reduce electricity, gas and water costs altogether, to apply for grants, smart meters and PSR together with other non-energy services. Disabled customers have been hit hard by the pandemic with 54% reporting and 34% worried about increased energy usage and costs. Therefore we invested to expand the range of Scope's Disability Energy Support single port of call service to overcome barriers.

"UK Power Networks is helping to break down the barriers faced by disabled people, by making the customer experience more accessible and inclusive. UKPN's, SGN's and Anglian Water's cross-utility partnership to fund additional services for Scope's energy helpline will enable disabled customers to get the holistic support they need in one place for the first time."

Paul Fuller, Acting Director Of Partnerships at Scope



- We joined forces with Affinity Water and AgilityEco to deliver fuel poverty support to 5,000 customers in financial difficulties on the water social tariff in the most fuel poor areas. We are now scaling up this approach across all our regional water companies as a result.

Stakeholder outcomes

- ✓ Up to 200,000 people in or entering fuel poverty could be identified via our AI solutions
- ✓ Unlocked additional support for 6,500 people through an expanded 'Disability Energy Support Extra' service
- ✓ 75 Affinity Water social tariff customers sought fuel poverty support in the first three weeks alone



£12.48 social value created by additional help to disabled customers in excess of every £1 spent over 10 years

4 Providing inclusive services to ensure no one is left behind

Engagement has highlighted that the changes driven by the pandemic and pressure to decarbonise, mean that more people in our communities are at risk of being left behind, therefore this year we stepped up our focus in this area.

✓ **1.6m**

at risk of not benefitting and being left behind by the energy transition

✓ **15,396**

customers provided with more accessible support throughout the pandemic

✓ **65%**

of flexibility tenders awarded to more inclusive service providers

Evolving our understanding of customer barriers

Stakeholders said:

Vulnerability is not static, as the world around us is moving at pace. We should ensure our framework for identifying customer barriers in the energy sector is flexible, driving reviews of our services as customers' needs change.

What we did: **ENHANCED**

- Launched a project called Socially Green to refresh our previous research with Energy Savings Trust, 'Mind the Gap: Energy 2.0' (where we identified eight customer barriers), and built on the Centre for Sustainable Energy's 'Smart and Fair?' project, conducting a review across 40

sources capturing the latest thinking on vulnerability, testing and refining our views with 14 expert stakeholders across electricity, gas and water sectors.

- We moved from a static vulnerability lens to understanding actual or potential vulnerability as a transient and dynamic concept. We co-created a two-stage social segmentation framework based on drivers of exclusion today and in the future. Through this new segmentation we identified 10 key barriers our customers may experience informed by present and future socio-economic trends, replacing the eight previous barriers.

- We then translated this theoretical framework into a spatial and temporal mapping tool helping us forecast where and when our customers will face various barriers, driving our future strategies, engagement and service offerings.

Stakeholder outcomes

- ✓ 1.6 million people on average identified as at risk of being left behind by the energy transition by 2030
- ✓ 29 new service offerings and six new partnerships identified

Delivering inclusive services fit for a changing world

Case Study 1: Reducing digital barriers

Stakeholders said:

At NEA's Warm Homes Week 2020, stakeholders shared the key issues associated with the growing digital divide. 90% of our delivery partners highlighted that digitally excluded individuals are severely underserved as a result of increased online services.

What we did: **ENHANCED**

Many of our partners quickly adapted to virtual support during the pandemic, however we recognised the risk that certain communities would be excluded from the support available. Therefore we:

- Continued to deliver fuel poverty support to those with no access to online services in remote areas through our ongoing partnership with **Rural Coffee Caravan**. We supplied 505 energy efficient slow cookers which use as little energy as a lightbulb, to cook affordable warm meals.
- Set up a new telephone service through **Groundwork South** providing the only holistic fuel poverty service available in Kent to rural communities and digitally excluded residents, also carrying out referrals to Kent County Council's digital inclusion scheme and local Citizens Online consortiums.
- Partnered with **Energise Sussex Coast** to provide accessible support to 450 people in severely deprived communities in

Hastings and Rother, providing an energy advice telephone helpline and COVID-19 secure appointments, promoted through local newspapers, the only window many digitally excluded people had into the outside world in the pandemic.

Case Study 2: Extra support for our business customers

Stakeholders said:

Through analysing over 1,390 business customer comments coupled with Ofgem, Citizens Advice and Money Advice Trust's published research on small businesses, it was clear that SMEs can also be vulnerable, with the current PSR offering not being suitable for their specific needs.

What we did: **NEW**

- Launched an engagement and research programme to better understand small business vulnerabilities and needs, to prioritise and tailor our Extra Care Register services accordingly.
- Engaged with a representative group of 282 SMEs, learning that our support should be 'sector-agnostic' and prioritised by the primary and secondary impact an outage would have on their employees and customers when no risk management is in place. This resulted in us developing a two-tier Extra Care Register system with 12 new services for those SMEs most impacted.

- The insights informed our definition of SMEs in vulnerable circumstances and the eligibility criteria for our Extra Care Register.

An SME business in vulnerable circumstances is a business:

DNO FIRST



- whose operation is susceptible to a single power outage caused by factors outside its control, which regardless of duration
 - has the potential to significantly impact the lives and wellbeing of its employees or customers; or
 - impacts the business's operations to such a degree that it results in proportionally material financial loss to the business; or
- whose main point of contact has an impairment or communication need that, when identified, requires adjustments to ensure all communication is accessible

Stakeholder outcomes

- ✓ Reduced digital barriers for 8,914 customers at risk of being excluded during COVID-19, saving them £549,006 on their energy bills
- ✓ 13,533 SMEs in vulnerable circumstances registered on our Extra Care Register benefitting from 12 business-specific support services
- ✓ Industry's first customer-driven definition of SME vulnerability, tested with our SME online community

Enabling a just and fair Net Zero transition

We strive to ensure no one is left behind in the Net Zero transition by maximising opportunities and participation for all groups to benefit from low carbon technologies such as electric vehicles (EVs) and heat pumps.

Maximising flexibility participation for residential consumers

Stakeholders said:

Stakeholders at our Summer and Winter Forums and Q1 Flexibility tender engagements asked us to focus on increasing participation from smaller providers in the emerging flexibility market.

What we did: **DNO FIRST**

- We contracted the world's first low voltage flexibility service and continued to expand the participation of residential aggregators to eight domestic and five EV aggregators. Working with Moixa in West Sussex we are unlocking flexibility from 250 co-located solar and battery systems in social housing, public buildings and schools, and 250 public EV chargepoints.
- Co-designed our flexibility products with our stakeholders by further reducing the minimum participation requirement for our HV flexibility products from 50kW to 10kW. Unlocking greater value for more domestic customers across 138 locations, increasing domestic and EV aggregators from three to 13. **Our flexibility**

programme was also endorsed by Community Energy England.

- Supported local community schemes which would traditionally be unviable by unlocking additional flexibility revenue, e.g. Cambridgeshire County Council installing a heat pump to provide clean heat to a local school.
- Worked with Social Energy to co-design their engagement materials to better inform up to 5,400 potential customers on the value of participating in flexibility.
- Generated key learning on how to address three drivers of exclusion: lack of opportunity, capacity/accessibility and trust. Working in Brixton with Repowering London and EDF Energy R&D we unlocked benefits for social tenants from solar and battery storage installed in communal spaces, enjoying £5 rebate per person for every flexibility event. Our Core4Grid partnership empowered a diverse set of trial participants including full time carers and disabled customers to save £266 and 44 kg of CO₂ each over 12 months through smart controls, smart meters, energy storage and monitoring.

"Collaborating with UK Power Networks enabled us to integrate an otherwise complex message into the flow of our marketing activity, leveraging their team's expertise in communicating their activities to stakeholders. They facilitated a credible piece of marketing capable of fostering consumer trust. Without this process, our combined offering would have proved far less credible to consumers."

Daniel Mahoney, Marketing Director at Social Energy



Stakeholder outcomes

- ✓ 433% increase in domestic flexibility participation on previous year by reducing the entry threshold by 80%
- ✓ World's first low voltage social flexibility contracts awarded
- ✓ Delivered £266 average energy bill saving per household through smart flexible solutions



£2.16 social value created by our Core4Grid partnership in excess of every £1 spent over 10 years

Making the Net Zero transition accessible to all

Stakeholders said:

Motability told us that by 2035 up to 1.35 million drivers or passengers with a disability will be reliant on public charging infrastructure. Those on the Motability scheme lease a new car every three to five years and are likely to go electric earlier. However limited options adequately designed for their specific needs are available. Similarly, HEET advised the traditional gas boiler remains the cheapest option for energy efficiency interventions, so fuel poor customers are currently unlikely to adopt green solutions.

What we did:

Case Study 1: Public charging access for all **DNO FIRST**

- Worked with Motability to fill gaps in existing research, identifying the need to investigate the barriers and opportunities for potential disabled EV drivers parking and charging on-street, and the role DNOs can play in facilitating their transition.
- Launched a research project looking at electrifying disabled parking bays to inform our EV strategy and local authorities' strategic planning of EV

charging infrastructure provision.

- Set up a long-term membership with Disabled Motoring UK to continue engaging and learning how best to facilitate the EV transition for this group.

Case Study 2: Supporting heat decarbonisation in social housing and fuel poverty areas **NEW**

- Partnered with PassivSystems, Social Energy and leading social housing provider Stonewater, to identify social housing tenants' requirements and co-designed a likely economically viable solution to decarbonise their heating where social landlords cannot afford the upfront costs of converting the homes. This blueprint solution combines the benefits of co-locating solar and battery storage with a compact hybrid heating system designed for houses with space constraints, at the same time unlocking flexibility to support the landlords' capital costs and protect tenants from increased energy bills.
- Overlaid our heat decarbonisation mapping with our fuel poverty data to identify the future communities most at risk. We then engaged with the NEA, 256 local authorities and NGOs to share our insights and inform their plans as they decarbonise heat in areas of fuel poverty.

Stakeholder outcomes

- ✓ First utility to unlock electrification of disabled bays in coordination with local authorities and disability charities
- ✓ Co-designed a replicable blueprint to help social housing tenants to decarbonise their heating
- ✓ Identified 58 local authorities to help develop their electrification of heat policy and local energy plans in areas of high fuel poverty



£2.76 social value created by electrifying disabled bays in excess of every £1 spent over 10 years

"UK Power Networks' work will ensure the local authorities involved can help EV drivers living with disabilities. There is a robust commercial and social case for ensuring future EV charging infrastructure is inclusive for all. This forward-thinking initiative will help inform our own UK-wide initiatives on accessible charging."

Catherine Morris, Head of Innovation at Motability



Our lowest carbon submission journey ever

This year we challenged ourselves to produce a printed low carbon Stakeholder Engagement and Consumer Vulnerability submission, from production to output.



I am passionate about finding and adopting the latest sustainability measures to help us reduce our business carbon footprint. I am pleased to have helped deliver a low carbon journey of this report - ultimately every little bit helps.

Jen Bäckström, Sustainability Lead



225kg of CO₂ avoided

using digital materials rather than printing documents to support engagement.



9,020kg of CO₂ avoided

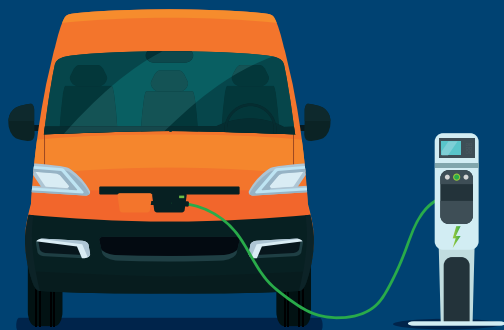
through switching to over 1,200 digital meetings with stakeholders.

Offset 43kg of CO₂

from using carbon-balanced paper in partnership with the World Land Trust.



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7kg of CO₂ avoided

by using electric vehicle couriers to transport our submission from the printing office to our London office.

Digital meetings have had a huge positive impact on reducing the carbon footprint of all the engagement activities making up this report. I wanted us to go a step further by ensuring the production and delivery reflected our enthusiasm to continue innovating and our ambition to deliver Net Zero in everything that we do.

**Michael Horwood, ED1 Stakeholder
Engagement Manager**



1.21kg of CO₂ avoided

by Michael cycling the submission copies across London to deliver at Ofgem offices.

181kg of CO₂ offset

for the entire production of this report through the supporting of planting 31 trees with Trees for Cities.



So now it's over to you...

We hope you enjoy reading our submission as much as we did preparing it. However we would like to pass this challenge forward, so have provided a fully recyclable pencil for your marking, which can be planted helping you reduce CO₂ even further.

