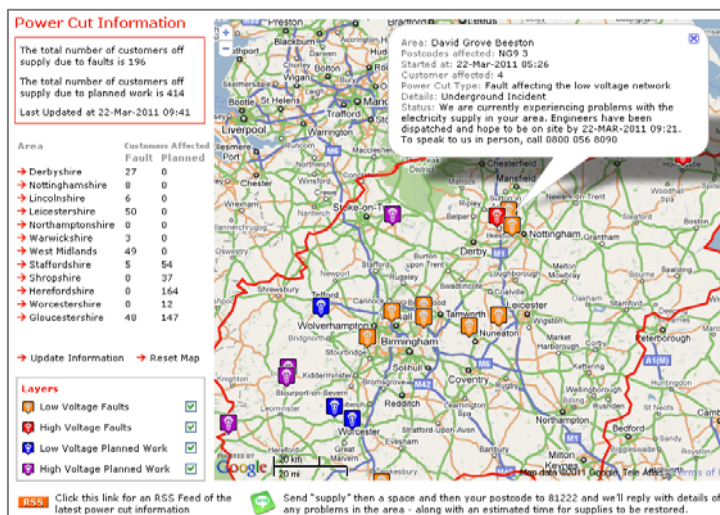


Customer Service Reward Scheme 2010/11

Understanding and responding to the requirements of various customer groups with a range of strategies to cater for them

"Smart" network information for a social media generation

Our highly popular live network information site has had a make-over and been upgraded! For over 6 years we've been the only DNO to offer this for customers, enhancing it year-on-year - and 2011 has seen the biggest improvement yet. We've introduced new, clearer mapping, and a new status feature providing much greater detail - that refreshes in real time. An interactive Google map makes it easier for customers to pinpoint their address and remove any chance for confusion. Coloured pins allow customers to toggle between planned and unplanned power



cuts, and show the actual substation affected. We've also locked the zoom above street-level, to avoid the risk of potential doorstep crime.

The 'status bubbles' update customers on the progress being made to restore electricity supply - including when engineers are en-route and their estimated time of arrival.

Download the 'Power Cut Checker' Application

Want to easily access the latest information about a power cut? Need to report a fault but don't have power for a digital phone or computer? There's an app for that! And it's a first for the whole utility industry. It's free to download and allows customers to enter their postcode to instantly view details about a power cut in the area. If we don't currently know about it, they can report it too. The app features power cut advice as well as key contact numbers. Research has told us there are a group of customers - mostly young adults - who use smart phones to look for information when there's a power cut. After a substation fire in Nottingham city centre last year, hundreds of customers logged onto blogs, Twitter and Facebook via their phones, doing just that. Now they can get all the details they need, in the format they want. Users of other smart phones can access mobile information at www.central-networks.co.uk/mobile



- **206,000** views of our live, historic & mobile phone network information last year
- Representing **18%¹** of our inbound customer interactions during a power cut
- **6.4m** people use iPhones in the UK
- **177** downloads of our free app in the first 5 days, with a **5/5 star rating**

Effective use of feedback provided by established process of stakeholder engagement

Communication strategy embedded into ongoing business practices

Customer Panel brings results – customer insight drives improvements

Now into its 3rd year, we've evolved our innovative Panel again, to keep up to speed with the issues affecting our customers. We've welcomed 3 new members representing the British Red Cross, WRVS and Northamptonshire Local Resilience Forum; all bringing valuable customer perspectives to aid us in our emergency planning commitments, particularly in the light of changes to the Civil Contingencies Act, and the 2007 floods which affected our region.



Phil Wilson, Customer Operations Manager hosting a panel session

Major Energy Users Council (MEUC) working partnership has seen us become the only DNO to attend MEUC industry meetings - hearing the views of large energy users on topics including network performance, use of system charging and network investment. **Panel member: Hugh Conway**

Zero electricity-related distraction burglaries in Warwickshire in 2010 following co-working with Warwickshire Police and expansion of "There's no such thing as the electricity board" campaign. **Panel member: PC Ian King**

Quality of Supply Report signed-off and consulted on topics covered.

Regional Development Agencies working partnerships - co-working to facilitate development in the Midlands, bringing jobs and opportunities to the area. **Panel member: Andy Abraham (EMDA)**



The Panel have redesigned the cards used to notify customers about planned power cuts, with excellent results for customers.

- **98% reduction** in customer calls from customers who had missed their notification.
- **100% customer satisfaction** with clarity and ease of understanding of the new card.

Feedback told us the cards were occasionally mistaken as leaflets/ junk mail. We've made the most critical information clearer, included more details about why work is required and added important help and advice.

¹ 1,244,739 customer calls (March 1st 2010 - March 31st 2011) vs 206,032 online hits for power cut information

Versions of information available to meet different customer population's needs

Customer service in our hand(book)s

On a daily basis, our field staff are speaking with customers, some of whom find it difficult to communicate with us – either because their first language isn't English or because they're deaf or hard of hearing. So we've created a simple pocket handbook that our engineers and alliance partnership teams will carry – that's **over 2500** - to help when speaking to customers. It contains key phrases in Braille and the top seven languages used in our region, as well as FAQs and useful contact numbers.

Specific market research and close working with East Midland's Language Line, tells us there has been a large increase in Polish and Turkish



speakers in our region over the last five years. The booklet allows us to **communicate with hard to reach customers first hand**, rather than via an interpreting service, with clear information in the format they prefer and understand.

Best practice

Preparing for an emergency: 2400 free parish council packs

If you had a power cut, would you be able to cope? Continuing our work with Emergency Planning Forums, we put this question firmly on the agenda and took action. We've offered a visit and sent **2400 free 'tool box' kits** to every Parish Council in central England, to raise awareness and communicate the importance of preparation. Useful items include a wind-up mobile phone charger, battery-operated radio, torch, analogue phone, blanket and reusable hand-warmer help us to **create safe and prepared parishioners** in the Midlands.

RNID accredited for a 4th year



Since becoming the first DNO to gain the RNID's best-practice Charter mark, our co-working continues to shape major

improvements and **increase accessibility for deaf customers**. Our telephony system enables customers to text or email us in real-time, whilst our new iPhone app, allows customers to access information first hand rather than through a relay service. Currently in collaborative development, we are producing DVD's for customers – detailing power cut advice, including how to check the trip switches – that will feature on-screen sign language – another first for the industry.

New Innovation

Educating young children

We talk to our customers - of all ages – in the way that best suits their needs. Building on our extensive children's safety programme, we've introduced a brand new initiative aimed at children aged 5-7, in the form of a fiction book called "A Nasty Shock". We've sent a free copy to every primary school in central England – that's **3434 schools** - educating up to **600,000 children**.

Written in conjunction with author Hedley Griffin, who has written a number of children's safety books, it allows children to learn vital safety messages whilst enjoying the humorous story about Harey the Rabbit and his friends. The book covers electrical safety in the home and substation safety, enabling them to make the right decisions in the future. So by the time the children are old enough to play out independently they'll be well aware of the dangers of electricity. If their ball or kite ends up in the grounds of a substation they'll recognise the warning sign and know they need to contact us rather than put their lives at risk. More children calling us to ask for their ball back tells us it's working!

Pupils at Banks Road Infant School, Nottingham



Effective processes for managing our Priority Service Register (PSR)

290,000 Priority Customers and counting

- **80,000 records manually updated** in 2010, after we contacted every PSR customer.
- Due to improved data quality we **proactively contacted 35,485 PSR customers** during a power cut to offer support and advice, helping to make the situation easier and less distressing.
- **71,000 new customers joined our PSR** last year following our efforts to better promote the service. We're sending welcome packs to every new PSR customer, to offer advice and let them know the dedicated PSR contact number.
- As an output of the Priority Customer Workshop we organised last year with UK Suppliers, an **industry-wide change is underway (via Genserv) to automate the dataflow from DNO's to suppliers**, and also to include up-to-date contact numbers, to make it quicker and easier for us to get in touch during a power cut.

New Innovation

Communicating with contractors:

Step By Step Guide to Avoiding Underground Danger

We feel strongly that we have an obligation to keep contractors safe who are working close to underground cables. The HSE have produced a 47-page document - HSG47 - detailing safe working practices; but customer feedback has told us that companies and H&S Managers carrying out excavations, struggle to ensure their operatives follow the guidelines. The Electricity Networks Association (ENA) raised concerns that much simpler guidelines should be made available. So at Central Networks we've produced a simple step-by-step guide summarising the main safety points and complementing the wider guidelines.

We're sending **12,000 free booklets** to contractors in our region, supplemented by our



Tom Brennan, Cablesafe Liaison Officer, with operatives from Thomas Vale Construction Services and their Guidebooks

face-to-face visits. We've had excellent feedback – telling us it's likely to help reduce the number of cable damages, as operatives find the booklet easier to understand and more accessible – so we've shared our initiative as best practice, with the ENA's "No Strike" working group, local councils and major contractors.

Power cut crisis kits help residents

by Amy Hirst

PENSIONERS who have been experiencing random power cuts have told the Advertiser they just want to get back to normal.

The homes of 23 people living in areas of Kirk Hallam including Elliot Drive, Sandringham Place and Windmere Avenue have been cut off due to a fault which electricity distribution company Central Networks are trying to fix.

Gwyneth Jones, 90 and his wife Mavis, who have experienced four or five power cuts at varying times of day and night over the last week.

Mr Jones said: "We're coping alright but we just want to get back to normal really."

"The electricity company are doing everything they can, I understand but I need to work for the electric before I retired."

Most of the people living in the area affected are elderly which prompted local councillor, John Frudd to contact Central Networks and find out what the problem is.

He said: "The power cuts will continue to occur until a fault on one of the cables is pinpointed."

"Until the cable blurs altogether it is very difficult to know where it is."



POWER CUTS: Gwyneth Jones, 90, lives in one of 23 Kirk Hallam homes that have been experiencing electricity cuts.

In the meantime Central Networks supplied Cllr Frudd with emergency packs, including an analogue phone, thermal blankets, gloves and a torch, to distribute to pensioners.

Cllr Frudd added: "I had no idea these packs existed until staff at Central Networks suggested they send some to help make life more comfortable for residents."

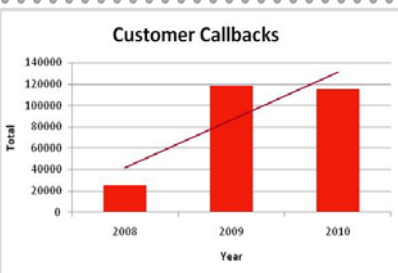
during the power cuts that they are unfortunately experiencing."

A spokesman for Central Networks said: "We've had repeated problems with power blowing where there is a faulty section of cable but we've not yet been able to locate the fault."

"We've fitted monitoring equipment to try and find the source of the problem."

The value of communicating effectively and proactively with our vulnerable customers:

It's not just about giving free packs – it's the vital messages we communicate with them, so our customers are prepared and know what to do if there's ever a problem.



We're committed to making it easier for customers in a power cut. So we offer to proactively call customers with updates, rather than them calling us. Since 2008 we've **increased outbound calls by 335%** - now calling over 115,000 customers a year, as part of business as usual.

"Thank you for the book called 'A Nasty Shock' we really enjoyed it! It taught us all about electricity and how to use it safely."

"Thank you for the Danger Spot stickers, we have put them by the switches in our classroom so that people know that they need to be careful."

"We really liked Harry because he was funny and because he had lots of electric shocks! We thought the man from the Electricity Company was very kind for returning the ball to Harry."

Many Thanks again for your kindness.

CN has been RNID accredited longer than any other utility company. Our partnership continues to strengthen and we've seen huge improvements for people who are deaf or have hearing loss. The new iPhone app is a great step forward for customers - it is easy to use, informative and clear. Following our feedback it includes details of the Text Relay service, so deaf customers can still speak to a person using their text phone.

David Haughton, RNID

Every month we independently survey over 1000 customers, for planned and emergency power cuts and new connections. Acting on their feedback, we're continually improving our service – and a big increase in satisfaction tells us its working. We also get valuable verbatim comments and "issues" breakdowns that help us to target our improvements – such as changing the way we notify customers before starting work. **Satisfaction has increased by 30% in new connections, complaints have reduced by 25% and customer service satisfaction during power cuts stands at 68% - up 8%.**

We've been nationally recognised for the quality of our communications with customers – in particular making it easier for them to get in touch and to access the latest information in the format they prefer. We were named winners in the category of "Best use of Technology in Customer Service" in the NCS Awards, and for "Customer Satisfaction Innovation of the Year" in the ICS UK Satisfaction Awards.



In addition to, and in support of the projects detailed in our submission, the following initiatives have continued or evolved this year:

✓ = Year introduced/continued ★ = Enhanced/expanded

Wider Communication Strategies Initiative	Pre 07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11
Vulnerable Customer Support Programme Attend Age UK and vulnerable person events – offering advice, handing out information leaflets and Crisis Packs, and proactively signing customers up to the PSR. In 2010 this saw a huge expansion, visiting 86 events and signing up 790 customers face to face.	✓	✓	✓	✓	★
Free Crisis Packs for PSR customers, including flasks.	✓	✓	✓	★	★
Initiatives to promote the PSR and improve the quality of our data Partnerships with Air Products to share data. Improvements to data flow with suppliers. Dedicated phone numbers. Send welcome pack to all PSR Customers. Promote the service via hospital and GP's surgeries, talking newspapers and hospital radio	✓	✓	✓	★	★
Proactive callbacks to customers daily to offer the latest information updates.	✓	✓	✓	★	★
Braille, foreign language, audio & plain text leaflets	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Multi-lingual webpages	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Live and historic Network Information Map online	✓	✓	✓	★	★
Bespoke customer market research In 2010 focussing on "the future of networks" to get the views of our customers on green energy, smart networks and demand side management.	✓	★	★	★	★
Schools education events Power Discovery Zone website and interactive workshops inc mock substations and pyrotechnics. Teacher's lesson packs and educational resources. We also support schools via mock interviews, careers days, CV appraisals and assisted reading.	✓	✓	✓	★	★
Customer Support Vehicles	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Working with Parish Councils Attending meetings to discuss local network related issues. In 2010, sent 2400 free 'tool box' kits containing useful items to have in a power cut.	✓	✓	✓	✓	★
Citizen's Advice Bureau packs containing all our leaflets sent to every CAB office in our region.	✓	✓	✓	✓	★
Media Training for staff	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Employee opinion surveys to improve our processes and the way we serve customers.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RNID's Louder Than Words Charter Mark As part of this the Red Cross now carry hearing loops, funded by us, when visiting customers on our behalf.	✓	✓	✓	★	★
RNID, RNIB and Mencap Staff training	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Free Analogue phones for customers with critical electricity dependencies.	✓	★	★	★	★
Quality of Supply Report written for our customers, detailing network performance and investment.			✓	✓	✓
Permanent Customer Panel			✓	★	★
Customer Satisfaction Surveys including Net Promoter Scoring to gain valuable customer insight to inform improvements.			✓	✓	★
DG Customer surgeries and Developer Days for New Connections customers			✓	✓	✓
MP newsletters In 2010 we introduced a new electronic version, as requested by MP's, as well as hosting numerous network appreciation visits every year.			✓	✓	★
Live network information for mobile phones				✓	★
National Recognition for innovation in customer communication					✓
Power cut info and advice on iPhone application					✓