

## Ofgem Incentive Scheme 2012/13

# Stakeholder Engagement

### Part Two Submission

## Welcome



In the Midlands, South West England and Wales, 7.7 million people rely on us to safely deliver power to their homes and businesses. They therefore have a right to expect a high quality, value for money service that they can influence.

Proactive engagement with stakeholders will become ever more important as electricity networks evolve. Low carbon technologies are changing the way we interact with customers. It is vital that we listen and deliver the services they want. Our engagement programme is enduring and recurrent - we seek feedback, change our customer service processes in the light of that feedback, and then return to stakeholders to measure the benefits. Whilst much of 2012/13 has focussed on informing our Business Plan for 2015-23, we already have a clear plan for how we will continue to engage stakeholders in a meaningful, worthwhile way in the future.

### Strong board-level commitment

We have had a stakeholder engagement strategy in place for the last six years. The strategy is approved by our Directors and reviewed regularly. Our approach is made up of a number of facets and one of my key contributions is leading the Customer Panel, made up of 20 experts, representative of our customer base. Their feedback has led to several improvements to our service.

### A robust approach

Stakeholder engagement is part of the regular management information that I and my senior management team review monthly. Updates are included in the monthly report delivered to WPD's owners, PPL (Pennsylvania Power & Light). The feedback from stakeholders is used to shape our business strategy. I am proud that the thoroughness of our engagement programme and strategy has received the highest external endorsement from the Customer Service Excellence Standard.

### Engagement leads to action and measurable benefits

This submission focuses not just on the breadth of our programme but most importantly on the outcomes our engagement has delivered. For example, WPD's Customer Panel is innovative because it is member driven - they shape our long-term plans whilst making meaningful improvements to our daily operations. In the last 12 months they have:

- Co-authored WPD's new social obligations strategy.
- Helped redesign the WPD website.
- Assisted with the production of clearer new connections leaflets, offer letters and cost breakdowns.
- Initiated a fuel poverty referral partnership with the Energy Saving Trust, including bespoke training delivered to WPD front-line staff.
- Substantially shaped our Business Plan for RII0-ED1 (the next price control review period).

Crucially, customers tell us the improvements are working. For instance, satisfaction with the overall way in which customers are connected to our network has improved by up to 12%, as a result of the initiatives detailed on page 10 of this submission.

### A culture embedded in our business

Stakeholder engagement isn't separate to our day-to-day activities - it underpins everything we do. Everyone at WPD is an advocate for improving service to our customers and sees engagement with stakeholders as part of their job. WPD staff are stakeholders themselves. That's why each year I deliver a series of presentations to all 6,100 staff. I visit each of our main operational units and conduct over 50 sessions so that groups are relatively small, which generates more feedback. My presentation covers the key aspects of our business plan and emphasises the role everyone plays in maintaining our record of customer service and operational efficiency.



▲ Robert Symons, WPD Chief Executive, at a company-wide staff road show in March 2013

**Externally accredited as 'Compliance Plus' rating for WPD's stakeholder engagement strategy**  
 - 2013 Customer Service Excellence Standard

## What sets WPD's engagement programme apart

- **Breadth and quality:** We have engaged with over 4,200 stakeholders on our future business plan and place a strong emphasis on talking directly to stakeholders face-to-face.
- **Business-led:** Over 50 of our operational Distribution and Team Managers have facilitated stakeholder events in 2012/13.
- **Innovative:** We identified future bill payers as a new key segment and carried out bespoke workshops.
- **Inclusive:** We use TV advertising and write annually to every WPD customer. Many stakeholders have taken part in our research and workshops as a result.
- **Transparent:** After every stakeholder event we publish an independent report of the findings, plus a WPD response including detailing how we will act on our stakeholders' feedback.
- **Valued by stakeholders:** Our workshops have received 99% satisfaction ratings for usefulness and value.
- **A phased approach:** We have maintained relationships and built our Business Plan with stakeholders in stages, from identifying high-level priorities, to testing our Plan in full, including all 67 outputs.

# Key outcomes of our engagement

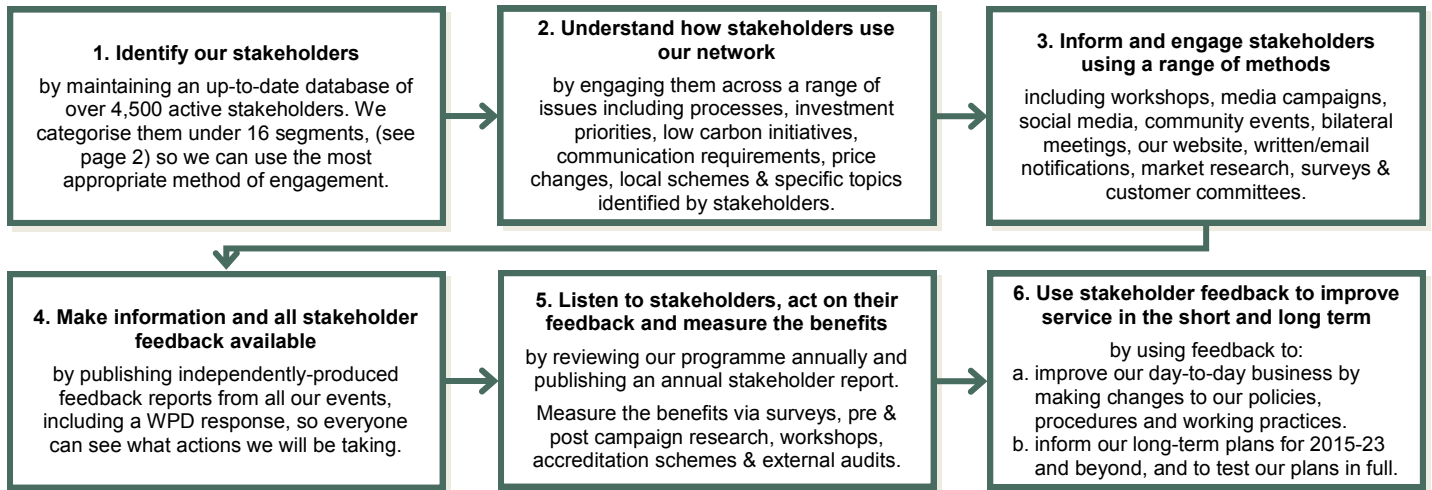
Criteria Initiatives that:	Evidence Examples of WPD initiatives:
Best serve the specific interests of stakeholder groups	Stakeholder database split into <b>16 segments</b> ; <b>24 tailored initiatives</b> to specific groups outlined on pages 7-10.
Reflect innovative thinking	<b>Key-pad voting</b> at workshops (pg 6); events with <b>future bill payers</b> (pg 8); annual awareness campaign including <b>TV adverts and write to every WPD customer</b> to raise awareness (pg 4), Data analysis to <b>identify high concentrations of vulnerable households</b> (pg 7).
Are part of a holistic, embedded approach	<b>DG Connections surgeries</b> (pg 10) - local network managers meeting local people (embedded), targeting an emerging segment (responding to changing stakeholder needs), now held quarterly in all regions (changing policy).
Are supported by robust project management processes	<b>12 hour power cut restoration standard</b> adopted (pg 4); <b>periodic stakeholder workshops</b> part of a 5-stage programme (pg 6), with feedback processes (internal: management reports, external: published responses to findings).
Are smart practice, replicated across the industry	<b>We were the first DNO to:</b> Have a <b>Customer Panel</b> (pg 4); <b>proactively call back all customers</b> who contacted us during a power cut; conduct bespoke <b>Distributed Generation connection surveys</b> (pg 10). In 2012/13 <b>we spoke with every Transmission, Gas and Electricity network operator</b> (bar one) to discuss and share best practice, in particular about the stakeholder engagement incentive.

## WPD's stakeholder engagement programme has achieved at least 36 positive outcomes in 2012/13:

- Voluntarily doubled payments** for guaranteed standard failures.
- New shutdown notification letters** - increasing customer satisfaction by 10%.
- Free phone numbers for mobile phone users.**
- Increased brand awareness** (up to 56%) following media campaign.
- Redesigned website**, smartphone friendly version and power cut updates online - **287% increase in hits** in typical month on 'power cut information & advice' page.
- 469,579 proactive text messages sent** and now call back all customers after power cuts.
- Mobile handheld devices rolled out to field teams** to improve quality and speed of updates during power cuts.
- Business Plan reviewed in full**, shaped and amended by Customer Panel members.
- Amended business plan proposals** including: acceleration of tree trimming programme for severe weather resilience, increased number of substations protected from flooding and increased amount of overhead lines undergrounded in National Parks.
- Around 17,000 PSR customers offered assistance** during power cuts.
- Fuel poverty referral partnership** with the Energy Saving Trust, and 55 staff trained.
- New social obligations strategy written** and consulted on with over 225 vulnerable customer representatives.
- Rural customer advice newsletter** sent to 2,500 parish councils to promote our Priority Service Register (PSR) and power cut advice. Very positive feedback received including one request for 1,200 additional leaflets and many have posted copies on their websites.
- 121% annual increase in customers joining the PSR** in Derbyshire as a result of a community engagement project that helped prepare 13,500 for a power cut.
- British Red Cross supported over 900 customers**, at 19 power cut incidents.
- 250 stakeholders better informed about the connections process** via new connections surgeries.
- Online connections applications** launched.
- New connections cost breakdowns** - increasing satisfaction by 13%.
- New 'Competition in Connections' leaflet** included in every application pack.
- DG customer satisfaction improved to 8.71 out of 10** (8.31 in 2012).
- Long-term revenue forecasts and use of system charging tariffs published.**
- 50,000 children educated in person** about staying safe around electrical equipment.
- New education website launched**, with over 3,300 hits to date. Recognised in British Education & Technology Awards.
- Students directly influenced our Business Plan outputs** including investment levels to reduce average power cut duration and information updates made available online, via text messages and Twitter.
- Identified high concentrations of vulnerable households** via detailed network models.
- Accelerated reduction of waste sent to landfill targets**, in Business Plan proposals.
- Funded energy efficiency measures (£65k)** at 66 community buildings.
- 1,000 free energy monitors** to help fuel poor customers to reduce their consumption.
- 'Self healing' network automation algorithm** rolled out in Midlands to restore customer supplies more quickly.
- Identified probable low carbon technology hotspots** for targeted network investment.
- Partnering 10 communities** to engage them about demand side management.
- Six flood response vehicles purchased** and new emergency resilience policies developed.
- 46% reduction in metal thefts** - the high reduction of any electricity network company - following police training, WPD cable identification charts and use of Smartwater.
- New metal theft safety film.**
- Working with the Civil Contingency Office to use WPD High Volume Call Taking** and text messaging service to alert public during local emergencies.
- Ten advanced investor briefings** to inform and build confidence in WPD's Business Plan and the regulatory framework. This potentially makes WPD a more attractive investment opportunity, which delivers the most cost-effective financing for customers.

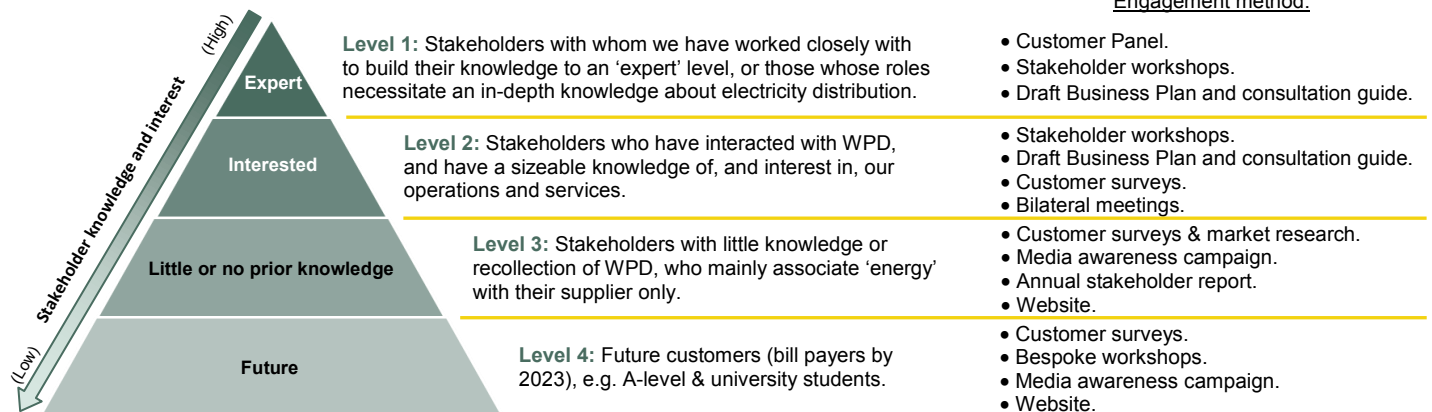
# WPD's engagement strategy

Our six-stage strategy underpins all our activities. Our CEO reviews our strategy and action plan annually and receives monthly progress reports:



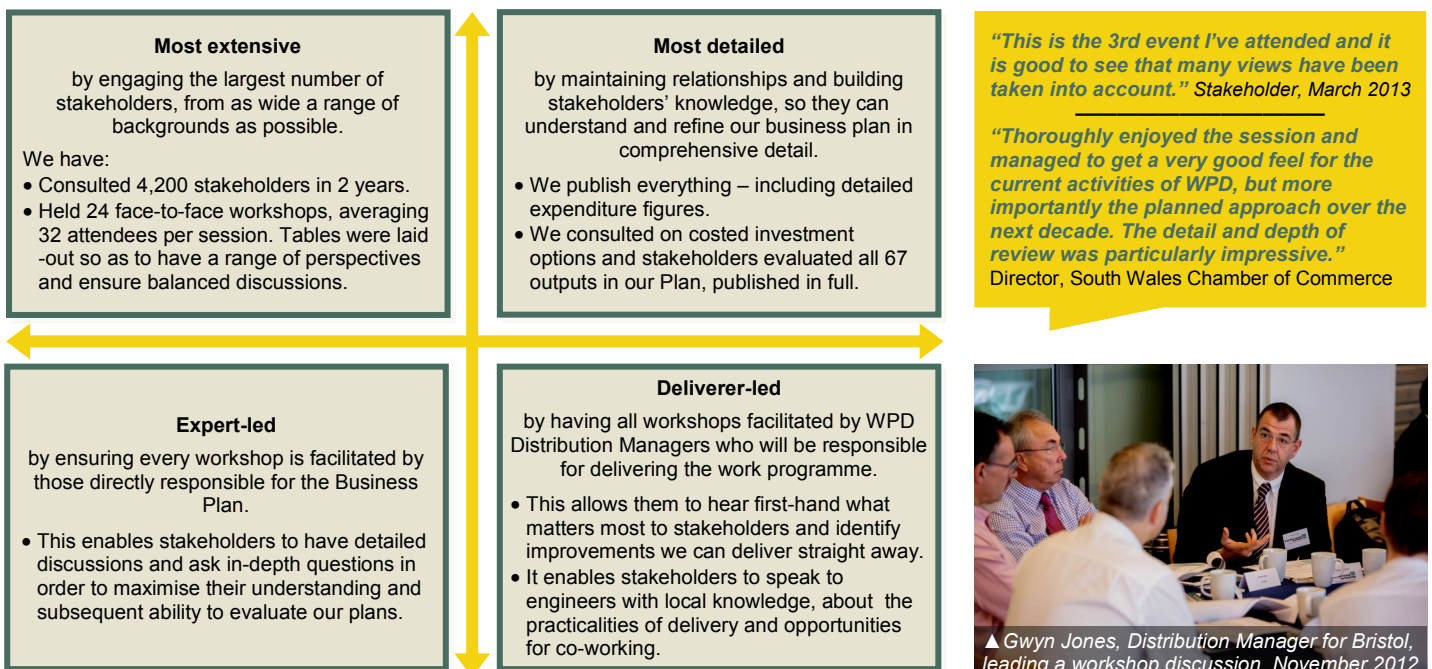
## Tailored and inclusive

We tailor our methods of engagement to best suit the knowledge and interest level of our stakeholders.



## Updated in 2012/13

To ensure our RIIO-ED1 consultation programme was of the highest quality, scope and effectiveness, our events were underpinned by 4 key goals:



# WPD's engagement strategy in action



▲ Top-led: Our panel meets quarterly and is led by WPD Chief Executive, Robert Symons.

## Key outcomes from WPD's Customer Panel

- We now manage our business to a 12 hour restoration standard.
- We have voluntarily doubled guaranteed standard failure payments to customers.
- 10% increase in satisfaction following new shutdown notifications (now 9.14 out of 10).
- The Panel signed off WPD's stakeholder strategy and co-wrote our social obligations strategy.
- We have introduced free phone numbers for mobile phone users.

## WPD's Customer Panel

"WPD were by a long way the first DNO to adopt open and enduring stakeholder engagement, long before RIIO-ED1. While other DNOs are now looking at such initiatives, this remains the only panel of its kind currently enabling us to regularly meet board members and senior managers, see the company at work and learn more about what the company is doing, where and when. It has also been an opportunity for the group to comment on policy and feed back concerns / suggestions to management directly.

WPD are very keen to engage our group at an early stage with first sight of new policies, strategies and investment proposals before they are more widely consulted on at stakeholder workshops.

WPD's approach to engagement is transparent, genuine and well thought out, using a wide range of methods. Meetings are a worthwhile use of our time." WPD Customer Panel joint statement

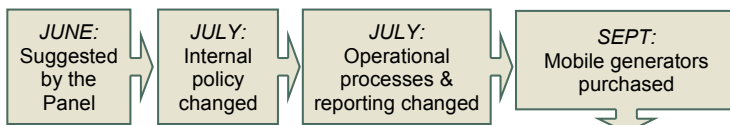
**Best practice:** We have helped Northern Gas Networks, National Grid and Wales & West Utilities establish their own forums and committees.

**High-calibre, evolving membership:** There are now 20 members (originally 11), each representing a different stakeholder segment. In 2012, as fuel poverty emerged as a key issue for WPD, the Energy Saving Trust's Operations Director joined the Panel, whilst increased interest in Distributed Generation and future distribution charges saw us welcome Severn Trent and The Co-operative.

**Holistic and wide-ranging debate:** We cover a vast range of topics in detail. The Panel always review our proposed engagement topics, approach and materials before we consult more widely with stakeholders, as seen opposite. ▶

**Doers, not talkers:** Feedback leads to immediate improvements to our operations, and the co-delivery of projects.

**Example: Changing from an 18hr to a 12hr power cut restoration standard:**



**RESULT: 89% reduction (in 12 months) in power cuts longer than 12hrs**

**What's next?** We will give the Panel a budget for specific projects and research. We will establish a Junior Customer Panel and Connections sub-panel.



2012/13 timetable:	Jun	Oct	Nov	Dec	Feb	Feb	Mar	Mar
Number of stakeholders:	17	17	206	17	31	67	41	250
<b>Strategy</b>								
Innovation strategy	✓	✓	✓					✓
Communication strategy	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	
RIIO-ED1 engagement strategy		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Social obligations strategy				✓			✓	✓
Distributed Generation strategy				✓		✓		✓
<b>RIIO-ED1 Business Plan</b>								
Priority topics to be addressed	✓		✓		✓			
Draft Business Plan outputs				✓		✓		✓
Findings from previous engagement	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
<b>Options for investment &amp; costs:</b>								
Network investment		✓	✓					✓
Quality of supply		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
Customer service & social obligations		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
Innovation & environment		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
Connections		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
Consultation document				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Full draft Business Plan document								✓
67 Business Plan outputs								✓
<b>Day-to-day operations &amp; improvements</b>								
Planned interruption notifications		✓						Launched November
Connections leaflets & offer letters		✓						Launched November
Website redesign					✓			Launched February
PSR leaflets & parish newsletters					✓			Launched March
Online power cut information					✓	✓		Launched March

## 'Power for Life' media campaign

WPD's fourth annual customer awareness campaign began in February 2013 with the unveiling of a brand new TV advert - a bold and novel approach to engaging millions of customers who have little knowledge of WPD. Stakeholders tell us, particularly vulnerable customers and students, that raising awareness of WPD should be a high priority. The campaign aimed to:

- Further raise awareness of who we are and what we do.
- Report on current performance and how we are improving our service.
- Invite customers to take part in our stakeholder engagement programme and help shape our future investment plans.

The month-long campaign, screened on ITV, as well as Channel 4 in Wales (S4C) and On Demand services, featured local newspaper advertising and a newsletter delivered to every home and business in our region.

The 'newsletter' gave an overview of our stakeholder engagement programme, our plans for RIIO-ED1 and invited readers to participate in our consultation process. Respondents have taken part in our willingness to pay research and several attended business plan workshops.

**What's next?** We will use Twitter and local radio as part of the campaign in 2014.



## Key outcomes:

- 7.7m customers engaged.
- 2,000 customers surveyed pre & post campaign, in 20 towns and cities.
- Considerable increase in awareness of WPD – 56% amongst those who recalled the campaign – compared to 28% of those who could not.
- Strong endorsement for methods used - TV, radio, newsletters and WPD's website seen as preferred sources of information.

# Independent accreditation & evaluation



**bsi.**  
 (BS18477) **British Standard for Inclusive Service Provision: Identifying & responding to consumer vulnerability**

**LOUDER THAN WORDS**  
 Action on Hearing Loss

**“WPD is again leading the field in the timeliness and quality of customer service... Your Stakeholder Engagement Strategy marks a significant improvement in your approach to engaging with users. It has already been put to good use in helping to prioritise the [business] plan and is commended as 'Compliance Plus'.” - CSE Standard Assessor**

Our stakeholder engagement activities have been externally assessed and accredited. Many WPD initiatives outlined in this submission, have been identified as best practice, across multiple sectors. Aspects of our service that have been externally assessed include our:

- Robust stakeholder engagement strategy.
- Holistic embedded approach to engagement.
- Customer-focussed culture including senior manager buy-in.
- Wide-range of engagement mechanisms in use.
- Innovative approaches to consultation.
- Clear processes to monitor changes made as a result of stakeholder feedback and to measure the benefits.

## Customer Service Excellence Standard

WPD have held the Government’s national charter mark of best practice since its launch in 1992 - the only energy company to do so. This is now known as the Customer Service Excellence (CSE) Award. In 2012 our accreditation included the Midlands, just 14 months after acquisition by WPD and at the very first attempt. The assessor was particularly impressed with this achievement:

*“Despite the demands of the incorporation...you have maintained your position as the leading industry performer - a commendable achievement.”*

An external auditor assesses WPD annually against 57 standards, grouped in five areas. WPD achieved compliance against every standard.

Example standard assessed: Excerpt from 2013 CSE Assessment Report :	
<b>1. Customer insight &amp; stakeholder engagement</b>	<p><i>Have a strategy for engaging stakeholders using a range of methods appropriate to their needs.</i></p> <p><b>“There is a strong process for the identification of customer groups by a range of relevant characteristics and this is used to segment groups and deliver services that meet needs in an appropriate manner.”</b></p>
<b>2. Customer-focussed culture</b>	<p><i>Prioritise customer focus at all levels of your organisation &amp; evaluate this via performance management.</i></p> <p><b>“Clear leadership at all levels and appropriate policies are in place to support staff in delivering consistently high levels of performance... Staff Roadshows encourage everyone to be involved in this customer-focused culture.”</b></p>
<b>3. Provision of accessible information</b>	<p><i>Evaluate how customers interact with you &amp; use this information to identify service improvements.</i></p> <p><b>“Your re-launched website is a great improvement and offers live power cut information. This has been complemented by a leaflet distributed to all customers (over 7 million) and a supporting TV advertisement.”</b></p>
<b>4. Service delivery</b>	<p><i>Develop &amp; learn from best practice identified within (&amp; outside) your organisation.</i></p> <p><b>“Services are delivered to a very high standard, with successful outcomes for the vast majority of customers... Good evidence of the use of benchmarking and the sharing of good practice has been noted this year.”</b></p>
<b>5. Timeliness &amp; quality of service</b>	<p><i>Meet standards for quality &amp; timeliness of service &amp; publicise performance to stakeholders.</i></p> <p><b>“You have maintained your position as the leading industry performer in this area. A number of improvements have been made since the last visit including more pro-active information provision to customers during power cuts.”</b></p>

## BSI - Inclusive Service Provision

We achieved compliance with this standard in 2013, learning from Ofgem’s industry-wide vulnerability workshop and in particular the experience of the Financial Ombudsman Service. The associated evidence has been externally reviewed by the CSE assessor.

The areas assessed include:

- Board commitment to inclusive services.
- Knowledge & sharing of best practice.
- Policies that identify and meet the needs of disadvantaged people.
- Stakeholder engagement used to identify improvements.
- Appropriate, clear & jargon free information, in accessible formats.
- Surveys of vulnerable consumers for feedback on services provided.

## Louder Than Words

WPD has held the Acton on Hearing Loss (AOHL) deaf awareness charter mark for five years. An enduring partnership with AOHL, who are members of our Customer Panel, has led to practical changes to services and processes. AOHL have also directly influenced our Business Plan and social obligations proposals.

WPD has been benchmarked in 10 best practice areas including:

- Consultation with customers with hearing loss.
- Clear and accessible customer information.
- Staff training to effectively communicate with customers.

# Engagement on WPD's Business Plan for 2015-2023



## Sharing knowledge

During 2012/13 the following industry peers participated in our workshops. Several have also attended separate best practice meetings with WPD:

- Northern Powergrid
- Scottish Power Energy Networks
- SSE Power Distribution
- Wales & West Utilities
- Northern Gas Networks
- National Grid
- Scotia Gas Networks
- Energy Networks Association
- Wessex, Severn Trent, Anglian and South West Water

## Our RIIO-ED1 engagement programme has 5 phases:

<b>1 - Preliminary engagement</b>	Jan '10 - Dec '11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify all stakeholders and their preferred method of communication.</li> <li>• Identify the issues that concern them most.</li> </ul>
<b>2 - Willingness to pay research</b>	Jan '12 - Aug '12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group stakeholders' priorities into common areas.</li> <li>• Identify specific levels of service improvement achievable for each priority.</li> <li>• Understand customers' 'willingness to pay' for improved performance.</li> </ul>
<b>3 - Business Plan consultation</b>	Sep '12 - July '13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate the key aspects of our Plan and the impact on customers.</li> <li>• Present stakeholders with: 1) Options for network investment; 2) Service improvements each would deliver; 3) The overall costs and impact on bills.</li> </ul>
<b>4 - Business Plan outcomes</b>	July '13 - Feb '14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate how we incorporate stakeholder feedback into our Plan.</li> <li>• Highlight any significant changes from our draft proposals.</li> <li>• Identify key measures stakeholders would like us to use to monitor delivery.</li> </ul>
<b>5 - Review of our delivery</b>	Feb '14 - Mar '23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide an update on our performance against key output measures.</li> <li>• Identify areas of emerging stakeholder interest.</li> </ul>

## Changes made to the Business Plan following stakeholder feedback

We will:

- Accelerate our resilience tree trimming programme to complete it 5 years ahead of Government guidelines, to reduce the risk of power cuts due to severe weather.
  - 41% of stakeholders supported an option to accelerate the programme.
- Protect 195 major substations from flooding by 2023.
  - 49% wanted WPD to protect more sites than the 100 initially proposed.
- Increase undergrounding in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty & National Parks from 40km to 55km.
  - WPD's initial proposal to increase to 70km was rejected by 64% of stakeholders. But in response to our plans to continue at present levels (40km), 28% voted to do more, hence a compromise at 55km.
- Improve service for remote customers so that 20% (4000 customers) are no longer classified as 'Worst Served' (WS).
  - 40% voted for a 20% improvement and they unanimously supported a new definition of a WS customer (from 15+, to 12+ power cuts in 3 years).
- Deliver a reduction in waste sent to landfill, of 20% by 2017 and 5% every year thereafter.
  - 44% wanted an acceleration to WPD's initial proposals (5% reduction p.a.).

## Innovative workshops

We used handheld voting technology to enable stakeholders to vote for their preferred investment option, "build their own bill" and indicate the appropriateness of our 67 business plan outputs. This was best practice we adopted from Severn Trent Water and National Grid events. It gave a real-time insight into the consensus view of stakeholders in the room.



Engagement is embedded in our business and over 50 operational Distribution Managers have facilitated our workshops in 2012/13.

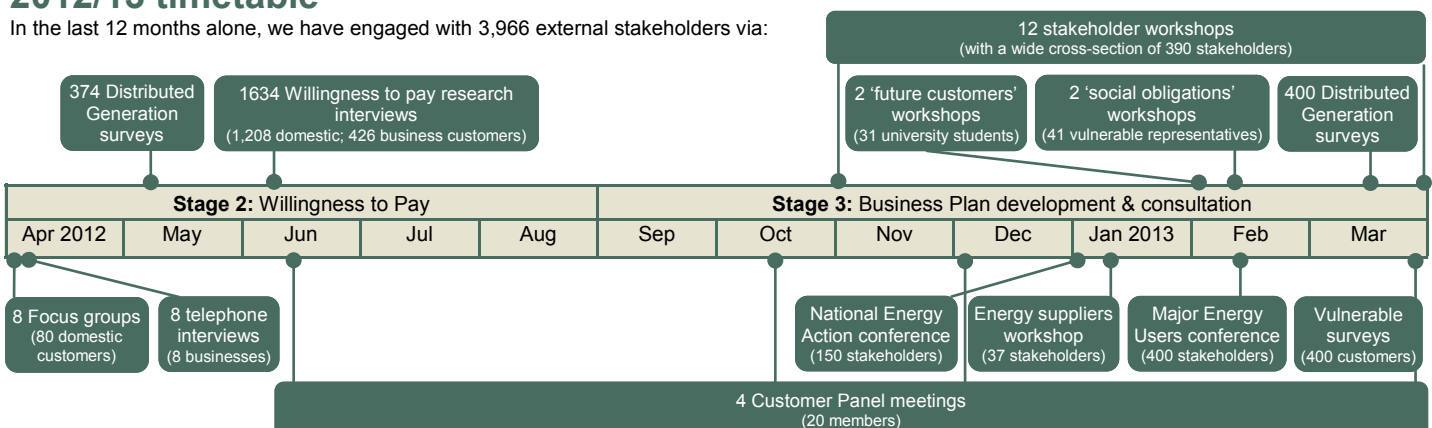
Of the 390 stakeholders who attended our workshops, 99.7% found them useful, 96% felt they had sufficient opportunity to express and discuss their view and 97% felt we covered the right topics.

We hosted expert-led surgeries (with the corresponding author of the business plan) on:

- Use of System charging.
- Social obligations.
- Low carbon innovation scenarios.
- Connections.

## 2012/13 timetable

In the last 12 months alone, we have engaged with 3,966 external stakeholders via:



**New Fuel Poverty & Vulnerability**

Stakeholders engaged in 2012/13 include:

Shelter, British Red Cross, Age UK, WRVS, Citizen's Advice, Energy Saving Trust (EST), National Energy Action, Advice Network, Consumer Futures, Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE), Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE).



▲ Advice Centre Manager, EST, at our Social Obligations workshop in Bristol, February 2013

**Key outcomes**

- 400 Priority Service Register (PSR) customers surveyed after a power cut, as part of bespoke research. To identify improvements and support expectations.
- 9.24 out of 10 satisfaction from customers proactively contacted by WPD during a power cut.
- 55 contact centre staff trained to identify signs of fuel poverty
- Energy referral partnership launched in Wales.
- 13,500 people engaged in person and given fuel poverty advice and practical support.

**New Social obligations strategy and action plan**

**Objective:** Provide relevant, timely and quality support to vulnerable customers and define WPD's role in tackling fuel poverty.

Our social obligations proposals for 2015-2023 have been co-authored by Pauline Mahon, Senior Services Manager from the British Red Cross (BRC). This was possible due to Pauline's expert knowledge of our business gained, from being a member of our Customer Panel for four years. BRC helped us to identify enhancements to our existing Priority Service Register (PSR) customer support and to refine our approach to address fuel poverty. The latter has been a divisive issue amongst stakeholders, so we built a pragmatic and detailed action plan to test further with stakeholders at specific events.

Our strategy has three strands and is underpinned by partnership working:

We will:	1. <b>Improve the data on the Priority Service Register</b>	Improve our vulnerable customer <b>data quality</b>	Be better at <b>identifying</b> vulnerable customers	Make <b>better use of registers</b> about vulnerable customers
	2. <b>Improve services provided to vulnerable customers relating to power cuts</b>	Continue to offer <b>practical support</b> during power cuts	<b>Prepare</b> customers for the possibility of a power cut	Work with <b>partners</b> (agencies & charities) to provide support
	3. <b>Address fuel poverty and cold homes by supporting customers to access key information</b>	Share <b>best practice</b> and information on vulnerability	Pick up on the <b>warning signs</b> of fuel poverty	Seek solutions and provide <b>support for fuel poor</b> customers

**There are 17 social obligations outputs in total. Examples include:**

- ✓ WPD will establish a dedicated team to contact every PSR customer at least once every 2 years, to update their records and offer bespoke advice.

Stakeholders told us that sign-posting and "giving out telephone numbers" doesn't work, so:

- ✓ WPD will build a referral framework of regional partners with whom we can arrange appointments for customers to receive energy efficiency and affordability advice.

Whilst RIIO ED1 covers 2015-2023, we're getting on with it and delivering our promises now via some of the following initiatives:

**New** ✓ Develop local outreach initiatives

### Networking for Warmth

For sensitive topics such as fuel poverty, we've learnt that face-to-face contact is the most effective method of engagement. So we funded a £40k initiative with the NEA, to recruit and train 22 volunteers as 'energy champions' in Derbyshire – where data shows high rates of fuel poverty.

Via a network of 19 organisations including Age UK and Rural Action Derbyshire, volunteers attended rotary clubs, community centres, libraries and 'Patient Participation Groups'. As well as promoting the PSR and giving power cut advice, volunteers provided energy advice such as optimising your heating system and combatting damp, reducing fuel bills and keeping warm. In 12 months we:

- Reached around 13,500 householders in person.
- Distributed 896 co-produced advice booklets, 1159 'top-tips' flyers and 854 PSR leaflets.
- 121% increase in customers joining the PSR in Derbyshire (12,287 joined 2013; 5,557 in 2012).
- An example event saw a presentation given to 1000 vulnerable adults (including those on low-incomes, with mental health/addiction issues and ex-offenders) at Adullam Housing Association.

**New** ✓ Identify high concentrations of vulnerable households

### Who's On Our Wires?

Working with the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) we have developed detailed social indicator maps identifying areas that have the highest numbers of vulnerable people, at substation-level. Combining network data with government statistics, we've identified customers potentially eligible for the PSR (shown below) and separately, those to target for affordable warmth programmes aimed at alleviating fuel poverty (e.g. ECO Affordable Warmth).

**New** ✓ Provide bespoke staff training to recognise signs of fuel poverty

### NEST - energy referrals

'Nest' is the Welsh Government's fuel poverty scheme, run by EST. It provides advice and support services including energy saving, switching energy tariffs, Benefit Entitlement Checks and money management. WPD have joined forces with EST to:

- Train staff to recognise 'warning signs' when customers contact us about a power cut.
- Set up a formal referral partnership so we

✓ Make 10,000 **crisis packs** available

Working with Leicestershire County Council, WRVS and Change Agents UK, we supported this local initiative by providing 1,500 packs to help vulnerable people stay warm and safe at home. Packs contain power cut advice leaflets (promoting our PSR and Doorstep Crime awareness), a torch, gloves and a fridge magnet displaying WPD's emergency numbers.

**- Well justified by stakeholders**

**Objectives:** Test our proposals, discuss delivery and identify opportunities for co-working and .

**DEC 2012:** The strategy was reviewed by the EST's Director of Operations and signed-off by the whole Customer Panel. We then published our proposals and ran a three month consultation.

**JAN 2013:** We shared our draft proposals with 150 stakeholders at National Energy Action's (NEA) fuel poverty conference, gaining strong support.

**JAN 2013:** To share our knowledge industry-wide, we presented our proposals at Wales & West Utilities' 'Addressing Fuel Poverty in Wales' conference.

**FEB 2013:** We hosted 'social obligations' workshops to discuss every corresponding output (17 actions) in our business plan. 41 stakeholders attended sessions in Bristol and Birmingham.

**RESULT: Changes following feedback include:**

- ✓ WPD will contact PSR customers within 3 hours of a power cut (reduced from 4 hours).
- ✓ WPD will conduct bi-annual research with PSR customers to ensure we offer the most appropriate support services during power cuts.

New

## Future Customers, Children & Education

Stakeholders engaged in 2012/13 include:

Universities of Nottingham, Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff, Manchester, Loughborough, Keele, Bath, Aston and Warwick. Over 6,500 primary schools.



▲ A student gives his views on WPD's plans for substation flood defences at the University of Nottingham workshop.

### Key outcomes

- Awarded 'Compliance Plus' by CSE Assessor for the quality of WPD's Power Discovery Zone website and Key Stage 2 resources packs.
- Over 50,000 children educated in person about staying safe around electrical equipment.
- WPD's new education website recognised in finals of the British Education & Technology Awards.
- Students directly influenced our Business Plan outputs including investment levels to reduce average power cut duration and information updates made available online.

New

### 'Future bill payer' workshops

**Objective:** Give future electricity bill payers the chance to influence and feedback on our plans.

Given that WPD's Business Plan covers the period up to 2023, we have identified a new stakeholder segment for specific consultation. Whilst WPD has always engaged with children, discussions have predominantly centred on vital safety messages. In 2013 we ran a series of workshops specifically with university students, taking an innovative approach to engaging young people and giving them a say on key future decisions and detailed investment plans.

Every effort was made to reach out to a broad range of students. At Nottingham University, we used the university's database of 209 societies and sent invitations by email. At Bristol University, we placed posters at locations around the Students' Union building and emailed students directly, using a specialist student marketing company.



Following an introductory presentation from WPD, we held facilitated round-table discussions about WPD's future plans with respect to:

1. Reducing power cuts.
2. Customer communication and social media.
3. Climate change mitigation and protecting the network from severe weather.
4. Smart networks and low carbon technologies.

- **100% said the sessions were useful** and they had ample opportunity to discuss their views.
- **71% stated that the rising costs of energy were a concern** and they therefore commended WPD for giving them a say on our investment proposals and how we plan to improve service, whilst lowering customer bills. One student wrote:

*"Imaginative, informative and thought provoking. Good to give my views and hear about the future of electricity distribution. Well done for thinking about future bill payers."*

New

### Website redesign, social media & online power cut information

**Objective:** Act on feedback from all stakeholders, particularly students, that we must provide easy access to information online and via smartphones.

Customers who engage with WPD online are enjoying big improvements since our redesigned website went live in 2013, following months of discussions with customers and the Customer Panel.

**They said:** Make it user-friendly, designed from a customer's point of view, and focus on core elements like power cuts and connections.

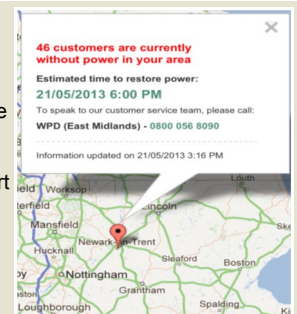
**We did:**

- **The new site is smartphone friendly** and features improved links to information customers need quickly, along with a modern look and feel.
- **Innovative features** like a 'mega-nav' bar gives a taste of what pages contain when you hover over it.
- A new 'sliding' homepage feature gives an alternative way of getting to the part of the site you want and raises the profile of key aspects of our business, such as our stakeholder consultations.

**They said:** 57% of stakeholders at our events requested power cut information online.

**We did:**

- **Our new online power cut map** gives access to the latest information and allows customers to report faults and access our emergency numbers just by entering their post code.



**They said:** 43% want online applications, payments and job tracking for connections.

**What's next?**

- This is currently under development, for launch later in 2013. It will vastly reduce paperwork and lead times for customers – which are the key improvement areas identified in monthly satisfaction surveys.

**They said:** 30% see a role for social media but as a lower priority than website communication.

**What's next?**

- We will shortly be launching **communication via Twitter: @westernpoweruk and @wpduk.**
- We already use **YouTube** to feature our latest TV advert and will shortly launch a new series of short video clips to help customers with key topics such as 'what to do if there's a power cut'.

New

### www.PowerDiscoveryZone.com

**Objective:** Use innovative approaches to safety education.

WPD have launched a new website, and sent details to 6,500 schools in our region. Through fun, interactive activities, it educates children about staying safe around electrical equipment as well as the importance of sustainability. The site is linked to the key stage 2 national curriculum.

For teachers, it features a huge range of 65 downloadable teaching resources based on electricity safety, but tailored to subjects including Science, Geography, Art, History, Maths and PE. Whilst a 'Kids Zone' includes a range of exciting educational games.

Our strategy places a strong emphasis on face-to-face outreach and engagement is seen as everyone's responsibility. In 2012/13 our Community Education Advisers, along with WPD apprentices and field staff, ran 120 events educating over 50,000 schoolchildren.



◀ Over **1,000 pupils** got hands-on with science at a WPD-sponsored 'Big Bang' event in Worcestershire. (pictured: WPD Apprentice, Stewart Searle with pupils)

We've upgraded mock substations at 7 safety centres in our region with pyrotechnics that are set off if someone tries to reach inside. **The centres educate 40,000 children every year.** We've also taken the experience on the road at 9 community safety events, **educating 7381 children from 159 different schools.**

◀ (pictured: Nottingham Apprentice, Alex Collier)



◀ WPD's safety superhero teamed up with two Welsh radio stations in August 2012 to meet youngsters at **four roadshows** and spread the "Play Safe" message. (pictured top left: WPD Craftsman, Martyn Vaughan)





## Innovation & Environment

### Stakeholders engaged in 2012/13 include:

Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE), The Carbon Trust, Siemens, Energy Technologies Institute, EA Technology, SmartGrid GB, Regen South West, Electricity Storage Network, Peak District & Exmoor National Parks, Wye Valley, East Devon AONBs, Dartmoor Preservation Association.



▲ The packed auditorium at the national LCNF conference listen to the opening address from WPD's Finance Director.

### Key outcomes

- Working with CSE, network analysis has identified low carbon technology hotspots in 109 locations per year (around 7% of the total network) for targeted network investment.
- £65,000 given to 66 charities for energy efficiency projects.
- 21 AONB and National Park groups consulted at 16 events to discuss the delivery of 9 schemes in 2012, (undergrounding 11km of lines).
- Partnering 10 communities to engage them about demand side management including community web portals.

## Low Carbon Networks Fund (LCNF) Conference

**Objective:** Understand customers' requirements in a low carbon future, and share learning from community projects and innovation trials.

WPD this year co-hosted the Low Carbon Networks Fund annual conference, which brought together network operators, energy industry professionals and others interested in a low carbon energy future to share learning from various smart network trials.

The event at the Wales Millennium Centre attracted **over 400 delegates from across the UK as well as Europe and the USA. This was more than double the attendance at last year's event.**

Demonstrating board-level commitment to engagement, WPD's Finance Director, delivered the opening address highlighting the uncertainty and challenges facing the industry in delivering low carbon networks and how it will change the way we interact, and work in partnership, with customers.

Attended by Wales' First Minister, Carwyn Jones, the conference was a key opportunity to share knowledge and build on the collaborative approach to innovation WPD is taking involving customers, energy suppliers and universities. Discussions were held with key project partners and interested parties with the aim to help deliver workable, value for money solutions for customers in the future.

WPD's Future Networks team, showcased a wide-range of projects already implemented and the progress made to date. WPD's 'Innovation & Low Carbon Engineers', helped facilitate the day, delivered presentations and held interactive discussions and Q&A sessions.

New

## Low Carbon surgeries

Working with the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) we have produced detailed models of the potential uptake and 'clustering' of low carbon technologies (LCT) on the network in the future. This has shaped our business plan, with details presented at **specialist sessions, attended by over 50 stakeholders.**

*"As well as finding the morning an excellent experience - you are an exemplar of customer engagement - I was fascinated by the contrast in your data, following the CSE work, between the various LCT installation prospects for each of your regions."* Energy Advisor, Welsh Assembly Government

**Objective:** Deliver low carbon projects with local communities.

### Hook Norton community engagement

WPD are trialling many new technologies as part of the LCNF, but for us it is not just about developing engineering solutions. We are seizing the opportunity to educate and build relationships with the local community, raise awareness of WPD and make it easier for customers to connect to the network.

In February, WPD Low Carbon Engineer, Steve Burns led an engagement event to give the community a chance to learn about the 'Smart Hooky' project in Oxfordshire. Representatives from four electricity network companies, along with the Centre for Sustainability, the Open University and local residents attended.

WPD have helped customers to develop an energy web portal to better understand their usage. Based on this data, in partnership with the National Energy Foundation we've delivered bespoke advice to individual customers about how to reduce their energy consumption. At the same time we are testing a revolutionary way of getting information about the local network using power lines as data carriers, in order to better manage load and improve reliability.

The event involved an interactive presentation to share findings so far, a visit to a local substation to see the technology in action and a workshop with other network companies to share learning about the best ways to engage customers.



## National Park & AONB steering groups

WPD co-chair quarterly meetings across the Midlands, South West and Wales, with key Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and National Park (NP) representatives.

In-line with WPD's broader approach to engagement, sessions always include engineers from our local offices who can give direct feedback and arrange follow up meetings over specific scheme details. This leads to better overall programmes and faster implementation. The meetings enable WPD to:

- Share information, knowledge and best practice between AONBs and NPs.
- Discuss common issues and challenges in implementing schemes in different AONB areas.
- Explain scheme selection decisions and requirements.
- Provide opportunities for stakeholders to discuss other network issues with the responsible local managers.
- Build relationships that help the efficient planning and delivery of other works, e.g. refurbishment of overhead lines in the Peak District in 2012.

## Community Chest Scheme

**Objective:** Address a funding gap identified by CSE, and help fuel poor customers reduce their energy consumption and costs.

We invested **£65,000** last year to provide **grants to 66** community groups and charities for things such as heating and lighting upgrades, insulation and draft excluders at village halls and community buildings.

**New** This year the scheme has been expanded. Working with organisations like Age UK, Disability UK, RNIB and SPAN (Single Parent Action Network) we are providing wireless energy monitors to help vulnerable, low income and fuel poor customers identify electrical items in their homes that are contributing to their fuel costs. **Around 1,000 monitors have been distributed to date.**

## Community Energy Action

Working with 5 energy charities, we've signed up 2,082 households to work with them to reduce load on the network via demand side management. We chose 10 communities from different socio-economic backgrounds, but particularly those with high deprivation, social housing and low income levels. Aside from the engineering learning, we're again using innovative methods of engagement:

- **Community webpages show customers' real-time usage.**
- **£2-3k community incentives** for reaching energy saving targets.
- As an innovative next step, we are developing a **fridge magnet for every home which displays usage information and indicates when demand needs to be reduced.** It includes a button to press when action has been taken, which indicates how many households still need to do the same.

## Major Users, Connections, & Distributed Generation (DG)

Stakeholders engaged in 2012/13 include:

Various City, County & District Councils, Chambers of Commerce, Severn Trent, Anglian & Wessex Water, Rolls Royce, Toyota, BT Openreach, NHS, British Ports, Barratt Homes, local Housing Associations.



▲ WPD's display stand at the Major Energy Users' Council conference, promoting our Business Plan consultation, March 2013

## Network Security & Emergency Resilience

Stakeholders engaged in 2012/13 include:

The Police, Environment Agency, West Mids. Ambulance Service, various NHS hospitals and Primary Care Trusts, DECC, Department for Communities & Local Government, National Grid, Network Rail, BT, local councils, Highways Agency, 18 separate Local Resilience Forums.

**New**

### Connections surgeries

**Objective:** Respond to the growing interest in on-site renewables and make it as easy as possible for customers to connect.

WPD Distribution Managers and Network Planners hosted a series of surgeries at the renewable energy exchanges in Buiith Wells, Cornwall, Stoneleigh and Exeter, and 6 events at the main WPD offices in South Wales. The expert-led sessions helped inform landowners, businesses, housing associations and schools interested in investing in renewable or energy-efficiency technologies by taking advantage of the Government's Feed in Tariff and Green Deal schemes.



We held discussions to help customers understand the connection process, timescales, and costs, as well as the requirements for different types and sizes of generation. In 2012/13 we:

- Engaged over 250 stakeholders face-to-face
- Held 125 pre-arranged one-to-one appointments
- Hosted 6 round table discussions

Given the success of these events, it is WPD's on-going policy to run quarterly connections surgeries in all our local regions. We received glowing feedback, as stakeholders welcomed the opportunity to raise issues, and gained a much better understanding and appreciation of the connection process.

### Sharing knowledge: Cabinet Office civil alerting systems

In 2013 we hosted a best practice visit to our Contact Centre from the Head of Resilience Services at the Welsh Assembly Government, to find out more about how we inform customers via text message during power cuts.

WPD are now working in partnership with the Civil Contingency Office to help them to extend their civil alerts programme across the whole WPD area using our HVCT (High Volume Call Taking) facility. This text messaging service could be used to alert the public during local incidents and emergencies.

### MEUC conference

**Objective:** Give major energy users a say on our future Business Plan.

Our relationship with the Major Energy Users' Council (MEUC), who have been members of our Customer Panel since 2009, led us to engage around 400 stakeholders about our Business Plan, at their National conference. WPD's Future Networks Manager, gave a presentation outlining our key outputs, and invited delegates to respond to our consultation. WPD staff were also on hand for detailed discussions. Several business customers participated in our stakeholder workshops, one month later.

### DG improvement plan

**Objective:** Act on customer feedback to make the connections process and our information, clearer.

Engagement with our Customer Panel and several DG customers has led to:

- New itemised cost breakdowns for all quotations, with detailed explanations.
- A DG customer service improvement plan, reviewed annually by our CEO, containing 21 measurable actions.
- A new 'Competition in Connections' leaflet sent with every application pack to inform customers about the options available to them.

**New**

### Police training sessions

WPD's partnership with the Police and Crimestoppers has seen a reduction in metal thefts from the network in 2012. Taking our engagement further, we've run proactive training sessions for police officers in a bid to explain the consequences of theft, make it easier to identify stolen cables and minimise the risk when attending crime scenes where live equipment has been exposed.

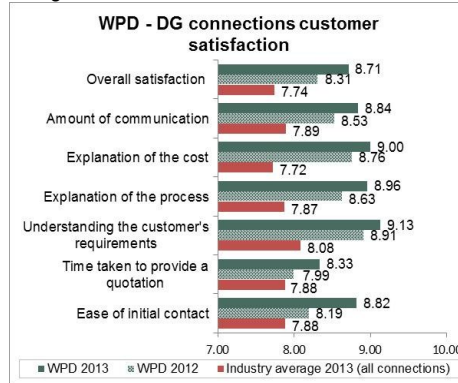
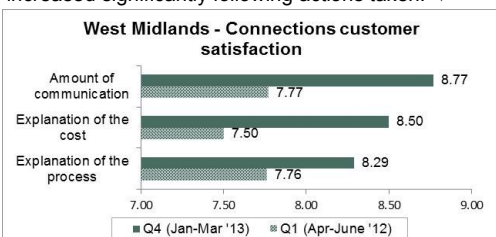
An event at WPD's Nottingham depot, organised with the police's Metal Theft Reduction Team the event brought several partners together, with speakers from the City Council, BT Openreach, Smartwater, Kegwatch, Calorgas, Severn Trent Water and Nottinghamshire Police Force.

- 46% reduction in metal thefts in 2012 - the largest reduction of any electricity network company.

### Annual research shows substantial improvements

In 2012 WPD were the first company to conduct annual research specifically with DG customers, conducting 400 interviews about the key aspects of our service. After sharing our results, questions and methodology with other DNOs, many are now conducting similar research.

As a result of the actions taken as part of WPD's improvement plan, in 2013 customer satisfaction improved in every area of our DG service. ► We also undertake detailed monthly analysis of our overall connections satisfaction surveys. Results have increased significantly following actions taken. ▼



**New**

### Safety film

WPD teamed up with BT and Police from Staffordshire, Warwickshire, West Midlands and West Mercia, to produce a short film on the impact of metal theft, aimed at educating young people about the dangers.