



Part 2 | Stakeholder Engagement Submission

In Part 1 we talked about how our stakeholder strategy is aligned with our business strategy.

In Part 2 we explain the changes and improvements we've made internally following last year's feedback, and illustrate some of the highlights resulting from our work with stakeholders and the real benefits these changes have brought.

Transforming our approach

As detailed in Part 1, page 2 we've transformed how we manage our stakeholder engagement strategy over the past year, setting up a dedicated team to manage and lead on stakeholder engagement activities throughout our company. We've also put in place a robust governance process through our Executive team, external Stakeholder Advisory Panel and our internal Steering Group.



Working collaboratively

We've recognised the importance of partnerships and working collaboratively, especially when it comes to delivery of initiatives which go beyond our normal business activities. As a result, we've partnered with the other Gas Distribution Networks (GDNs) in setting up a series of quarterly collaboration meetings under the secretariat of the ENA (Energy Networks Association) to share best practice and discuss solutions to shared issues.

The groups cover:

- Customer service
- Fuel Poverty
- CO awareness
- Stakeholder engagement

This group has already shared carbon monoxide (CO) awareness initiatives very successfully to launch a national campaign by the All-Party Parliamentary Carbon Monoxide Group.

Some of our other partnerships include:

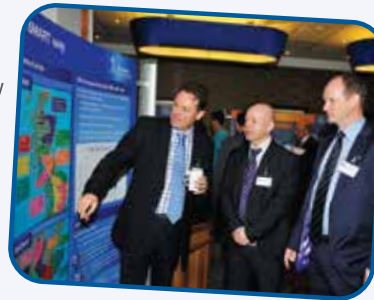
- YES (Yorkshire Energy Services) – our partner for delivering fuel poverty solutions in the south of England
- JV Energen – our partner for biogas delivery at Poundbury

'Let's chat' success

Last year we wanted to make sure all our employees understood and had the opportunity to contribute to the challenges of our new eight-year RIIO-GD1 business plan so we introduced interactive Q&A sessions called 'Let's chat'.

In March this year we used our internal Let's chat format to engage with our external stakeholders for the first time at our annual events in London and Edinburgh.

Around 40 delegates attended our Edinburgh event and over 90 took part in London. After a brief introduction to our company, the guests were invited to chat to the business leads around the exhibition area on subjects that were of specific interest to them, such as 'Greening the gas', fuel poverty and CO awareness. We then held a Q&A session with our CEO and Executive team, followed by a networking lunch. The feedback received from stakeholders was very positive as the following comments show:



This has been an excellent opportunity to engage with senior SGN staff and I've been impressed by the genuine interest shown in the feedback from stakeholders.

Elsbeth King, Scottish Road Works Commissioner

Your event today provides an opportunity for us to work across the issues, from electricity to gas operators to achieve more together. We want the same thing when it comes to tackling fuel poverty.

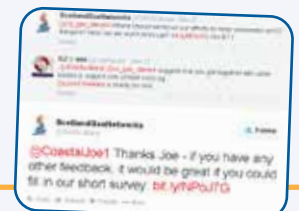
Lynn Wilson, SP Energy Networks

I wasn't sure what to expect at your event, however it's been great. I have been concerned about what's been happening with Russian gas supplies. Also I'm quite new in my Smart Metering role so I can take away lots of information from today.

David Goodall, Senior Engineer (Gas) EDF Energy

Social Media

In Part 1, we outlined how we've developed our social media strategy to meet its growing use by our stakeholders and customers. We've introduced a social media team within our Customer Service Centre to respond quickly to the increased volume of customer enquiries through Twitter and Facebook. We've also increased the use of social media to proactively engage stakeholders in conversation with us on topics such as carbon monoxide. For example, we tweeted on how we should focus our efforts to raise awareness of CO dangers so we could reach more people.



We've collated all the feedback we received from these events and our consultations, and are now using it to substantiate our engagement plans this year and going forward.

Four key themes of strategy delivery

In Part 1, page 2 we explained how we've reviewed our stakeholder engagement strategy against our company vision and goals (for further information see Appendix A – The SGN Way), and identified the issues that mattered most to our stakeholders. They are:

Keeping the gas flowing

Working safely and efficiently in our streets

Acting responsibly

Future of gas

We've listed some highlights from our work last year which fall under these four key themes:

Strategy theme: Keeping the gas flowing

Important issues for our stakeholder:

Confidence in a secure, uninterrupted gas supply is important to them

The Stakeholders involved: **MPs, MSPs, Customers, Local councils, Local resilience groups**

Our objective

Manage the risk to vulnerable customers in the event of a prolonged, significant outage of gas.

Following the very severe winter of 2010 we reviewed the number of deaths as a result of prolonged cold weather particularly among our vulnerable customers.

We identified the risk of death from hypothermia was greater than the risk of allowing customers to self turn-off and turn-on their gas supply.

We were proud to be able to propose a convincing case to DECC, Ofgem, HSE and the other GDNs to develop a solution to minimise the risk in the event of a large outage of gas.

We successfully developed detailed, risk-based processes to enable customers to turn their own emergency control valve off and on where they were able to do so, allowing our engineers to concentrate on supporting the most vulnerable customers.



Achievements this year

This process was reviewed collaboratively with the other GDNs and developed to include supportive aids such as customer communication materials.

We then tested the communication materials in a field trial with over 1,000 customers across all the GDN areas to establish its effectiveness. This resulted in further improvements before we finalised the process.

We felt it important to test how effective our existing communication channels were during this type of event.

Following an internal exercise, we developed an action plan to consider all options and agree how we can best proactively reach out to our customers.



What's next?

We will be reviewing and benchmarking similar research done by electricity networks during the power cuts last year to understand key lessons learned.

We'll also be reaching out to our own customers to see how happy they are with our current communication channels. In the

event of a loss of supply incident we'll use customer focus groups and customer surveys (either face-to-face or by letter) to ensure the effectiveness of our communications.

We'll also liaise with local resilience groups to further improve our support processes in the event of a large supply outage.

Important issue for our stakeholder:

Ensure the Scottish Independent Undertakings (SIUs)¹ have a secure energy supply

The Stakeholders involved: **Ofgem, DECC, Scottish Energy Minister, MSPs, MPs**

Our objective

We've been developing an enduring solution to maintain energy supplies for the mainland SIUs as a result of the closure of Avonmouth LNG plant in 2018.

Achievements this year

All supply options have been evaluated for cost and delivery timescales. An alternative LNG source is the only solution which will meet the 2018 timeline to ensure continuity of supply.

Our engagement was restricted to government level, and as a result of initial feedback, we have put a hold on our future energy source survey.

What's next?

We'll continue to work to deliver a solution for 2018 and beyond into our next price control review period.

¹ Our SIUs are isolated networks not connected to the mains gas network

Important issue for our stakeholder:

There are shipperless or unregistered sites with the potential for customers to be using gas and not paying for it. GDNs should collaborate with other utility companies to identify and resolve this issue

The Stakeholders involved: **Ofgem, xoserve, Gas suppliers, iGTs, UIPs**

Our objective

To lead on an industry solution to tackle shipperless and unregistered sites which have the potential for customers to be using gas and not paying for it.

Achievements this year

We created a new process on behalf of the GDNs we consulted with and have agreed upon a suite of letters to be sent to premises where gas may be being used and not paid for. We also implemented a new customer leaflet.

What's next?

Continue targeted engagement with shippers and review progress on our sites (shipperless 2,126 and unregistered 4,752).

Important issue for our stakeholder:

Investigate possibility of using other energy sources such as LNG which can minimise costs for customers



The Stakeholders involved: **Ofgem, MSPs, MPs, Gas suppliers, Consumer Futures, Local Council, Councillors, Police, Housing Associations, Local support groups, Local press**

Our objective

Deliver the 'Opening up the Gas Market' (OutGM) pilot project in Oban to explore how we can use new gas sources and reduce the need for expensive gas processing in the future.

Achievements this year

We've engaged at a high-level with Ofgem to agree our customer engagement plan for the project. We've begun the next stage of engagement with the Scottish Energy Minister, MPs and MSPs.

What's next?

Continue engaging with local authorities, Police Scotland, consumer groups, and suppliers. This is to ensure all support is in place before communication to customers takes place in the first phase of the trial.

Strategy theme: Working safely and efficiently in our streets

Important issue for our stakeholder:

Share planned work programme for the next eight-year period and co-ordinate your gas mains replacement works with other utilities

Collaborate with National Grid and other utilities in London to share ideas and learning from our work with highways authorities, the London Mayor's office and Transport for London (TfL)

The Stakeholders involved: **Scottish Government, Highways authorities (TfL), Local authorities, Other utilities, Network Grid**

Our objective

Plan and share our future programme of works with local authorities and other stakeholders to facilitate coordination well in advance.

Achievements this year

In Scotland we have planned 63% of our replacement work for the next eight years and have shared our 2014/15 plans (250km) with local authorities.

What's next?

Continue this model in our Southern network. Extensive collaboration with other utilities and highways authorities. Track the impact of more widespread coordination. Host first session of the NGG and SGN London working group on 20 May 2014 and agree terms of reference, priorities and sub-groups to which we will invite other utility companies.



Important issue for our stakeholder:

The speed of our repair work and the resultant traffic disruption.

You can reach out to so many more people if you identify twitter accounts of local town councils or chambers of commerce, and tweet them about the progress of road works. These accounts usually have thousands of local community members following them.

The stakeholders involved: **TfL, Local councils and London boroughs, Scottish Road Works Commissioner, Road users, Bus companies, Customers**

Our objective

Continue engagement with local authorities to roll-out innovative tools and techniques such as Core and Vac and CISBOT.



Achievements this year

Our CEO has met with the London Deputy Mayor and senior members from TfL to discuss the benefits of using innovative techniques.

Following this the General Manager for our London depot engaged with the seven London boroughs and 40 of the local Councils in our Southern network to implement Core and Vac technology.

In addition we engaged with the South East Highway Authorities and Utilities Committee (SEHAUC) as a result of which, our Core and Vac technology is now registered on the SEHAUC website where local authorities can access a list of innovative techniques outside normal reinstatement principles that can be used.

In Scotland, we've been engaging the Scottish Road Works Commissioner to ensure a similar process can be implemented.

We've also embarked on a project to pilot the first ever 'live-gas' robotic joint seal in GB, using our CISBOT technology, to further reduce disruption on the highways.

What's next?

Finalise the agreement with the Scottish Road Works Commissioner on improvements in reinstatement, and acceptance of our Core and Vac technique across Scotland.

Share best practice across London with the set up of the joint NGG and SGN London working group, engaging key stakeholders such as TfL. Progress with our robotics project and develop the engagement plan.

Continue to seek out new techniques to reduce disruption.

Revisit our social media strategy and identify opportunities to proactively engage with town councils and similar organisations.



Important issue for our stakeholder:

Use innovative technologies to minimise environmental impact of road works

The Stakeholders involved: **Local councils, Environment Agency (EA), Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA).**

Our objective

Progressed plans to reduce the use of virgin aggregate by 50% by 2017 and eliminate material sent to landfill by 2021.

Our environment team has engaged with reinstatement teams and contracting managers to ensure all waste data is captured and our contractors know they are required to deliver against 'no landfill' targets.

Achievements this year

This year we have reduced our use of virgin aggregate by almost 10% sending only 3% of our excavated material to landfill.

What's next?

Continue to engage with stakeholders to explore new techniques and uses for waste material.



Strategy theme: Acting responsibly

Important issue for our stakeholder:

Vulnerable customers

Look at partnerships with Local authorities, local Community and Parish Councils, charity organisations and suppliers to identify vulnerable customers.

The Stakeholders involved: **Local customer support organisations, Social work agencies, Housing Associations, Local council**

Our objective

In London particularly, we attend emergencies at blocks of flats where the gas supply needs to be renewed but not in its existing position. This means customers are without gas until we can get agreement from the landlord or freeholder to erect scaffolding and renew the supply which can take a number of weeks.

Achievements this year

We sometimes discover that these customers are in hardship and might have difficulty paying the additional cost of running electric fan heaters. So we've introduced a policy to pay the guaranteed standard payments to the customer direct rather than through their supplier and for one case we paid in instalments to ease the burden on the customer.

This year in London 550 customers in 120 blocks of flats received direct payments for failure to supply gas.

What's next?

We plan to share this process across our networks and through the working group with the other GDNs.

We'll also work with GDNs and DNOs to identify vulnerable customers and how we can better meet their needs.

Important issue for our stakeholder: **Fuel poverty**

Extend the scope of your work to connect fuel poor independent gas transporters (iGT) customers to ensure they're not discriminated against, and also include district heat schemes

SGN needs to more actively engage with local authorities and work with gas suppliers, iGTs and GDNs, and agree how to reach the right people to tackle fuel poverty

The stakeholders involved: **Ofgem, Government, Local councils, Housing Associations, SFHA (Scottish Federation of Housing Associations), YES (Yorkshire Energy Services), iGTs, Resident groups, Energy Saving Trust (EST), National Energy Action (NEA), Energy Action Scotland (EAS)**

Our objective

Official figures from 2011 show that 25% of people in Scotland and 11% of people in England are in fuel poverty.

We aim to mitigate the effects of fuel poverty through our Assisted Connections scheme with targets of 11,000 in Scotland and 9,000 in Southern by 2021. We're also working with partner organisations to identify and act on other means of taking people out of fuel poverty.

Achievement this year

In 2013/14 we've completed 5,100 Assisted Connections in Scotland and 1,100 in our Southern network.

We've started the conversation with Ofgem to enhance the scope of the Assisted Connections scheme to include district heat schemes and iGT sites, and to review the target for Scotland.

We're providing maps showing our gas infrastructure to the Scottish Government to help them develop a Scotland-wide heat map.

We're working with the Energy Saving Trust (EST) on developing a home analytics data tool.

We're a partner in the Hampshire Hitting the Cold Spots campaign, providing 500 CO alarms this year.

We supported National Energy Action's Fuel Poverty Day, when our employees raised £250 by taking selfies. We posted them on our facebook site to raise awareness of fuel poverty.

What's next?

We'll try and persuade Ofgem to enhance the scope of the scheme to include district heat schemes and iGT sites, and to review the target for Scotland.

We continue to explore new partnerships, funding mechanisms and innovative ideas to tackle fuel poverty.

We will be setting up a dedicated Help-to-Heat team going forward to focus our efforts on fuel poverty.



PARK HOMES

Approximately 200,000 people live in park homes in the UK. Around 63% of residents are elderly and pay on average 20% of their income on fuel to keep warm.

Building on our previous achievements such as Double Dykes in Perth we are targeting Park Homes sites as a priority area to tackle fuel poverty. Double Dykes in Perth was a Council-owned traveller site with 20 pitches where we've been able to extend the gas network and install a gas supply to these mobile homes. Residents have reduced fuel bills with an average saving of £1,136 a year.

At Kingfisher Park in Bournemouth there were 12 units connected to mains gas. We undertook work in April 2013 to lay new gas mains infrastructure to the 12 units resulting in an annual saving of between £1,020 and £1,320 for residents.

We will be reaching out to more park home sites, and we're already working with Chichester Borough Council on two sites with 72 mobile homes.

Important issue for our stakeholder: **CO awareness**

Exhibits at outdoor leisure events to raise awareness of CO when camping or caravanning

Link with fire and rescue services to highlight the dangers of CO

Enduring relationships with organisations such as Girlguiding to promote awareness of CO for young people

The stakeholders involved: **UK Government, European Parliament, HSE, Ofgem, Gas Safe Register, Gas Safety Trust, Girlguiding, IGEM, Merseyside Fire and Rescue, John Moores University, RoSPA, Cranfield University, CoGDEM**

Our objective

We continue to support Safetaysiders, Risk Factory, LV streetwise, and Hazard Alley.

We're working hard to influence policy and strategy to educate and inform the public (both nationally and internationally) on the dangers of carbon monoxide (CO).

Achievement this year

During Gas Safe Register's Gas Safety Week, Chris Bielby (Director of Industry Liaison) presented to the All-Party Parliamentary Carbon Monoxide Group, industry, CO charities, HSE, and Ofgem.

The presentation made all attendees aware of the fundamental research which we direct or are involved in to avoid duplication of effort, and reassure them all outcomes will be shared with them in a collaborative manner.

Current Research projects:

- IGEM - Research into the effect of energy efficiency initiatives/air tightness on levels of CO in the home.
- John Moores University, Liverpool – A study collating CO data collected by Merseyside Fire and Rescue during home visits.
- Lifeskills for learning – An initiative in Bristol which educates kids on CO safety issues through experience.
- RoSPA - A project teaching CO safety through experiencing risk.
- Downstream Gas GP Study – A small scoping study looking at GPs testing for CO.
- Cranfield University – A study looking at CO levels produced by wood pellets
- Cranfield University - A literature/information review on CO

Chris Bielby acted as advisor to Baroness Finlay, Rt. Hon Gregory Barker MP and Barry Sheerman MP to persuade the government to accept an amendment to the Energy bill requiring residential landlords to install CO alarms.

Chris Bielby gave a keynote speech to the national Gas Safety Management Conference at the Belfry in 2014 to over 220 Gas Safety Managers from local authorities and housing associations to highlight the importance of annual servicing and the need to have an audible CO alarm to reduce the risk from CO poisoning.

Our endorsement by CoGDEM – see supplementary information Appendix P.

Our partners at Girlguiding said:

“ We were pleased with the click through rates for Gasbusters which have been consistently good since the launch last summer with an average of 4,200 hits each month. ”

What's next?

Continue our involvement in Safetaysiders, and identify similar large scale events to raise awareness.

We're reviewing our strategy and will extend the areas we cover, linking-up with Gas Safe register to further increase our coverage.

Potential Research projects:

A study looking at the relationship between fuel poverty and CO poisoning.

Medical studies looking at the effects of CO on different groups such as antenatal services.

We will actively participate in the parliamentary debate around the concept of home MOTs.



Continue our partnership with Girlguiding and explore opportunities to link with other partners, such as fire and rescue services.

As we near the end of our current partnership term with Girlguiding, we're actively looking for new opportunities to build on the work we've done to date. We're in the process of identifying seminars at the Institution of Gas Engineers and Managers (IGEM) and the All-Party Parliamentary Gas Safety Group to promote our partnership through seminars.

We'll be sponsoring a science related badge event, which will feature in the 2015 Adventure Made Easy. Volunteers from our company will attend the event and raise awareness of CO.

We've been discussing the results of the Girls' Attitudes Survey, which highlighted that both career aspirations and positive female role models for girls and young women were vital. Girlguiding has responded by developing the Camp CEO initiative - a weekend mentoring opportunity.

We've identified our Head of Operations (Replacement) and a trainee Team Manager in our London depot as the female managers who would love to act as mentors.

Working in partnership with



This is the third year of our enduring partnership with Girlguiding UK to actively engage Brownie Guides (7-11) and Guides (11-16) in raising awareness on the dangers of CO in the home.

We supported the Guides Active Response Badge as well as Gasbusters, the jointly branded online game for Brownies hosted on relevant youth sites.

Important issue for our stakeholder:

Community support

Customers value the work we do in local communities



The Stakeholders involved: **Employees, National and local charities, Local fund raisers, Barnardo's, Community councils, Church organisations, Schools**

Our objective

We believe it's really important to give something back to the communities we work in and through our Community Action Programme (CAP) we provide volunteering opportunities for our employees to engage directly with our stakeholders on a very personal level.

Achievements this year

This year 750 of our employees spent 5,600 hours volunteering through our Community Action Programme.

We have reviewed our strategy this year to put a stronger emphasis on delivering projects which will benefit the communities where we carried out planned works or where major incidents occurred to give something back in a positive way. For example, last year a team from our West Kent depot spent two days revamping St Michael's Church Hall in Orpington to say thank you to local people affected by a loss of supply incident at the start of the year. We had used the hall as our base when restoring supplies to 1,650 homes without gas after a water main burst, flooding our gas network.

Over the two days walls, ceilings and radiators were prepped, glossed and varnished, stairways were scrubbed and parking bays were re-built and repainted in the car park for which we received the grateful thanks of locals.

What's next?

Our new charitable partnership of 2014/15 with Barnardo's will allow us to specify how we want money raised to be spent. We will donate a proportion of the money raised towards emergency energy grants for families in fuel poverty who are struggling to pay their fuel bills.

We are developing a community action strategy which includes volunteering opportunities with the Royal Voluntary Service (RVS) and mentoring children living in poverty through the Outward Bound Trust.

Important issue for our stakeholder:

Engagement with our employees and nurturing talent:

Communication with employees can be improved. We'd like to find out about things through structured briefs.

We'd like to see more training opportunities.

We don't see enough of our leaders and senior managers.

The Stakeholders involved: **Employees, Executive team, Trade Unions (TU)**

Our objective

Continue to conduct our Employee Engagement (EE) survey on yearly basis to understand what we're getting right and what we need to work on.

Continually improve our Employee Engagement Index (EEI).

Increase senior manager visibility and help colleagues understand our business priorities better and voice their concerns directly with them.

Embed stakeholder engagement throughout the company ensuring everyone understands the part they play.

Achievements this year

In 2012/13 our EEI showed that 59% of our employees were engaged. This was improved to 78% in 2013/14.

All our depots and departments have employee engagement action plans, which are continuously reviewed based on feedback received in our survey. For example, we recognised our people wanted to develop and learn new skills so we introduced a programme of 'cross-flexing' between operational and office-based staff. This has allowed people to develop as well as providing additional skilled people to cover key areas when workload is high.

Our Executive team meetings are held 'on the road' visiting and engaging with each depot or work area which is hosting their monthly meetings.

Another change made in response to the survey feedback is the inclusion of team managers as an integral part of our strategy meetings. This was to allow everyone to be involved in decision-making around training and resource planning.

We've delivered stakeholder engagement briefings to all senior managers, our TU representatives and issued a stakeholder engagement factsheet (Appendix E). We've also updated our induction pack to include a module on stakeholder engagement.

What's next?

Continue to review employee engagement action plans.

Deliver tailored training on stakeholder engagement to our senior managers on what it means for them and their teams and provide the tools for them to brief their teams.

Strategy theme: Future of gas

Important issues for our stakeholder:

Greening the gas

SGN should continue to invest in alternative greener, cleaner energy sources integrated in to its existing network system.

The Stakeholders involved: **Ofgem, DECC, Anaerobic Digestion producers, HSE, Farmers, Landowners, Waste management, Distilleries**

Our objective

As a leader in the development of 'green gas', we've been instrumental in the area of policy and regulations around this topic.

We've worked closely with the HSE, Ofgem and DECC for three years on these issues. We continue to resolve some of the challenges which slow the development of green gas, and we were fundamental in creating the 'Biomethane Roundtable Sub-Group' which is now run by the ENA, and pulls in stakeholders from across the biomethane industry.

We engage with some of our key stakeholders such as DECC and Ofgem through this group as well as on a direct basis. This includes working directly with civil servants on the development of the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) policy and also through the attendance at industry events and conferences.



Achievements this year

Our Poundbury joint-venture project was recognised in the ministerial statement on non-domestic renewable heat incentive on 4 December 2013.

To date, we have 3,500 customers connected to green gas from our networks.

Extensive stakeholder engagement with producers and developers during 2013 has led to four biomethane projects being developed, scheduled to come online during 2014. The estimated numbers of homes which will be connected is:

- Crouchland (between c.9,000 and c.10,000) to go live in June 2014
- Apsley Farm (between c.9,000 and c.10,000) to go live in September 2014
- Coupar Angus (c. 6,000) to go live in November 2014
- Mitcham (c. 5,000) to go live in November 2014

Winners of the UK AD & BIOGAS Awards 2013 - Making the most of Biogas.

Sustainable transport

We've worked with a wide range of stakeholders and project partners including Aberdeen City Council, SSE, Stagecoach and FirstGroup to deliver a hydrogen infrastructure project in Aberdeen. This project is still in pilot stage, and our partners have ordered four buses which are being tested.

What's next?

There are 15 additional projects currently in development.

We'll continue to follow up on the extensive interest from our stakeholders for more partnerships and green connection to our networks.

Working towards our target of 250,000 homes on green gas by 2021, we'll continue to implement and explore future opportunities for a diverse range of green gas projects, including biomethane, energy from waste, hydrogen and green vehicles.

We'll explore opportunities to inject hydrogen into our network in the next phase.



Important issue for our stakeholder: **Skills for the future**

Share your plans and ideas on how you will ensure you have enough skilled staff to deal with changing technology and workload demands from 2018-2020 onwards

Engage with younger people to make them aware of the opportunities available in the gas industry

The Stakeholders involved: **HSE, Ofgem, Government bodies, Trade Unions**

Our objective

As a good corporate citizen contributing to wealth we're constantly reviewing our skills and future needs.

Succession plans are in place across our business recognising the changing environment and the challenges of RIIO.

We have an apprentice programme and target training to ensure we have the right skills to deliver our future strategy.

Achievements this year

As part of our succession plans we have a programme in place to re-train 12 emergency engineers on maintenance activities to allow greater flexibility.

What's next?

Working with the wider industry to develop a future-proof workforce.

Continue our apprenticeship programme and identify opportunities to engage with pupils during school safety visits to encourage them to pursue a career in the gas industry.

Important issue for our stakeholder: **Smart metering**

Minimise the impact of smart meter roll-out on customers, and vulnerable customers and share your plans on how you will achieve this.

The Stakeholders involved: **DECC, Ofgem, Gas suppliers, Other GDNs**

Our objective

We're working across the industry on a plan to deliver an efficient and cost-effective SMART meter roll-out to minimise disruption to our customers.

Achievements this year

We were the first GDN to proactively approach big six suppliers to discuss working collaboratively on meter roll-out plans. We've already shared our eight-year mains replacement plans with them to help them gain access to customers and minimise disruption. We've also set up individual steering groups with four of the 'big six' suppliers.

What's next?

We'll continue to work with energy suppliers on integrated roll-out plans to proactively address issues which could negatively impact the roll-out and the customers' experience.

Our nominations and awards in 2013/14

During the year we were pleased to receive a number of top awards and these are shown in our supplementary information as Appendix K.

Next Steps

Our strategy

The needs of our stakeholders will change going forward and we will continue to take their views and aspirations into account as we review our strategy against the developing political, regulatory and economic environment in which we operate.

Our structure

We're expanding our core stakeholder team by creating dedicated stakeholder engagement managers to support our business leads in achieving our company goals. This will ensure our stakeholder strategy is embedded in all our decision-making. Consistent and timely action planning will enable us to prioritise and resource our activities effectively.

Our assessment of the benefits of our achievements

We're committed to evaluating all our proposed initiatives to ensure we focus on those which provide the most benefit to our stakeholders and ultimately our customers. We recognise not all initiatives will have a direct financial benefit, particularly in the short-term, but we're committed to working to achieve measurable outcomes where the benefit is less tangible. For example, working with GDNs to develop a collaborative approach to CO awareness reporting via the GDN CO Best Practice Group.

