

May 2014

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SSEPD Submission Document Part 2: Acting on stakeholder feedback

2013/14

Ofgem Stakeholder Engagement
Incentive Scheme



BILL



Placing stakeholders at the centre of our business



Scottish and Southern
Energy

Power Distribution

Stakeholder Engagement 2013/14



Stuart Hogarth
Director of Distribution

Stakeholder engagement is fully and firmly embedded in our culture. Every day, every one of our colleagues – from field staff to senior management – actively seeks ways to link the opinions and observations of our stakeholders to our day-to-day activities and business planning. In everything we do, we look for ways to make improvements to the way we operate, resulting in tangible benefits for our stakeholders and our business.

During 2013/14, as well as using traditional methods of engagement, we sought new and exciting ways to communicate with as wide a range of stakeholders as possible – including those with whom we historically have had limited contact. As a result, we identified five key areas of mutual interest, giving our stakeholders the opportunity to genuinely influence our actions and directly inform our initiatives. I believe our activities in 2013/14 firmly demonstrate our open and committed approach to implementing change in direct response to stakeholder feedback.

Engagement techniques

- interviewer administered surveys
- written consultation documents;
- audio recorded focus groups with electronic audience response system
- on-line surveys
- structured interviews with stakeholders
- stakeholder meetings and events
- forums and workshops
- Customer Voice Groups

How we engage

It is vital that we engage with the people, companies and organisation affected by our business so that we can deliver a consumer focused, socially responsible and sustainable energy service that takes their needs and opinions into consideration.

emergency services and NHS bodies; landowners; supply chain participants; government; public sector and regulators; elected officials; energy industry bodies; charities and our staff.

In 2013/14 we engaged directly with 8,507 stakeholders including: customer representatives; major, minor and unmetered connection customers; demand customers; environmental groups; third sector voluntary organisations;

We identified our stakeholders' concerns that mattered most to them by using a variety of traditional and innovative techniques. We then matched these concerns against areas that our business has prioritised for improvement.

About this document

There are two parts to our submission, this document is our Part 2 submission.

Part 1 shows how we gathered and analysed the views of a wide range of stakeholders across a variety of topics and explains the actions we took resulting in changes to our business plan, processes, approach or communications.

Part 2 reports on the initiatives we put in place in direct response to stakeholder feedback. This document focuses on the **five key areas** identified as being of mutual interest



Assessment Criteria Key
Ofgem identified five Assessment Criteria which our initiatives are measured against using the following key
<p>✓ Outreach To best serve specific interests of challenging groups of customers/communities/future stakeholders and result in measurable benefits</p>
<p>✓ Innovative To reflect innovative thinking in responding to the needs of stakeholders</p>
<p>✓ Embedded in our business Part of an holistic approach embedded in the business</p>
<p>✓ Robust Management Supported by robust project management processes and appropriate resources</p>
<p>✓ Replicable Results from stakeholder engagement activities which may be recognised as smart practice and could be replicated across the industry</p>

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During 2013/14, we focused on **five key areas** of mutual interest so that we could capture input from our stakeholders on topics that they could meaningfully influence and that have directly informed our **initiatives**.

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	2. Local Community Emergency Resilience Planning	✓✓✓✓	04
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2. Priority Service Register	4. Involving communities in emergency planning	✓✓✓✓	05
	5. Making sure that the right people know about our PSR service	✓✓✓✓	05
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	22. Reaching out to landowners and farmers	✓✓✓✓	10
	23. Open4 Business	✓✓✓✓	10



Our framework for engagement

We are committed to placing our stakeholders at the centre of our business planning and improvement processes. But we can't do this without knowing what our stakeholders want and need, so we have formalised our approach to stakeholder engagement in our **Stakeholder Engagement Policy, Strategy and Implementation Plan**.

Our Stakeholder Engagement Policy

Performance 'ticks' →



Our Policy places stakeholders at the heart of our business – both in terms of informing and obtaining feedback from them. It creates the conditions for sharing information as well as capturing, recording, analysing, and applying the feedback from a representative range of stakeholders on an equitable, accessible and sustainable basis.

Our Stakeholder Engagement Strategy



Strategy →

1. Identifying our stakeholders

We developed a list of stakeholders who we felt could add particular insight into our day-to-day business and RIIO-ED1 business planning process. We have created a centralised stakeholder contact and record management system to enable us to actively manage engagement across the business. This is managed in accordance with our Data Protection Policy and ISO 9001:2008.

stakeholders; stakeholder meetings, events, forums and workshops; Customer Voice Groups. With our stakeholders in mind, we will continually monitor and evaluate our mechanisms of engagement to ensure they sustain constructive engagement.

2. Understanding our relationship with our stakeholders

We have categorised our stakeholders based upon our existing relationships with them; the level of influence they have over our business plan and processes; and their interest in helping us shape it.

4. Informing our stakeholders

We will produce and regularly update our stakeholder engagement and communication plan which will provide stakeholders with enough information, in a format they want, to enable them to participate in key debates.

3. Actively engaging our stakeholders

We offer a range of ways to engage with us: interviewer administered surveys; written consultation documents; audio recorded focus groups with electronic audience response system; on-line surveys; structured interviews with

5. Listening and responding to stakeholders

We will publish key themes arising from our stakeholder consultation processes and our response to them so that our stakeholders know what action we will be taking both to improve our internal processes and how it has informed our business plan.

6. Being accessible to our stakeholders

We are committed to being open and easy to talk to.



Key Performance Indicator

Our Board like to be kept closely informed of the changes we are delivering through our engagement with stakeholders. One of the ways in which we do that is by reporting on our performance via a Key Performance Indicator, which is: "The number of business processes and procedures which have been implemented or changed as a result of stakeholder engagement targeting a minimum of one per licensed area per quarter."

Our Stakeholder Engagement Implementation Plan



We annually review and update our comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement Plan which details how we will ensure our stakeholders voices are heard. For every engagement activity, we set out why we are engaging, the target audience, the activities and time frame we will use to obtain their views so that they can meaningfully influence our decision making processes. We want to be sure that we can demonstrate how feedback from stakeholders has brought about changes in the way we do things. Our Stakeholder Engagement Process enables us to do that by ensuring we have a consistent and auditable approach to stakeholder engagement activities throughout the business.

Acting on feedback from stakeholders

Each business unit in SSEPD has work plans that define how engagement activity is delivered at a unit, team and individual level so that ownership and accountability is clear. And at Board level we monitor our progress by measuring changes we have made to our business processes, procedures and policies as a direct result of stakeholder feedback.

Assessment Criteria Key

✓ Outreach
✓ Innovative
✓ Embedded in our business
✓ Robust Management
✓ Replicable



Our framework for engagement (cont.)

Planning our engagement this year



“There has been significant progress in stakeholder engagement and management with robust governance in place.”

SSE Group Audit

In planning our engagement this year, we asked our stakeholders what mattered to them. Once they had told us their views, we planned and delivered a programme that focussed on their needs and priorities across five areas of mutual interest:

- Preparing for emergencies
- Priority Services Register
- Making it easier to connect
- Innovating to keep customer bills low
- Targeting our communications

Throughout this document we report absolute population numbers to show support for initiatives. The sample size of our domestic customer survey, has provided us with a high degree of statistical precision, enabling us to extrapolate the results to the overall population within, and across, both network areas.

At the end of the year, we checked back with stakeholders to make sure that our engagement activities had delivered beneficial outcomes for them.

We commissioned focus groups and in-depth interviews with stakeholders so that we could better understand the benefits of our programme of engagement in the eyes of our stakeholders. The overriding feedback is that our stakeholders tell us that our proactive approach makes them feel listened and responded to, which instills trust in our business.

A robust approach

In 2013/14, we undertook a number of activities to ensure that our stakeholder engagement methodology was robust and measurable:

- We commissioned an independent audit by SSE Group Audit to identify the key risks associated with stakeholder management and to assess the effectiveness of controls to manage these risk areas. The audit concluded that the overall control environment is effective. A second audit carried out by SGS confirmed that we had established and maintained our management system for stakeholder engagement in line with ISO 9001:2008.
- We monitored and evaluated our methodology to ensure it sustains constructive engagement.
- We planned every activity meticulously, allocating individual responsibilities, activities and target dates. This helped us to identify potential risks which were then captured in our Stakeholder Engagement Risk Register.
- We secured senior management buy-in, evidenced by Board approval, of both our Stakeholder Engagement Plan and changes to our business processes, policies and procedures.

Engagement 'at a glance' ↘

Engaging a broad range of stakeholders in 2013/14

Events

158

- Connections & DG Events/Surgeries and Workshops
- Open Days/Behind The Scenes and Fun Days with Resilience Partners, Councils, Community & Parish Councils and the General Public/Young Stakeholders
- Storm Follow Ups/Responses
- Shows and Events

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Events Held	5	13	5	9	12	19	39	13	12	13	11	7
Attended	91	96	44	285	169	533	1635	404	42	428	712	232

Attendance

4,671

July–Oct 2013

Support for RIIO-ED1 commitments/engagement activities survey (2,739 domestic customers)
 Support for RIIO-ED1 commitment interviews (19 key stakeholders)
 Support for RIIO-ED1 commitment online survey (513 respondents)
 Support for RIIO-ED1 commitment facebook survey (56 respondents)
 Support for RIIO-ED1 commitment at shows survey (27 respondents)

April–Nov 2013

Online Survey covering power cuts, network investment, energy use pattern, innovation, customer service, PSR, connections, engagement (150 respondents)

Mar 2013

Focus Groups to understand the benefits arising from our stakeholder engagement initiatives in 2013/14 (82 respondents)

Sep 2013

Unmetered connection customer surveys (12 respondents)
 Unmetered connection customer interviews (3 respondents)

Sep–Nov 2013

Major connection customer survey (110 respondents)

Feb 2014

Distributed generation customer survey (125 respondents)

We showcase some of these initiatives in detail within the next section to show how we acted on stakeholder feedback during 2013/14.

Assessment Criteria Key
✓ Outreach
✓ Innovative
✓ Embedded in our business
✓ Robust Management
✓ Replicable



Preparing for emergencies

First of our
'key areas'

3.3 million of our customers are supportive of our work with communities and vulnerable customers to help them become more resilient in times of power cuts.

New this year: ✓✓✓ Community Liaison Teams

Based across our network areas, during emergencies they pro-actively call at the homes of customers without supply to check they are coping and to highlight where the nearest welfare facilities are.

"When you have a special learning difficulty, you're panicking. You just need the person to be able to come to your door, or be able to pick up the phone. [You need] someone to say it's OK. Everything is going to be all right."
Focus group participant

In its report into the storms of March 2013, published in May 2014, the House of Commons' Scottish Affairs Committee singled out the work carried out by SSEPD

"We heard many glowing tributes to the efforts which the electricity companies, and SSE in particular, made to restore the supply to the communities in Arran and Kintyre," the report said. "We are encouraged that so much was able to be done so quickly, and that SSE displayed such ingenuity in addressing the myriad challenges facing them."

"They have brought together the strategic planning partnerships and local people to ensure that communities in their network area are prepared and ready for the unexpected. In our view SSEPD... demonstrated a commitment to going the extra mile for their customers, particularly in times of most need."

John Harkin and Colin McGowan, Forsee Associates (resilience planning specialists)

Assessment Criteria Key
✓ Outreach
✓ Innovative
✓ Embedded in our business
✓ Robust Management
✓ Replicable

When there is a power cut, our core task is to restore power to our customers as quickly as possible. However, we know the impact power cuts have on people. That's why we implement practical, on the ground, support for customers who are without power for a prolonged period. This practical help takes a variety of forms including welfare vehicles which carry hot meals and drinks, offer charging points for phones and laptops, and provide up-to-date information on estimated power restoration time. Additionally, we can provide small generators to customers who are dependent on medical equipment or at strategic welfare cluster points. Working closely with local authorities and emergency response teams, our community liaison teams target help and welfare facilities effectively.

We reported on our work towards our long term strategy of helping communities to prepare for, and increase, their resilience to power cuts last year. We have continued this work and, in July 2013, we checked with a representative survey of domestic customers (from both our network areas) to check that they agree with the approach. Our survey confirmed that 91% agreed that we should be working with communities and vulnerable customers to help them become more resilient in times of power cuts.

We accelerated our programme of engagement around resilience planning and the support we offer to customers accordingly. This proved timely as both our networks have been hit by unprecedented severe weather this year, causing multiple faults.

Initiative 1: Active partners in Resilience Planning Partnerships

First of our
'initiatives'

✓✓✓✓

Resilience Planning Partnerships (RPPs) coordinate multi-agency arrangements to deal with emergencies such as prolonged power cuts. We engage with a number of key partners, including Police, Fire & Rescue, Ambulance Service, Coastguard, 4 x 4 Rescue, Scottish Government, local authorities, NHS, SEPA and voluntary bodies like the British Red Cross and, following emergencies, we debrief them to identify what went well and how our responses could be improved. Engagement reveals the importance of understanding each partner's duties and processes, and respecting our individual styles of working and communicating, as this will help us to improve our collective response in an emergency.

As an active RPP member, we have conducted guided tours this year to:

- our Emergency Centre which fields calls from customers without power,
- our Network Management Centre which manages the safe restoration of power across our network, and
- our Local Depots and Storm Rooms from which we coordinate our response.

This also allowed key personnel who work together in an emergency to meet one another – helping us to provide a cohesive and coordinated response in a power cut.

Initiative 2: Local Community Emergency Resilience Planning

✓✓✓✓

Local Community Emergency Resilience Plans are developed by groups of householders and businesses to help them cope with unexpected and prolonged power cuts while we fix the problem on the network and restore power. Communities tell us that knowing there is a back-up plan in place reduces anxiety when the lights go out.

to establish a communication protocol for use during a power cut to ensure accurate updates are given to the community.

We have worked with 36 community and parish councils this year to help them develop their local Community Emergency Resilience Plans which help us

Plans also help us to identify the most appropriate place to set up our welfare facilities and, in areas where plans were established, we experienced fewer complaints from customers and elected officials in relation to our methods and level of communication, compared to communities who didn't have them.

Initiative 3: Maintaining momentum in Local Community Emergency Resilience Planning

✓✓✓✓

Since March 2013, we have worked hard to build up a close working relationship with the community in Arran, listening to them and working with them to be better prepared for any future emergency situations. We organised an event, attended by 50 key individuals, to create a Community Emergency Resilience Plan which included resources and people who can be called upon within the community. This will make a real difference in an emergency situation.

Attendees collaborated to produce a resilience plan for the island. As 97% of the attendees would recommend the event to a friend, we've now collated the wider learning into a formal report recommending how we maximise the benefits from future events across our network.



Preparing for emergencies (cont.)

Initiative 4: Involving communities in emergency planning



During 2013/14, 8,004 of our colleagues took a day of leave to volunteer their time and skills within the communities we serve.

As part of the North of Scotland Resilience Partnership we organised an Open and Fun Day at Pitlochry Power Station to demonstrate how we work together to mobilise help for communities and individuals during prolonged power cuts.

We attracted over 400 Perth and Kinross residents by providing a range of free activities and it was a great chance to highlight the Community Emergency Resilience Plans and encourage people to get involved.

The benefits →



Stakeholder benefits

Stakeholders understand that we are targeting resources effectively and efficiently in a power cut.
Stakeholders feel we are offering better support to customers especially during a crisis situation.
Collaboration and proactive approach to emergency planning provides an improved service to customers and stakeholders during power cuts.
Communities can help us to identify best locations for welfare facilities and ways to share information during a powercut.



Business benefits

Our proactive approach demonstrates that we consider the safety of our customers and act responsibly.
We experience fewer complaints when severe weather causes power cuts.
We have a better understanding of who is most vulnerable to loss of supply.



“It’s good to think that if you were on your own and you were vulnerable that there’s something like this as a back-up plan as not everyone has families to rely on.” **Focus group participant**

Priority Service Register (PSR)

As a responsible, supportive and caring organisation, we want to understand why customers are vulnerable, or may become vulnerable, during an interruption to their electricity supply, so we are honing our strategy which puts measures in place to reassure, protect and serve those people.

Initiative 5: Making sure that the right people know about our PSR service



457,944

customers are on our PSR (up 40% from last year)

In addition to our regular promotion of this vital service through phone calls, public meetings, press releases, online and social media, this year we also launched a leaflet campaign, explaining who can join the PSR and how.

We also added ‘young babies’ to our PSR to encourage households with children under 12 months to register.

Over 21,066 new registrations were made during the first three months of the leaflet campaign.

The leaflet was distributed through existing networks including GP surgeries and hospitals (in particular renal, pulmonary, remote monitoring and midwifery units) where we know that customers who may benefit from registration will attend.

Initiative 6: Evaluating and targeting support between power loss and restoration



Working in partnership with the University of Dundee, we are carrying out research into the past experiences of communities during prolonged power outages. We are particularly interested in how vulnerable groups felt about the power cut and our response, and also health and social care during these times. Socio-demographic models and study data will then be used to form the basis

and framework necessary to develop and test the most effective solutions. **This will include ensuring that we give specialist advice to individuals on how to cope in a power cut. It’s expected that the learning will benefit the wider population too as this will also inform the advice we offer Resilience Planning Partnerships.**

Initiative 7: Sharing our learning



Recently we’ve been working with Ofgem, Department of Environment and Climate Change (DECC), the Energy Network Association and Distribution Network Operators to ensure that lessons learned from recent storm events are shared across all parties.

We have highlighted the importance of local community emergency resilience planning and the benefits of eligible customers joining the PSR.

Assessment Criteria Key
✓ Outreach
✓ Innovative
✓ Embedded in our business
✓ Robust Management
✓ Replicable



Stakeholder benefits

Stakeholders tell us we are offering better support to vulnerable customers especially during a crisis situation.
Stakeholders tell us they are comforted by our proactive approach to assessment and mitigation of risks in power cut.
Stakeholders are reassured that we are developing solutions to understand how to tackle vulnerability on our networks between power disruption and restoration.



Business benefits

We reduced the impact of power cuts on households with babies under 12 months old, by encouraging them to register for PSR.
The creation of a bespoke model to understand how to best target support and advice for vulnerable customers helps us to be more efficient and effective.



Making it easier to connect

In 2013/14 we issued just under 23,000 quotes, each one providing the customer with a named member of staff to help them through the connection process, answer their questions and feedback their suggestions for improvement.

As well as providing customers with their own account manager, we use workshops, customer surgeries, meetings, national and local events, and focus surveys as ways to engage with this group.

Initiative 8: A workplan to assist generation customers to connect ✓✓✓✓

In 2013/14, our generation connection customers told us that they would like to see further improvements within the areas of:

- customer service;
- information provision;
- the application and connection process;
- ease of choice in connection provider.

We responded by creating a workplan for 2014/15 which directly addresses the issues that were raised and then tested that we were focussing on the correct initiatives through a focused survey involving a further 125 customers.

This resulted in 12 stakeholder led initiatives. The workplan has been made available on our website and through the main trade bodies.

Initiative 9: Informing ICPs how to become accredited to carry out connections to our networks ✓✓✓✓✓

Continuing to develop competition in connections is extremely important to us. We want to strengthen relationships with Independent Connection Providers (ICPs). We are encouraging them to become accredited to carry out connections on our network so that when we adopt their installation we are confident that their work meets the same quality and safety standards as ours.

We invited interested companies to a workshop in Newbury showcasing training and assessment materials and walked them through the processes of final connection to our network including what needs to be in place should they choose to nominate us as their network operator. **The 40 Newbury attendees felt that we were encouraging competition in the area and were leading the way among network operators in actively supporting ICPs and Independent Distribution Network Operators to become accredited connection providers.**

Initiative 10: Explaining regulatory changes to unmetered connections ✓✓✓✓✓

Bus stops, traffic lights and streetlights are not fitted with individual meters and are known as unmetered connections. We want to encourage competition in the unmetered connection market. To assist this we held an event to explain the process that customers need to follow if they choose an ICP. We attracted 15 representatives from ICPs, local authorities, housing and industrial site developers.

Event feedback suggested we should be more proactive in advising future changes and underlined that face-to-face contact helped them progress their connection and disconnections processes. So we have committed to regularly repeating this event.



Changes we have made, based on feedback from events, surveys and interviews ✓✓✓

- We changed our policy on how customers receive connections communications from us, including significantly increasing the number of staff in our Customer Account Management Team and tailoring our engagement style to suit individual customer preference.
- We revised our policy to increase quotation validity periods from 30 to 90 days as this will help customers with various aspects of their internal processes for authorising a project.
- We made information more readily available on our website regarding capacity on the network for generation or demand and opening up wide-scale access to our GIS mapping system.



Stakeholder benefits

Stakeholders say that our proactive approach makes them feel listened and responded to, which instills trust in our business. Stakeholders welcome being given choice around how we communicate with them.

Created a generation customers work plan focusing on 12 stakeholder led initiatives.

ICPs attendees confirmed that we are encouraging competition in connections.



Business benefits

Demonstrates our commitment to responding to stakeholder feedback and changing our processes accordingly.

Being open and honest with our customers builds trust in our business.

Openly encouraging competition shows that we are confident about the service we provide.

Assessment Criteria Key
✓ Outreach
✓ Innovative
✓ Embedded in our business
✓ Robust Management
✓ Replicable



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Innovating to keep customer bills low

The projects detailed below are long term initiatives which we are trialling to ensure that they deliver the expected outcomes in terms of financial savings arising from not having to carry out engineering works. In the short term we deliver financial savings for the customers directly involved in the project.

Because the current economic climate means that some customers are finding it hard to pay their bills, we offer advice around energy efficiency (behaviour change, efficiency of appliances, thermal efficiency of property) and also the use

of low carbon technology (smart electric vehicle charging, micro distributed generation) to communities, individual households and businesses.

The benefits are twofold. Firstly, customers now have the tools and support to change their behaviour, reducing the amount of electricity they use and pay for. Secondly, more residential, commercial and industrial developments can, through distributed generation, connect to the existing network thereby offsetting the need for an engineering reinforcement solution and reducing the costs we pass on to customers.

Outreach ✓

We have demonstrated our leadership and vision with innovation at various events where we shared learning with stakeholders including Ofgem, DECC, DNOs and a range of consultancies, developers, academic institutions, and community and industry bodies.

We participate in a range of industry forums to promote knowledge exchange around smart grid technologies and we were one of the founding members of the Energy Storage Operators Forum (ESOF).

We have an excellent track record of participating in relevant industry conferences and in 2012/13 we presented at the International Conference on Developments in Power System Protection, Distribution Automation Europe, GE Digital Energy – International Software Summit, Sustainability Live and All Energy.

Initiative 11: Working with communities to save energy and money ✓✓✓✓

As part of the Solent Achieving Value through Efficiency project (SAVE) we are working with partners to offer local domestic customers new energy efficiency technology to trial in their homes and incentives to change their energy usage. We are also delivering a community focused campaign to evaluate the impact that coaching may have on household energy usage.

Our aim is to see whether we can create a culture of lower consumption (and therefore energy bills) through education thereby reducing the need to spend money on expensive network upgrades.

From a networks perspective, we will measure how reduced energy usage in the home can reduce the amount of money that is required for electric network upgrades and balance this with the cost of the intervention campaign.

Initiative 12: Supporting communities with electric vehicles ✓✓✓✓

It's estimated that there will be between one to three million electric vehicles in the UK by 2023, and up to 23 million by 2050. Our forward looking project, My Electric Avenue, acknowledges that while there is sufficient capacity overall across the UK to meet these demands, if the charging requirements are concentrated in small areas during peak times the local network may become overloaded which could lead to outages.

Our project creates a simulation of the 2030 electricity network so that we can assess the impact of clusters of electric vehicles on our network. **This will help us to evaluate alternatives to expensive, disruptive network reinforcement, while still enabling more electric vehicles to charge on our network. We are demonstrating the effectiveness of a tool which monitors load through the charging of vehicles at peak times.**

Initiative 13: Using storage heaters to manage electrical demand ✓✓✓✓

Our Northern Isles New Energy Solutions (NINES) project is helping customers on Shetland to manage their electricity demand with efficient storage heating that can help reduce bills. Next generation Dimplex Quantum storage heaters and hot water tanks are being installed in social and

private housing on Shetland to create additional energy storage within the local network. **As well as managing demand, the project also includes an active network management system, a 1MW battery, and facilitates connection of a district heating system to our network.**

Initiative 14: Automatically reducing electricity usage at times of high demand ✓✓✓✓

Working in partnership with businesses in Bracknell and Berkshire, the Thames Valley Vision project uses Automated Demand Response (ADR) technology to reduce electricity usage during high demand times by remotely adjusting frequencies on air handling units and turning off lights in unoccupied offices or pumps on ornamental lakes.

The 'Your Energy Matters' centre in Bracknell has had nearly 3,000 visitors in the last 18 months and customers can also receive help and advice on energy saving appliances and micro-renewables from us through government led schemes such as the Energy Company Obligation.

Assessment Criteria Key

- ✓ Outreach
- ✓ Innovative
- ✓ Embedded in our business
- ✓ Robust Management
- ✓ Replicable



Stakeholder benefits

Individual customers benefit from having the tools and support at their disposal to change their behaviour and reduce the amount of electricity they use and pay for. More residential, commercial and industrial developments can, through distributed generation, connect to the existing network, thereby offsetting the need for an engineering reinforcement solution and reducing the costs we pass on to customers.



Business benefits

Allows us to keep the cost of managing the network low, without compromising supply reliability, meeting our customers' expectations. Piloting initiatives helps us to deliver savings and assess if they will achieve long-term benefits.



Targeting our communications

Our survey of domestic customers gave us a clear indication of the topics they are most interested in us communicating with them on: Reliability of supply **2.4 million**;

Environment **1.4 million**; Customer service **1.3 million**;
Safety **1.2 million**; Connections **1 million**;
Help for vulnerable customers **800,000**.

 **9 out of 10**
customers visiting our website found the information they were looking for.
Survey of 2739 domestic customers

Initiative 15: Ensuring our communications are understandable ✓✓✓✓

We want our communications to be accessible and understandable to all our customers. This includes those who don't speak English as a first language, who can't read or hear our communications; who finds it difficult to access quotes and compare the services of different connection providers; who is unable to make a complaint about service they have received.

We have been redesigning our website in line with W3C AA Standards for Accessibility and ARIA Standards which ensure our information is in an easy read format, written in jargon free plain English and suitable for those accessing it with screen readers. And we are now planning how we can support customers with communication difficulties in all customer facing situations.

This will result in our communications being much easier to understand and act upon for everyone – from people who don't use English as a first language and people with lower levels of literacy to the wider population.

We have a large customer base which has expressed lots of different preferences around the medium and type of publication we should use to keep them informed. We accommodate any special communication needs, such as making publications available in different languages or formats including large print, Braille and audio CD.

Initiative 16: Innovating to explain our RIIO-ED1 Business Plan ✓✓✓✓

 **84% of the 3,352**
stakeholders we consulted on our Business Plan told us that the commitments were important to them personally.


To help make some of our more complex topics easier to understand we have developed a suite of videos which deliver our message orally and visually. These have been made available on our social media channels, website and at conferences and community events.

Images were developed to represent these commitments, coupled with video footage of the SSEPD Management team explaining the business rationale behind each commitment.

We involved customers and wider stakeholders in the development of our business plan to understand what they expect from our business over the period April 2015-March 2023. This led to the development of our 12 proposed commitments to stakeholders which underpin our business plan.

The proposed 12 commitments to stakeholders have been made into interactive display boards, using augmented reality software, for use at conferences and community events. When a tablet or phone is held against the image, the information is brought to life as the explanatory video plays.

Stakeholders tell us that it brings our commitments to life. It was an extra bonus to receive the award for the best stand at the Energy Action Scotland Conference 'Realising An End To Fuel Poverty' in November 2013.

 **PR Week award**
"The standout entry. The passion and commitment of SSE to look after its constituents came through loud and clear. Importantly, the honesty and integrity of the no-frills comms was powerful."
Nigel Prideaux,
Group Director of Communications, Aviva

Initiative 17: Collaborating on a Customer Awareness Campaign ✓✓✓

We held focus groups for 82 hard to reach customers and members of the business community to understand how we could best meet their expectations. They placed a lot of value in us producing a rolling quarterly newsletter which details who we are and what we do and covers issues such as how to prepare for power cuts, our Priority Services Register and energy efficiency. Our Customer Voice Groups also agreed that an Awareness Campaign would be beneficial.

42% or 1.5 million of our customers know about us. We need to improve awareness among those who don't.

We want all our customers to know how to contact us should there be a power cut or if they need to connect to our network. We have therefore been co-designing a Customer Awareness Campaign with our customers so that we share the information they need, in the format they want.

Initiative 18: Award winning communications in a storm ✓✓✓✓

Following our response to extreme snow storms in March 2013, we won the 'PR Week Award for Issues and Crisis Management' PR Week said we won because: "[our] approach was honest. It did not try to spin the story or artificially reduce the number of customers without power.

It kept the media and stakeholders informed immediately of any setback."

Assessment Criteria Key
✓ Outreach
✓ Innovative
✓ Embedded in our business
✓ Robust Management
✓ Replicable



“The customer service principles shown in the SSEPD response [to the February 2014 storm] were excellent. 96% of tweets were specific responses to customer queries and the majority of responses were tailored to the customer’s specific query. In the face of over 2,000 tweets, this represents a Herculean effort.”

Peter Laffin, Head of Data Insight, Bloom Agency



Our Power Track app took the “IT Initiative of the Year” at the 2013 Utility Week awards. It was described as “a fine example of how a utility company was using innovation to drive their services to customers”.

Targeting our communications (cont.)

Initiative 19: Evolving our social media strategy

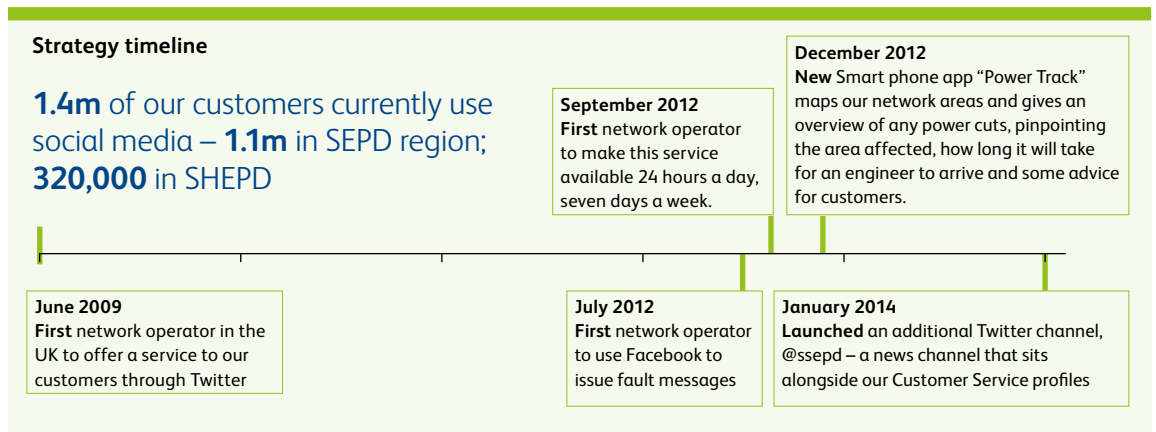


Our survey showed that **160,000** customers would be likely to follow us for information around planned work or power cuts

Customers have told us that they value being able to contact us to receive instant accurate updates through our social media channels, especially during a power cut. These updates are also valued by our resilience planning partners who share them on their social media channels, increasing the number of people who receive updates. Increasingly our channels are being accessed for information around how we are maintaining and repairing the network in our stakeholders area and we proactively search for customers without power across our regions to offer assistance.

We have been evolving our strategy to shift the focus from customer-driven enquiries to content-focused, targeted conversations supported by videos, photos and information about our work.

We are currently identifying key influencers to allow us to build a community of engaged stakeholders to help us reach wider audiences during crises and our social media audience continues to grow.



Initiative 20: Informing local stakeholders when we are working on the network



74% of stakeholders responding to our online survey tell us they are interested in being kept informed of work we are doing in their area.

In working with local elected representatives, we have found that many communities approach their community or parish council for information on electricity matters. In recognition of that important role, we now write to the relevant parish and community councils (as well as individual customers) when we are planning work that will cause scheduled interruptions to electricity supplies. In the letters we explain:

- when we will be working in their area, what areas will be affected by the supply interruption, and for how long;
- what we are spending on the work to improve the service we provide;
- who to contact locally if things go wrong.

This approach was prompted by a suggestion received from Appleton and Eaton Parish Council and has been welcomed by the communities we serve and also by our staff.

The enhanced relationships we now have with Community and Parish Councils has led to additional benefits, including a reduction in complaints about road or walkway closures due to working with community and parish councils at an early stage and agreeing solutions before work commences. We have also seen improvements in community response to tree cutting plans, thanks to a similar approach.

In 2013/14, we directly engaged 37 community and parish councils around planned interruptions and attended 31 parish and community council meetings to discuss reasons for power outages. We held six meetings to notify them of work we will be carrying out in the area.

Assessment Criteria Key
✓ Outreach
✓ Innovative
✓ Embedded in our business
✓ Robust Management
✓ Replicable



Targeting our communications (cont.)

3.5 million of our customers are supportive of us developing safety campaigns to keep people safe around our networks.

94 business opportunities have been awarded through the Open4Business portals, at a value of **£5.367m**, to carry out environmental consultancy, deer stalking/management, borehole installation, aggregate and fencing.

O4B H&I won the 'Contribution to Supply Chain Development' award at the Scottish Green Energy Awards 2013 and Scotrail Business Direct Award for 'Excellence in Business Service & Engagement' in September 2013 at the Scottish Council for Development & Industry Business Excellence Awards.

Assessment Criteria Key
✓ Outreach
✓ Innovative
✓ Embedded in our business
✓ Robust Management
✓ Replicable

Initiative 21: Working in the community to combat metal theft



In the past three years we have had to spend £3.42m to prevent and repair damage caused by thieves stealing metal from our network. Metal theft poses severe danger not only to the thieves but also to communities and employees

Working with the Metal Theft sub group of the Scottish Business Resilience Centre (SBRC), we identified the need to do more to help police officers recognise suspected stolen metal as belonging to us.

We have engaged police forces through:

- visits to our sites to help officers recognise our vehicles, equipment, cables and drums;
- issuing all officers a reference leaflet showing examples of our equipment;
- SBRC summit attended by fire and police services, Scottish Government and other network operators.

Initiative 22: Reaching out to landowners and farmers



We work with the agricultural community to raise awareness of electrical safety issues including avoiding contact between machinery and power lines, and what to do if this happens. Our engagement in 2013/14 included:

- annual presentation at Scottish agricultural college;
- a programme of attendance at regional agricultural shows;

- meetings with National Farmers Union (NFU) and NFU Scotland on safety and other issues including new technologies, connections for new developments and wayleaves (contracts for access to land);
- attendance at farming forums and key industry events including those run by the Health and Safety Executive.

Initiative 23: Open4 Business



We want to make sure that the communities we serve have opportunities to access work opportunities with us. To facilitate this in Scotland we operate an award-

winning free 'Open4Business' scheme which provides small and local business with access to a wide range of tendering opportunities.

New this year: Customer Voice Groups



3 million of our customers were supportive of us establishing a Customer Voice Group

Customer Voice Groups are widely recognised as effective in allowing customers to get their views across to an organisation by providing direct contact between senior managers and the people they serve.

Power Distribution, both chaired by Director of Distribution, Stuart Hogarth.

Having found that 80% of our domestic customers were supportive of us forming a Customer Voice Group, we introduced two Customer Voice Groups, one for Scottish Hydro Electric Power Distribution, the other for Southern Electric

Group members bring a wide range of practical and academic experience and represent the people who use our networks. Meeting quarterly, each group forms an independent scrutiny panel which evaluates our approach to, and performance on, Stakeholder Engagement.



Stakeholder benefits

Stakeholders experience less frustration and uncertainty during power cuts when they are aware of planned maintenance

SSEPD communications easier to understand and act on for vulnerable customers

Use of technology for communications makes our messaging more understandable

Customer awareness campaign provides targeted information on the topics that matter to them

Stakeholders can contact us in a way that suits them

Improved local awareness of our activities

Improved safety around our networks

Farming communities more aware of risks when working near our lines

Suppliers and contractors can benefit from procurement opportunities

Stakeholders welcome Customer Voice Groups as an enduring mechanism through which their voice can be heard



Business benefits

We experienced fewer complaints in areas where we carried out planned maintenance.

We demonstrated our commitment to keeping our stakeholders informed of our plans and how we are ensuring a continued safe reliable supply of electricity in the area.

Customer satisfaction

Pioneering technology encourages innovation in our business

Reduction in customers who cannot contact us

Less inbound calls leading to greater efficiencies

Strengthened relationships with communities

Less metal theft and fewer accidents involving staff or members of the public

Reduces likelihood of accidents due to collision with overhead lines

Improved relationship with suppliers and contractors

We are challenged by the independent Customer Voice Group to report and respond appropriately to stakeholder views