



2015-16  
STAKEHOLDER  
ENGAGEMENT  
AND CONSUMER  
VULNERABILITY

PART

3



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WE HOLD EVENTS EACH YEAR  
TO HEAR ABOUT HOW WE CAN  
IMPROVE OUR SERVICES FOR  
VULNERABLE CONSUMERS AND  
WORK WITH OUR STAKEHOLDERS  
TO PROMOTE AWARENESS OF THEM.

# INTRODUCTION

Caring for our customers is core to our business. We know that they can be vulnerable in a range of different ways and that they can require additional support.

**We have consulted widely with them, their representatives and our wider stakeholders to understand their needs and which services we can provide that will make the biggest difference to them. Our vulnerable consumer strategy and policy is built on what we've learnt.**

We are now aware that vulnerability does not just exist at the point of the powercut. Our social programme aims to support customers all year round and our staff are trained to spot vulnerability and come to the right judgement as to what we can do – not just follow a tick list.

We have taken the opportunity of refreshing the data in our priority services register to widen the scope of this support – offering referrals and information about advice services and energy efficiency and utilising the wide network we now have to promote the register and add more people to it.

We benefit from a position of relative trust and neutrality – we're not selling anything. With the right partnerships we can reach beyond the traditional remit of a network company to help our customers.

Our most valuable partnerships are outside the energy sector. We've supplemented our existing relationships with the likes of Citizens Advice and the Trussell Trust, with work this year with Safeguarding Boards and Housing Associations. We've used their networks to disseminate information about priority services and energy efficiency to our customers. We share these links with other network companies in our region, to make sure we maximise the opportunity to reach people who need this extra help.

With the Trussell Trust, Northern Gas, Children's Society and Groundwork we ran a project in Bradford this year, improving the energy efficiency of vulnerable people's homes in an area of higher deprivation. It brought together a range of skills and contacts, from charities and business, to make life better for customers that we provided services for. It ran as a pilot – both in its own right to test whether it was the best way of addressing a problem

and for our model of measuring our Social Return on Investment. We're now looking at the results of the pilot to develop a new scheme for the year ahead.

**Tom Fielden**  
Finance Director and Chairman  
of Northern Powergrid's  
Stakeholder Panel



**“IT IS CRUCIAL THAT WE CONTINUE TO DEVELOP MORE ACCURATE INFORMATION ABOUT OUR CUSTOMERS AND IDENTIFY THOSE THAT ARE VULNERABLE, AND UNDERSTAND THEIR DIVERSE NEEDS. THE SCALE OF THE IMPACT OF A POWER CUT IN THESE HOUSEHOLDS CAN VARY GREATLY DEPENDENT ON THE PARTICULAR SERVICES... OUR PSR IS THE PRIMARY MECHANISM THROUGH WHICH WE IDENTIFY WHO OUR VULNERABLE CUSTOMERS ARE, AND WHAT THE NATURE OF THEIR RELIANCE ON ELECTRICITY IS.”**

**NORTHERN POWERGRID'S WELL JUSTIFIED BUSINESS PLAN, 2015-2023**



# STAKEHOLDERS, DATA AND THE WIDER PICTURE

High quality data is the foundation of a high quality service to customers. In recent years network companies have had to re-learn the ability to handle customer data effectively.

**T**his year we have undertaken a major investment in the quality of our data handling systems and the quality of our data – particularly our Priority Services Register (PSR) data.

We've made a lot of progress already and in the next few months will have concluded the first two phases of our data refresh programme and will be moving into a day-to-day maintenance phase to ensure that the data retains its accuracy for the long term.

Our new Master Data Management system gives us more confidence than ever before in our ability to keep our data fresh, avoid duplication, and provide us with Management Information (MI) to guide our future data acquisition. As we discuss on pages 6 & 7, we will combine this MI with stakeholder engagement to shape the

way forward. Refreshing a database with hundreds of thousands of records is not a simple task. We engaged our stakeholders, and in particular our Social Issues Expert Group, to take their advice on the best approach to take. The wrong approach could easily remove vulnerable people from our register who needed to stay on it; or be over cautious and leave redundant data on. It was a difficult balancing act and we benefited from their experience of similar issues in their own sectors in developing our own model. The illustration opposite shows the scale of the project and the care that we took to ensure that we reached everyone.

We have taken advantage of this project to not just update our data but understand how else we can help our customers. Our letters to customers (and the

telephone script) ask about wider needs, such as whether they want to know more about fuel poverty or citizens advice, and we'll provide information to those customers who reply asking to know more. It's the part of the project where we're using the PSR as part of a referral network, and sits together with being able to pass data to trusted third parties – benefitting the customer beyond simply responding to incidents.

Running alongside this has been a project with our Northern Gas Networks colleagues, where they ask customers eligible for an Assisted Gas Connection Voucher if they would like to be added to our PSR. The pilot has shown benefits to both companies, and we are extending this to include customers visited by NGN engineers during emergency gas works.

## Q3. During a power cut, we can keep our customers updated via text message.

Please provide the details of the person to be contacted in the event of a power cut:

Name:

Mobile No:

Northern Powergrid works with a range of partners to provide services and information to our customers. If you are interested in finding out more, please tick the boxes below to indicate which areas you are interested in:

☐

Citizens Advice

☐

Energy Efficiency

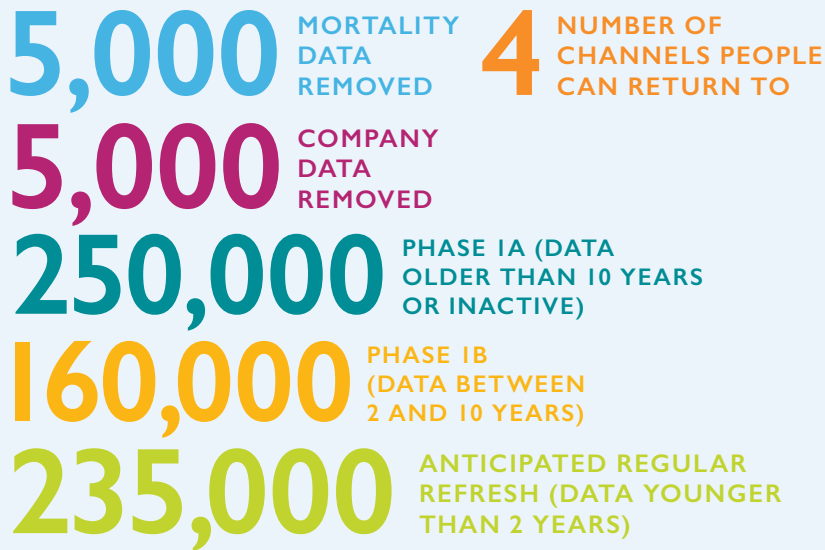
☐

Support Services specific to your Priority Services needs

In the event of an emergency, we may share your details with other agencies, such as the British Red Cross or a Local Resilience Forum in your area. This information will not be used for marketing purposes.

Extract of letter issued to customers as part of data refresh process.

## DATA REFRESH IN NUMBERS



## OUR DATA REFRESH

The project is in three phases:

- ▶ **PHASE 1(A)** contact approximately 250,000 customers whose PSR record is over 10 years old and/or who are inactive.
- ▶ **PHASE 1(B)** contact all customers with 'active' data between two and 10 years old to check if they need to stay on our register.
- ▶ **PHASE 2** the maintenance phase, the ongoing updating of our register, contacting each person at least once every two years.

A pilot phase prior to phase 1a saw us trial ideas and make improvements, including to our Interactive Voice Response system.

We understand the different needs of our customers. For those medically dependent on electricity or with a serious medical condition (categories 1 and 2 of our register) we make more attempts at contact through the available channels, than those with additional support or communication needs (categories 3 and 4). The impact of a powercut on these groups is much greater due to their individual needs, and we wanted to give them as many opportunities as possible to remain on our register.

## OUR NETWORK: HEALTHCARE AND WIDER

We have a very good relationship with Baywater Healthcare – an oxygen provider – and share data with them to ensure that together we provide the best care to their clients. The value that we've gained from this relationship, and help it's given us in better directing our services, has led to us talking to Air Liquide and BOC to similarly share data. With our data refresh and the fresh confidence it will bring, we have set out to establish similar relationships with other service support providers for those who are most in need of electricity. We've met with five local and one regional Adult Safeguarding Boards across our region to discuss our services and through them have also reached community nurses, sensory support teams and social workers.

This is an incremental process of engagement as we have to be invited to each (a similar pattern can be seen with housing associations where our network of contacts is gradually spreading). They have busy agendas, but we're pleased with our progress and have been invited to meet with the northern group of Safeguarding Boards to explain our work. The pattern of networks across the operating area varies, and a one size fits all pattern for engagement is not possible. We know that in this area particularly, our stakeholder network will never be complete, but through building those links we will incrementally reach those consumers who a network company would traditionally find hardest to reach.

## ACTIVE RECORDS 0-2 YEARS AND &gt; 2 YEARS; AND CATEGORIES 1 AND 2:



## ACTIVE RECORDS 0-2 YEARS AND &gt; 2 YEARS; AND CATEGORIES 3 AND 4:



## INACTIVE AND/OR &gt; 10 YEARS:



**FOR THE 73,600 CUSTOMERS WHOSE RECORDS ARE WITHIN 2 AND 10 YEARS OLD AND IN OUR TOP TWO CATEGORIES, WE'RE MAKING EVERY EFFORT TO REACH THEM, WITH 6 DIFFERENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR THEM TO GET BACK TO US, USING EACH OF 4 DIFFERENT CHANNELS.**

# WIDER SOCIAL ISSUES

Consumer vulnerability can be wide-ranging and multi-faceted, triggered by issues internal and external to the energy sector.

**O**ur vulnerable consumer strategy sets out our definition of vulnerability (see bottom right) and how we should tackle it. When we engage with our customers and stakeholders – such as through surveys and focus groups – we ask about a wide range of topics, from how we can do a better job to the wider energy landscape, vulnerability and poverty.

We're also very well aware of the value of external validation and challenge – so we welcome the audit that Ofgem has introduced and we're committed to securing the validation from the British Standards Institute for Inclusive Service Provision for our customer services team over the summer of 2016.

## COMMUNITY INVESTMENT STRATEGY

Our Community Investment Strategy sets our overarching strategy for supporting

our local communities. Developed after a workshop run by the Centre for Sustainable Energy and consultation across a range of our stakeholders, particularly our social issues expert group, it focuses our work around five pillars (see graphic below).

It ensures that we approach all our decisions with a long-term strategic eye. Each pillar has individual work programmes tracked and monitored via our internal Social Programme board, chaired by a head of department and with staff from across the business sitting on it. Our strategy, available on our website, is updated annually, to track our progress and set out our aspirations for the following year. We apportion resources and focus to ensure a balance across the five pillars.

The programme has been given identifiable branding so that staff recognise it as our social programme and we have dedicated pages on our intranet to update on activities and what volunteering opportunities are coming up.

£20K	VULNERABILITY TO POWERCUTS
£17K	PUBLIC SAFETY & EDUCATION
£2K	ENERGY AFFORDABILITY
£54K	EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT
£19K	STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES

OUR SHAREHOLDERS CHARITY DONATIONS ARE CLEARLY BASED AROUND THE FIVE PILLARS OF OUR COMMUNITY INVESTMENT STRATEGY. WE ALSO WORK WITH CHARITIES, SUCH AS VONNE, NEA AND THE RED CROSS, ON SERVICE DELIVERY.

## TO INFORM OUR WORK, THIS YEAR WE HAVE SURVEYED:

Older People in York, discussing flooding and how our services could respond and develop

Our PSR customer base on the full range of services and how they could be improved

Community energy projects we have worked with, exploring how we could develop our support for the sector

Beneficiaries and referrers of our green doctor project, to test whether they gained from it and help us develop our thoughts for a future phase

The Voluntary & Community sector to understand how we can help them deliver their services. This directly led to an extended reach for our PSR marketing.

## OUR VULNERABLE CONSUMER STRATEGY

We've built our strategy to recognise the needs of our area. It is updated each year to reflect new ideas and best practice.

Our strategy recognises that a consumer may be vulnerable for a number of reasons, including:

- i) long term or transient conditions
- ii) physical or mental problems
- iii) caring responsibilities
- iv) communication difficulties
- v) wider environmental or economic circumstances (for example, their home being flooded or losing their job).

### CARE PROFESSIONALS

In November we ran two events, as part of our Infrastructure North partnership. Organised by the voluntary sector and aimed at the health, social housing and voluntary sectors, they drew a wide audience keen to understand what we did and how we could work more closely together. We're now working on initiatives sparked by those events, including meeting with Yorkshire and Humber Housing Association Sustainability Forum to discuss how we could help with reducing energy bills and costs. Our joint

energy and water saving booklet was one of the products of this (see part 2, page 10 for more). Several hundred copies have been distributed to housing associations on request, from Gateshead to South Yorkshire.

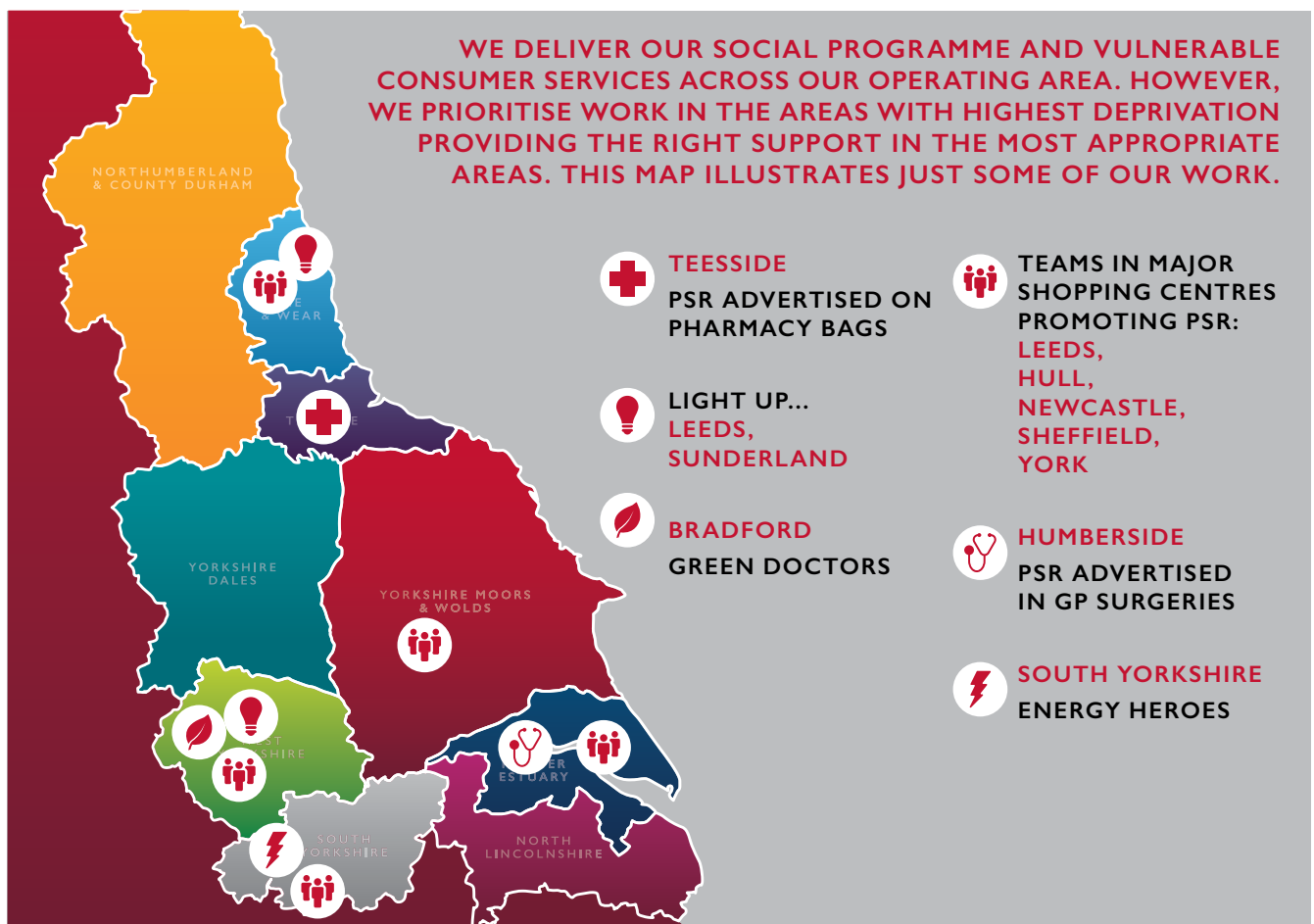
### FUEL POVERTY

2015's National Energy Action conference in Sheffield was sponsored by ourselves and National Grid. 358 delegates registered to attend, the highest in recent times. We presented our research into transferring costs from network reinforcement into

improved fuel efficiency (the Alternative Investment Strategy or AIS) for vulnerable consumers and led a discussion on how distribution companies could support vulnerable customers and communities, with participants from local authorities across the country. After sharing the fruits of the AIS widely and discussing the work with colleagues across the sector, we have decided to take the AIS forward and are identifying the area on our network which best demonstrates the technical and deprivation characteristics that will allow the theory to be tested.

**“ THEY LOOKED AFTER ME AS I’M HAVING CHEMOTHERAPY AND I NEEDED EXTRA HEATING AND A KETTLE DURING THE POWER CUT, AND THE MAN WHO DELIVERED THE LETTER ABOUT THE PLANNED POWER CUT TOLD ME TO CALL THE NUMBER ON THE LETTER, WHICH I DID AND THEY ENSURED I WAS OKAY. THE WORK STARTED ON TIME AND THEY GOT THE WORK DONE AS QUICKLY AS THEY COULD.”**

**BMCS VERBATIM, MRS LEE, MARKET RASEN, DECEMBER 2015**



# OUR PRIORITY SERVICES REGISTER

Our Priority Services Register is the foundation of our vulnerable consumer services – joining together many of the projects we're involved with through our social programme and referral network as well as, of course, the focus of our work during powercuts.

**We adopt a wide ranging view of who is eligible for our Priority Services Register. The full range of services is available to those on the register – whether for a short period or for many years.**

We consulted with our Social Issues Expert Group (SIEG) about our approach to the national consultation on the new need categories as well as the groupings guiding the developments of appropriate services. We know that vulnerability can be transitory as well as permanent; and our systems are clearly set up to allow short and long term registration.

Vulnerability can be triggered by medical or wider environmental factors. We promote these aspects of the register as well as perhaps the more traditional and expected elements. Everyone registering online, over the phone or through a leaflet is asked to select an end date for their registration. Our regular biennial data refresh of all our consumers on our Priority Services Register ensures we capture properly the needs of the consumer and they're properly recorded on our systems. For some years, our database held us back from active marketing of the register. Although we still used our networks to add consumers to the register, we were cautious about our ability to process the data. We have confidence that our data management tools are robust enough for a significant inflow of new data.

In January 2016 we embarked on an advertising campaign for our

Priority Services Register. We designed it with the advice of our SIEG and had four objectives for the campaign:

- ▶ Improve knowledge and awareness of the register amongst key groups
- ▶ Add new people to the register
- ▶ Help us to understand the most effective ways of adding people to the register
- ▶ Ensure that our efforts were prioritised to those areas most in need.

Our programme used different techniques in different areas so that we could more easily track the effectiveness of each method and ensure that a wider roll-out represented the best value for money. We selected areas with high deprivation indices in health and socio-economic data and where our existing stakeholder networks were weakest, to maximise the extension in the reach of our programme. We overlaid on that an approach with our existing networks and to access particular groups – such as Remploy branches to help us reach those with learning difficulties:

- ▶ Evolving our regular winter radio campaign into a Priority Services Campaign – playing out on Heart and Capital
- ▶ Twitter, Facebook and Instagram campaign – which saw a 50% uplift in online registrations during the period it ran
- ▶ Advertising on Pharmacy bags across the Teesside (TS) postcode area for an approximately four week period

▶ Posters (see an example of one on page 7) and application forms mailed to:

- ▶ All 117 GP surgeries in the Hull and East Riding areas
- ▶ All 55 Citizens Advice branches in our area
- ▶ All seven Remploy branches in our area.

▶ Teams in shopping streets in five cities handing out leaflets and promoting the benefits of the register.

## DATA ACQUISITION

Once the outcome from this initial exercise is complete, we will take the results and develop the most efficient way of promoting awareness of and adding people to the register. The online sign up asks how the applicants know about the register, so we get good quality data on the campaign. We combine this quantitative data with discussions with our stakeholders – SIEG, Online community, other partners we've worked with in promoting the register – in deciding the next phase of the campaign.

## LISTENING TO CUSTOMERS

Although we listen to our trusted expert group and representatives of people on our register, none is as important as hearing our customers voices direct. Our contact centre staff and customer liaison officers receive feedback daily, but we also run surveys twice a year using an independent research company. Additionally, we carry out ad hoc surveys such as with older people in York to discuss flooding and their views of our services improvement plans. The data is fed into the Care Quality Indicator (CQI) that



we designed to monitor quantitatively how we perform; and our Priority Services team receive a presentation, as well as the raw data, to inform their approach. In the past year this has led to:

- ▶ Customers registering online having the option of receiving a 'hard' copy of the PSR welcome pack
- ▶ Perforated cards in the PSR pack to handout to friends and neighbours
- ▶ All levels of PSR customer highlighted automatically as part of our planned powercut process.

Our CQI data showed at the half year that we had improved across the basket of performance indicators, one percentage point – a strong performance that we're looking to build on in the next six months. Our five Customer Support Vehicles are a longstanding part of our service provision. This year we replaced the two oldest with brand new vehicles. They promote our services during major events and during

powercuts they are focused on where they can help our priority customers the most. In the last year we've deployed our vans to 177 incidents, with a potential customer reach across them of 44,000 – just under 10% of whom were PSR customers. For several years now they have provided the following services:

- ▶ Hot water, drinks and snacks
- ▶ A fridge and microwave
- ▶ Charging points and inverters
- ▶ Practical items such as torches, hats, gloves and blankets.

We have selected these services as those which benefit the most, our more vulnerable customers during a powercut and can be accommodated within a vehicle of this size. We also provide our ambassadors with some of the kit, such as the inverters, so we can reach more people, quickly. We review the offer as part of our twice a year survey of our PSR customers.

**Need a little extra help in a power cut?**

We understand that if you have a serious health condition a power cut could be more than just an inconvenience.

We're the people responsible for the power network that delivers electricity to your door and we're here for you 24/7. If you, or someone you know, might need extra help in a power cut, why not join our free Priority Services Register.

To find out more and apply online visit [www.northernpowergrid.com](http://www.northernpowergrid.com) or call us on 0800 169 2996

**NORTHERN POWERGRID**

## CASE STUDY – LEADING THE INDUSTRY IN MARKETING THE PSR

**Our regular survey of PSR customers identified that a key area for raising awareness of our register should be around those with a disability.**

We explored a number of different opportunities to do this and found that a good option might be placing material in Able Magazine, the self-styled "leading disability lifestyle magazine". Having discussed our requirements with the editorial team we understood that the highest circulation edition of the magazine was the March/April publication, coinciding with an event at the NEC. We coordinated the other five DNOs in agreeing to share costs, booking the space, designing the material and circulating copies across our peers. This advert (see left) led to an approach from 'Living with Disability' magazine for a similar feature.

In 2016 the industry will discuss how effective the marketing was and whether we should be repeating it on a recurring basis. Our own research will seek to identify how effective an awareness raising tool it was in our own operating area to help us inform our contribution to that debate.



# EMBEDDED STRATEGY

Our approach towards vulnerable consumers is embedded within our organisation's culture, and documented in our business plan.

**W**e listen to our people and to external experts in putting together our strategies and hope to learn from the best – inside and outside the industry.

## STAFF TRAINING AND DISCRETION

Although we have guidance documents, we trust and encourage our people to do the right thing – recognising that individual customers do not fit neatly into categories and have individual needs that we might be able to help with. With a major incident in Bradford with many houses off power we provided a couple of families who couldn't afford to go out and eat with food from a local shop; a long running multi-agency incident in Calderdale over Christmas (see part 2, page 5) led to us providing the local rest centre with the details of properties on our PSR so that our efforts dovetailed with theirs. People do not fit neatly into categories and our staff training (developed with NEA and the Red Cross) and 'secondary roles' recognise that. It means that understanding of the circumstances of our customers, and in particular those who are suffering most during a powercut, runs throughout the organisation and not just with our frontline staff. What's important for us is what works and that we deploy the most effective resource for the circumstances; not what ticks a form.

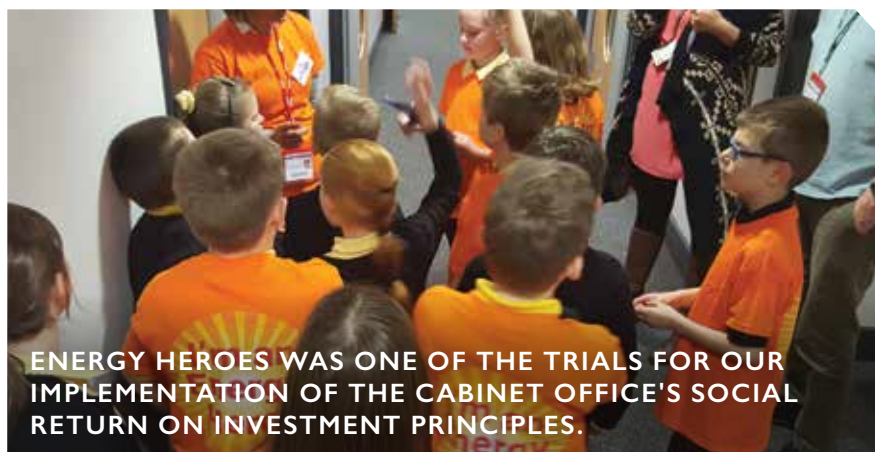
When a proposal comes to us we test it against our Community Investment Strategy (see page 4) to ensure it's helping to meet

one of our strategic objectives. We then test it through our project pro-forma, a gateway through which all new social projects have to pass. That checks that we have asked ourselves whether it's the best way of meeting the need, that it represents best value for money; and staff time, that we've tested we have an evaluation strategy and that we've thought through how the project would scale. Testing any initiative in this way ensures that it is the best way available to us of addressing a problem. It is at this stage that the SROI tests and data requirements are set, to allow us to carry out the assessment (see right) later.

## GUIDED BY THE EVIDENCE

In Autumn 2015 we began a collaboration with partners at Northern Gas Networks, working with them and Bradford Children's Society to explore ways of installing energy saving equipment in homes where there was fuel poverty.

We saw this project as part of a long lasting solution for the people it supported. As we developed the idea, we included our own partners at the Trussell Trust in the project – with the Trust and Society referring their clients on to Groundwork's 'Green Doctors' scheme – a project that they had developed with Leeds City Council and were looking to roll out further. When it became clear that we were struggling to get the number of referrals to the Green Doctors that we had planned for, we amended the project area to include more areas and more Trussell Trust centres. The inclusion of another charity partner, widening the reach of a valuable project, increased the impact of our investment and provided enough data for us to fairly assess the outcome of the work. We're now working on developing that project with Northern Gas and Groundwork to refine it in the light of our appraisal.



ENERGY HEROES WAS ONE OF THE TRIALS FOR OUR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CABINET OFFICE'S SOCIAL RETURN ON INVESTMENT PRINCIPLES.

**“ I CAN'T PRAISE NORTHERN POWERGRID ENOUGH. SUCH A COMFORT BEING CALLED AND KEPT INFORMED ABOUT WHAT'S GOING ON. I WAS ALSO GIVEN A PRIORITY NUMBER BECAUSE I AM OVER 80 AND LIVE ON MY OWN.”**

**BMCS VERBATIM, MR S HICKSON, SEPTEMBER 2015**

## SOCIAL RETURN ON INVESTMENT (SROI)

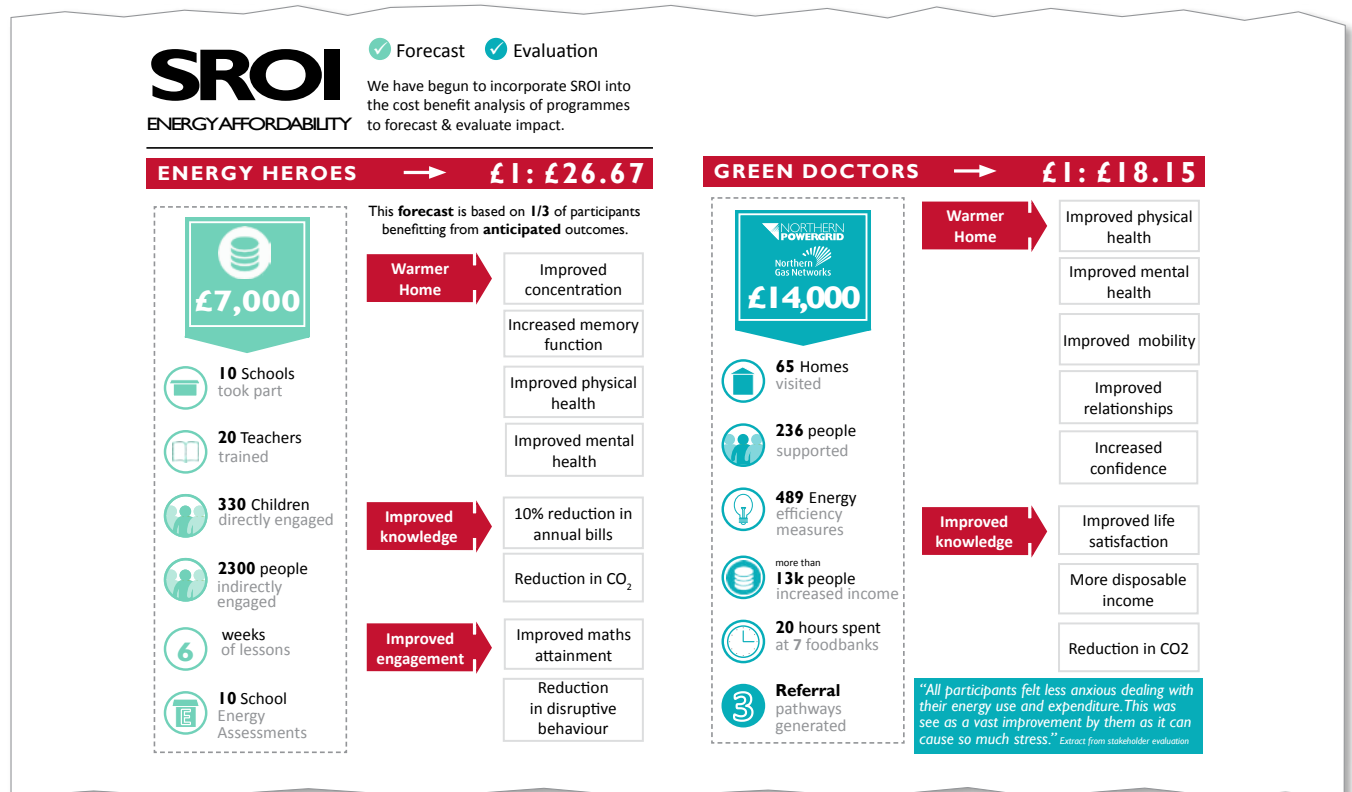
One of our priorities for the year has been formalising our 'impact' decision making process ensuring it is as robust as we would do with other aspects of the business such as asset renewal or climate change adaptation. We've explained in part 1 the principles we've used and how our work has followed Social Value UK principles originally developed as part of a Cabinet office framework – here we demonstrate how we measure our impact in practice.

Working with stakeholders forecasted goals are set out at the start of the project these are both of a qualitative and quantitative nature. Key outcomes are agreed and the forecasted benefits that these will have. In the Energy Heroes case study these included the numbers of children and parents reached; and forecasted improvements in knowledge of maths, energy and climate change. Data is gathered during the project lifecycle and forms part of the evaluation at the project conclusion.

The SROI methodology is based on a measure of proxies for the outcome achieved.

For example, a better understanding of energy efficiency at home could lead to a warmer homes and improved health for those living in it. We factored in proxies for the three stakeholder categories involved in the project – children, parents and teachers – and reached a judgement on the benefits for each in calculating the SROI.

This is the first year we have used this model, and the SROI generated will contribute to the benchmark for assessing future projects, including the wider service design and decisions about scale and location of any rollout.



“OUR PRIMARY SOCIAL OBLIGATIONS ARE TO PROVIDE A RELIABLE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY AND MINIMISE THE COSTS OF OUR OPERATIONS FOR OUR CUSTOMERS. HERE WE DIFFER FROM THE ENERGY SUPPLY COMPANIES, WHOSE OBLIGATIONS ARE WELL DEFINED IN THE VARIOUS SOCIAL SCHEMES THEY ARE MANDATED TO SUPPORT. HOWEVER, OUR LOCAL ROLE GIVES US A UNIVERSAL RELEVANCE IN THE COMMUNITIES WE SERVE AND OUR PLAN RECOGNISES THE POTENTIAL VALUE OF THAT ROLE IN A NEW WAY.”

NORTHERN POWERGRID'S WELL JUSTIFIED BUSINESS PLAN, 2015-2023

# OUR PARTNERSHIPS, OUR CONSUMERS

Partnerships are a key part to how we deliver so many of our services, and this is particularly true in the support for our vulnerable customers.

**T**hese partners are well positioned and trusted. They give us the platform to build relationships within an environment that our customers feel secure. We have a structured approach to developing partnerships built on guidance from the Cabinet Office and listening to our stakeholders.

## PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

We want to ensure that our programmes are the most cost effective and have the highest impact. Our approach with a new initiative is to match it against our community investment strategy.

We explore whether delivering this with a partner would increase reach and impact, particularly if resources can be pooled. Each new partnership is assessed to make sure it is the best investment of the time and funding and the best way to deliver that service. We also try to understand whether projects can deliver more than one objective (for example, the Energy Heroes scheme, discussed in more detail on page 9 of part 2, is part of our education and our community energy work) and the most appropriate geographies – influenced by demographic mapping data including deprivation data – before embarking on a project. We know that we're in a unique (more detail in part 2, page 6) position with our reach and impartiality across the region, and we must make the most of that status. Our partnership with the other utilities as Infrastructure North is a great example of this. We pool our resources to achieve a greater impact and reach a shared audience. We are realistic about what we can achieve.

Fundamentally we are a network company here to keep the lights on. We have kept our social obligations aligned to our overall business purpose and work to extend the reach whilst we are already working in the communities that we serve.

## CITIZENS ADVICE

In 2014 we followed the advice of our Social Issues Expert Group (SIEG) and started a pilot with Citizens Advice in Newcastle to fund a fuel poverty adviser. The advice was that a good way of providing deep-seated support was to link up with an existing advice provider. The arrangement has seen contact with almost 350 clients a year, taking referrals from across the city and providing expert advice to agencies across the wider Tyne and Wear area. From spring 2015 they produced regular case studies to help promote the partnership and we now regularly meet their Chief Executive. She joined our Social Issues Expert Group, bringing day-to-day experience to our strategic decision making.

We promised to provide a similar scheme in Yorkshire once we had the opportunity to learn lessons from Newcastle. We recognised that whilst Newcastle was providing excellent value and a good service for the people of Newcastle, a lot of the return was focused on the city. We asked the Chief Executive of Citizens Advice Newcastle how we should develop the programme for Yorkshire.

We identified that Leeds Citizens Advice had the best capacity to deliver a wide range of outputs and in autumn 2015 we met their Chief Executive. The Leeds scheme we have started includes extensive outreach across

## WIDER PARTNERSHIPS

Local Resilience Forums

Trussell Trust and Ahead Partnership

Targeting work at more deprived areas

Partnerships with clearly identified targets for both sides

Safeguarding boards and the wider statutory sector

the City of Leeds and pays for training (to a recognised qualification) for new advisers, as well as the salary for the adviser themselves. By funding training to develop more advisers, we are providing long term support that will run across the region, as well as the more immediate advice that the adviser will provide. Detailed user statistics will be provided as well as case studies, and after the Leeds scheme has settled in we will be using the lessons and experiences from there to develop our Newcastle project further.



**Sir Martin Narey**  
**@martinnarey**

Nov 28

Outstanding provision of information and speedy resolution to power cut in Whitby yesterday. Well done @Northpowergrid

EPC

@EPCollege

Nov 19

An impromptu talk from Jessica Cook, Northern Powergrid on Power #epcvulnerableseminar



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