



Part 2: Summary of outcomes resulting from our stakeholder engagement activities

Stakeholder Engagement and Consumer Vulnerability Incentive

Benefits of our stakeholder engagement

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Introduction

The vital need to engage with businesses, communities and consumers



Find out more here
ukpowernetworks.co.uk/events



Simon Gray
CEO of East of England Energy Group
(Chair of eastern Critical Friends Panel)

"Stakeholder engagement in the electricity distribution industry, as in other industries, has been growing in importance over recent years as businesses have become aware of the pressing need to understand their consumers better, the significant benefits it can bring and as regulators have encouraged greater involvement.

The feedback I have received from members of my group shows me that UK Power Networks is delivering improvements for the energy industry in our region, and not just talking about it. Having chaired numerous sessions of this highly informative, participatory and enjoyable round of critical friends events I believe that UK Power Networks can feel genuinely proud of their attempts to reach out and better understand the needs and pressures on consumers and groups representing the key stakeholders in the local community. I only wish other organisations embraced engagement on such a scale in this manner. I have been profoundly impressed with UK Power Networks' intent and desire to genuinely seek to understand their customers.

I hope and expect that this annual report of their stakeholder engagement activity gets across all the hard work that I know UK Power Networks are putting in, and I look forward to working with them to monitor and further advance their stakeholder engagement work in the coming years." **Simon Gray**

Why is stakeholder engagement important?



See more pictures
ukpowernetworks.co.uk/image3

- "Stakeholder Engagement is now accepted as integral to an organisation's sustainability and success." (AccountAbility AA1000SES standard).
- Stakeholder Engagement is adopted across the public and private sector. The Government Cabinet Office has issued guidance on Stakeholder Engagement to Government Departments.
- UK Power Networks fully agrees with this emphasis on engagement as do our stakeholders.

Therefore, this year for the first time we have conducted a stakeholder engagement best practice review exercise across a wide range of sectors to understand what engagement methods we could learn from and put into practice to improve our stakeholder engagement.

Structure of this document

This Part 2 report includes three of the **four areas** that stakeholders told us to focus on in 2015/16. The fourth area, consumer vulnerability, is in the Part 3 report. In the final section of this report we show examples of how embedded stakeholder engagement is in our business and the benefits achieved so far.

Delivering great customer service

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Embracing low carbon technologies

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Making it easier to connect to our network

Pages 07 – 08

Other stakeholder engagement activity

Pages 09 – 10

Highlighting some of our **145** outcomes

Innovating and leading the industry



First to offer video chat and web chat

By saving generation customers

£48M

New **'test it with customers'** scheme

Continuing to offer an excellent service

448k

proactive text messages sent during a power cut

Over

5,000

hours of customer service training delivered



2M

website hits this year



Helping stakeholders with specific interests



Workshops with companies moving to electric vehicles

New partnerships with **community energy groups**

Understanding **business customers**

who work from home



Continuing to support the most vulnerable

100% of records on our PSR cleansed

3,000

customers helped by our new 'customer and community support' team



New **'You and your home'** service set up

1 We continually monitor and evaluate the projects that we deliver

There is a rigorous process for developing projects within our stakeholder engagement programme from ideas, to pilots and embedding them in our business. This section shows some examples of the process we go through with every project:

Step 1: Innovation



We are always innovating and looking for new ideas to improve our service to stakeholders. We receive ideas from customers or stakeholders at engagement events, or we receive feedback from customers after they've had a service from us. We then appoint an owner internally to look into the idea or suggestion. Once we have started to develop the idea or have a draft prototype or outline, we hold a specific session to gain feedback from our customers or stakeholders where the aim is for them to help co-design the service. Based on feedback our project manager will refine the idea. This process will continue until we are ready to pilot the project.

Step 2: Pilot project



We run a pilot test either in a set geographical area or with a set group of customers. Piloting a project is less risky than implementing into the business immediately. We use it as an opportunity to learn and refine the project so it is a success for our stakeholders. A pilot project can be an idea run over a few weeks or even a year, if needed. From the pilot we would set goals we want to achieve, outcomes that will benefit stakeholders, identify resources needed, decide how we will evaluate success and define what we want to learn from the pilot. Throughout, the project manager will listen to feedback from customers or stakeholders via surveys, focus groups or feedback from customer interactions. At the end of a pilot the project manager will summarise results, report findings to the executive management team and recommend whether to embed it within the business or not. Once the executive management team have reviewed the successful proposal and level of outcomes, funding will be given to roll it out into business as usual. We share the outcome with stakeholders with 'you said, we did' sessions.

Seven pilot projects are referenced in this submission.

Step 3: Embedded into business as usual



After a successful pilot project, planning the implementation within the business begins. The learnings from the pilot will be used to ensure a smooth transition into the embedded stage. Changes will be made to policies and procedures where needed and training will take place with teams that are affected, then communication of the project will start. Progress of the project and delivered outcomes will be presented back to our internal stakeholder engagement strategic committee each month and then regularly to the CEO and executive management team.

14 projects referenced in this document are fully embedded.

All projects are closely monitored and evaluated at every stage

All projects are closely monitored and evaluated by the project manager. Our evaluation criteria for projects are:

- Is it cost efficient for the customer?
- Does it meet customers' needs?
- Can this be embedded into business as usual?
- Can it fit into wider systems throughout the business?
- Does it align with our business plan and vision?
- Is stakeholder feedback positive?

Examples of: monitoring new projects to incorporate customer feedback

Our Head of Customer Services evaluates the quality of service following implementation of a new process to proactively contact thousands of customers during a power cut (read more on page 3). This process is fully embedded within the customer service team and is now part of the service strategy. Each week comments from the customer satisfaction survey are documented, sent to senior managers and discussed. All comments are read and if any improvements need to be made to the process then the Head of Customer Service will ensure this happens. Each month a meeting is held with our CEO and relevant senior managers to review comments from customers to ensure everything is done to act on feedback.

Examples of: evaluating feedback about our website to create outcomes

We evaluate how customers use our website regularly. Each month a report shows how many customers have visited the website, what pages they have spent time on and how many used social media. We also analyse comments from website users. Senior managers look for trends and areas of improvement that are being suggested by customers. For example, comments were received about our live power cut map being slow to use during a power cut when the customers only had access to 3G because their Wi-Fi didn't have power. So we scoped out a new project to add a list of power cuts that would load far more quickly when customers may only be relying on a 3G connection. Customer feedback about this new list was great and over 100,000 customers have benefited from using it.

2 Delivering great customer service

Our vision for customer service is to offer products and services that provide customers with choice, flexibility and convenience, whilst ensuring they feel that their personal data is secure and that we are responsive to their personal needs.

Find out more here
ukpowernetworks.co.uk/customerservices

We have launched 'Test it with customers' – a scheme that enables our employees easily to test and co-design new ideas with customers



Employees told us they would like an easy way to test ideas with customers. This aligns with our guiding principles of stakeholder engagement where we always look to co-design ideas together with stakeholders. We launched a 'Test it with customers' scheme to provide feedback to our employees during new projects. The scheme gives our employees access to a pool of 300 customers in our geographical area, with representation from different age groups, regions, genders and backgrounds. 'Test it with customers' means employees can ask customers anything they like, to test and shape our services. Since its launch early in 2016 eight projects have been tested and six of those have been delivered.

Outcomes from this scheme:

- We launched a new channel for customers to contact us on because 58% of customers surveyed said they are interested in using video chat during a power cut.
- We added Met Office weather warnings to our website because 71% of customers surveyed said this would be useful.

We proactively contact thousands of our customers during a power cut before they have even contacted us

Customers have told us that they would expect us to let them know if there was a power cut in their area. One customer said, **"If there was a power cut they should have told us up front. They've got people's phone numbers and emails so they should contact beforehand."**

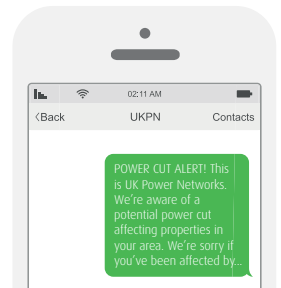
We listened to this feedback, changed our procedures and invested over £100,000 to implement a significantly more proactive service to our customers. Once we are aware of a power cut we automatically send customers in the affected area a text message and a message to their landline phone where we have their details. This year we sent out over 448,000 messages. Once customers call us they receive a personalised message giving them the latest update or can hold to speak to a member of our customer service team. The feedback from customers is excellent: **"I was amazed they contacted me out of the blue. It was good to know the reason for the power cut and the time it would come back on".**

This process is embedded within our business as a routine activity now; however, we continue to evaluate and seek to improve it. For example, some customers said that they had not read the text message because it didn't stand out to them. So we quickly changed the start of the text message to read 'POWER CUT ALERT!'.

Outcome:

- Customers who have been proactively contacted by us score us higher, at 90%, compared to 86% when customers have not been contacted.

A text message sent to customers



We offer a new 'reminder' service to customers to keep them updated while we carry out planned work

We received weekly feedback from customers saying they were not aware of work we were carrying out in their area. Customers suggested that we **"could also send out emails, phone calls or texts to make sure that everyone gets the message, as a letter might not reach everyone"**.

We listened to this feedback, adjusted our processes and invested over £35,000 in a pilot project, starting in London and the South East, to do just what our customers asked for. Since January 2016 we have sent 14,000 text and voice messages, in addition to over 32,000 written letters and reminder notices.

To monitor this pilot project our team has a daily conference call during which they discuss every planned job and check customers have been notified correctly. They highlight feedback in real time from customers and teams delivering the work. During this customers said they would expect to see the information on our website power cut map. So we did just that, which resulted in very positive feedback from our customers: **"I don't think they could have done anything better. They gave me plenty of warning, I was very satisfied". "I work for a housing association and I would just like to say how brilliant you all are and the use of the live power cut maps makes our job much easier and prevents us sending out electricians so thank you"**.

Outcome:

- Customer satisfaction score increased from 86% to 92% for planned work.



A written reminder notice sent to customers

Hi this is UK Power Networks. This message is to remind you of the planned power cut that is scheduled for 01/03/2016 between 09:00 and 11:00. This shutdown is scheduled so that we can complete an important repair on the network in your area. I would like to apologise for the inconvenience the power cut may cause you. If you have any queries or questions please call us on 08003 163105 or visit our website www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk/plannedpowercuts

17.05

A reminder text message sent to customers

We are working creatively with other utilities

We recognise that other utilities in our region of the UK serve the same customers and that they would benefit from us working more closely together. Therefore we hosted the first of our utility best-practice workshops with Thames Water, National Grid, Affinity Water, Southern Water, Essex & Suffolk Water, and Sutton and East Surrey Water. We will hold these three times a year. We shared our best practice on customer service and the Priority Service Register (PSR). We also invited an external guest to share industry-leading ideas about online communication channels.



nationalgrid

Outcome:

- Agreement reached to work together to share priority service data ahead of the industry changes which will be put in place in the future.

We have created industry-leading channels, so customers can contact us in as many ways as possible



Stakeholders and customers tell us at every opportunity that we need to continuously communicate online with our customers. We want to keep ahead of the latest trends, which is why we held a session with 30 Scouts and another with 10 young people from a youth council. They told us that in the future, when they will be paying electricity bills, **"If I had a power cut I'd just check online."** (South Cambridgeshire Youth Council). We also know that 86% of the public use the Internet, which is why since 2012 we have engaged with customers on social media 24 hours a day and made various innovative improvements to our website, such as giving customers the ability to report a power cut online. This work has earned significant external recognition for us, including Best Digital Utility at the Utility Week Achievement Awards plus three other awards. Here are some of the other innovations introduced this year:



Customers can talk to us on video chat and web chat

In 2014 we were the first electricity distribution company to launch web chat for customers and we have received excellent feedback about this. We are constantly looking for new ways to innovate and learn from other industries. We drew on the experience of the retailer Amazon, who have a 'Mayday button' via which customers can talk face-to-face online to an advisor if they have any technical problems. 43% of our "Test it with customers" stakeholder group said they would be interested in this service, so we launched a new video chat service of our own and are leading the industry by being the first to talk to customers using online video chat via any computer or mobile device.



Directly engaging hard-to-reach groups, our future energy bill payers discussing how they want to communicate with us during a power cut



Simulation of a customer and employee talking using video chat

"Great 24/7 customer service from the good peeps manning @UKPowerNetworks Twitter feed this morning. Good to see the socials used positively!" Tweet from a domestic customer

Customers can see what other customers are tweeting using our online power cut map

79% of customers surveyed told us that they would like to see where other people had reported a power cut in their area. So, in an innovation unique among utilities, we displayed tweets from customers on our online power cut map effectively answering their questions before they ask them. In 2015/16 we received over 31,000 tweets from customers and 980,000 customers benefited from using the online power cut map.



Our online map showing customers conversations on Twitter

Outcomes:

- Over 4,800 customers have used web and video chat and we have an 88% satisfaction rating for this service.
- Two million customers visit our website each year and we have over 32,000 engaged customers on Facebook and Twitter.

We have innovated using new ways to engage online



See videos here
ukpowernetworks.co.uk/video1



Customers asked our Director anything on Twitter

Over two-thirds of the "Test it with customers" group said they would find this useful, so this year we held our third and fourth Twitter Question & Answer sessions, which no other distribution company has held before.

Outcomes:

- 79 customers engaged with us during the Twitter Q&A events.
- Over 2 million customers were exposed to our messages during our Tweetathon.

Customers enjoyed a 12-hour live Tweetathon

We were the first distribution company to hold a live Tweetathon this year. We sent 99 live updates from 8am to 8pm to our customers about all aspects of the business: **"These information tweets are proving to be fascinating. Learning something new all the time."** (domestic customer)



See more pictures
ukpowernetworks.co.uk/image2

We are meeting the specific needs of our small rural business customers

Some customers are harder to reach out to than others and this includes small businesses. As part of a research study, we interviewed over 50 business owners. We found that rural businesses are less resilient during a power cut and for many of them power cuts have a critical impact. Comments included, **"We'd have to potentially close"** and **"We need heat for sheep that have hypothermic lambs"** (small business customers). Normally we ask all customers experiencing a power cut to complete internal checks for the property, but this can be difficult for some business premises. We have listened to their feedback and changed our processes (see outcome).

Outcome:

- We have changed our process for business customers. If business customers are unsure where their fuse box is during a power cut we send staff straight to them.

3 Embracing low carbon technologies

Our vision for our future network is to provide expertise and guidance to empower individuals, businesses, local communities and the public sector to embrace a low carbon future and to use our engineering skills and experience to shape energy policy for a better, low carbon Britain.

Find out more here
ukpowernetworks.co.uk/lowcarbon

We are leading the way in London to support the move to electric transport

See more pictures
ukpowernetworks.co.uk/image1

We have taken a wider than normal approach and have proactively contacted big brands outside the utility industry. 90% of our stakeholders who were surveyed endorse this and want to see us leading the way in this area. We approached Transport for London (TfL) to see how we could help deliver their ambitious targets. Given our unique position as an electricity distributor in London and the south-east of England, we see our role as helping to enable companies make the move to electric vehicles, by sharing our expert knowledge. We held a forum with TfL and the major bus operators, including Go-Ahead, Stagecoach, Metrolink and Arriva. Here we provided guidance on how they can connect to the electricity network, in order to make their fleets electric.

The reaction to this was very positive with TfL, saying: **"UK Power Networks has been very supportive in helping us plan our transition to low carbon emission transport. By organising a session with our bus operators, they have started to bridge the gap between new customers and the information they will need on their future electric requirements."**

Feedback told us that the service we offered had been useful so we thought about what we could do next. We know that electrification of vehicles is not only about public transport, but also about the many companies that have large commercial van fleets. So we approached companies such as UPS and Hertz to proactively discuss their electricity connection requirements and set up a workshop. We will continue to engage with more and more companies in this way, encouraging those with major transport fleets to embrace electric vehicles.

Outcomes:

- Supported nine companies in progressing their plans for electric vehicles
- Over 90% of workshop attendees found them very useful and interesting and 60%, including Hertz, agreed that **"following the workshop, I am more confident about taking forward an electric vehicle plan in my organisation."**

Peter Harris from UPS presenting at our electric vehicle fleets forum



Some of the companies we have engaged with



We have reduced connection charges for our generation customers by over £48m

This is a great example of where we have embedded a Low Carbon Networks Fund project into 'business as usual' and saved customers millions of pounds. Seeing the large increase in distributed generation connection requests, we have engaged much more closely with our customers through distributed generation stakeholder forums, one-to-one meetings and surgeries. In these we have co-designed commercial frameworks. From these sessions we have embedded new commercial, technical and service innovations into our routine business activity.

Last year our award-winning "Flexible Plug and Play" project made great strides in releasing capacity on a constrained network, so this year we rolled out flexible connection solutions to new areas in our eastern region. This year we have connected over 25 megawatts of generation that has delivered direct savings in connection costs to 5 of our larger customers. Not only are they saving money and making their project viable, but by avoiding extensive reinforcement they can connect their projects faster, which is exactly what customers told us they wanted.

"I can only compliment your can-do attitude and the willingness to go above and beyond to help us get our projects over the line. This has all helped us to successfully complete these schemes. I look forward to working with UK Power Networks on schemes in the future." Grid Manager, Solarcentury

Outcomes:

- A total of over £48m of reduced connection quotes for customers.
- We have the greatest amount of network under active management in the electricity distribution industry (allowing more flexibility in the times and levels of generation).
- We have enabled over 25 MW more generation to be connected than would have been possible before.



One of our Distributed Generation forums

We are improving UK-wide service to customers who install electric vehicle charging points

Electric vehicle charge-point installers are key players in facilitating the uptake of electric vehicles, which is why they are such important stakeholders to us. They made it clear to us that, when they install charge points, the process of notifying us was not easy; it was in some cases a blocker.

We listened to this and took action. As this is an industry-wide application process, we needed to involve other electricity distribution companies. So as chair of the Electricity Networks Association Low Carbon Technologies working group, we worked with all the electricity distributors and held two engagement sessions with a group of approximately 20 stakeholders from across the UK, including electric vehicle installers, manufacturers, the Society of Motor Manufacturers & Traders and the Office of Low Emission Vehicles.

At these sessions we openly discussed why we need to know when charge points are installed and customers in turn discussed their business processes. Together we co-designed a solution.

We have improved the application process for customers across the UK and created a simple form available online for installers to use on our website. We then further improved the form by making it easy to fill in online, based on further feedback.

We have had many positive comments, including this from the Office of Low Emission Vehicles: **“UK Power Networks have been proactive supporters in our efforts to promote the uptake of electric vehicles and the transition to low carbon emission transport in the UK. UK Power Networks were instrumental in facilitating an open dialogue with electric vehicle charge point installers to discuss the needs of all stakeholders and working towards an agreeable notification process. This was an important endeavour to minimise the obstacles to electric vehicle uptake.”**

Outcomes:

- Over 1,800 electric vehicle charging point installer applications have been made using our new easier application form.
- We created a new online form to further improve the service.



Our online application form



We are focusing on the hot topic of energy storage

Through delivering our Low Carbon Networks Fund energy storage project, we recognise that we have the best experience in this technology and have become storage experts. 89% of stakeholders surveyed said we should focus on storage and we have had over 300 requests from our customers to connect energy storage in the last four months. So we listened to this and hosted a storage workshop with over 25 developers. One of the key outcomes of that session was learning that storage developers would like to be informed about where in the network they can connect.

Working on the premise that such a tool would need energy import and export visibility, we set up a session with some of the storage developers to discuss the technical challenges of developing it. Four companies joined us for this exercise and we received feedback on how it could be improved. This co-design effort will produce results in 2016/17, when we publish more useful data to our storage customers. Providing the right information to customers means that developers will have more confidence in gaining access to the network where required - thereby reducing the risks of project delays.

Outcome:

- Storage will continue to be a high priority in the future for us, and we will continue to co-design new services with stakeholders.

We are busy in other energy-saving areas too

What stakeholders said	Action as a result of the engagement	Benefit
Arriva wanted to know about the process and network considerations in relation to electrifying their bus fleet	Met with Arriva and engaged on electrifying their fleet	Arriva has taken forward plans to increase on-site power for charging a number of buses
TfL need to roll out public on-street rapid electric vehicle charge points	Held surgeries to discuss and answer queries about rapid charge points	TfL has plans to deliver over 150 rapid charge points by 2018
Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) wanted to understand our interpretation of a Future Power Systems Architecture study	Met and presented a report to DECC	DECC understands how we see the future in this area and can feed this into their plans
Greater London Authority (GLA) wanted to develop its long term 2050 London Infrastructure Plan	Engaged and provided our data including; electric vehicle and heat pump and load profile data, substation data, long term development statements and load growth forecasts through to 2050.	GLA was able to develop forecasts for power requirements for London. “UKPN has been a great supporter of our London 2050 work programme, particularly our database of projects and in seeking to ‘deliver ahead of demand’.” Greater London Authority
Small scale storage developers wanted to understand how storage could help the electricity network	Engaged with small storage developers to design an innovation project to establish an industry position on the role of storage	Developers were given the confidence to roll out approximately 240 battery storage units
Heat pump installation application forms aren't easy to complete	Changed the forms to make them easier	1,000 forms received

4 Making it easier to connect to our network

Our vision is to offer a range of connection solutions that serve our customers' diverse needs, encouraging choice and supporting economic growth in the communities we serve.

 **Find out more here**
ukpowernetworks.co.uk/connections

We engage with a huge number of connection customers and these sessions help us shape future services. This year we have engaged with over 750 stakeholders at over 100 events with over 150 companies represented. We have also answered over 17,500 calls from our business connection customers alone.

We have helped over 4,500 customers to apply for connections easily online

77% of stakeholders surveyed told us that providing customers with support before they apply for connection work is really important. So in 2015 we were one of the first electricity distribution companies to offer a complete online service, enabling customers to apply, view a quote, pay for the connection and track the progress of the work without having to call us. All of this can be done in less than 15 minutes. This online service was co-designed with our customers and tested with them throughout the development process.

The online service has received very positive feedback: **"It was really straightforward, I got a quick price and it did not take long for the case worker to get in touch with me, with the turnaround time being just a couple of days"** and **"Really easy to use considering I don't use PCs often."**

This year we have made further improvements based on feedback. Customers often told us we had too many application forms which could be confusing. We simplified our application forms and standardised them so there were only two.



A customer using our online connections portal

Outcome:

- Customer satisfaction is higher when customers use the website to apply. 83%, against 82% from customers who do not use the website.

We have engaged on community energy

88% of stakeholders surveyed told us that working with community energy groups should be an integral part of our business, so this year we engaged with three groups to better understand the sectors' objectives, aspirations and diverse needs. We have undertaken interviews with Hertford Energy Now in the east of England, Brixton Energy in London and Community Energy South in the south east.

Hertford Energy Now said **"I found UKPN to be extremely supportive and responsive when setting up Hertford Energy Network."**

It is clear from our discussions that we can work with the community energy sector and together we can really help each other. Community energy companies are in an ideal position to sign up local people to our priority service register. They play a powerful role in local communities, they are talking on doorsteps and in customers' living rooms about people's energy needs and are seen as trusted intermediaries and sources of advice on energy matters. Brixton Energy has already set up a generation scheme for estates in South London with more to come through its framework agreement with Lambeth Council. They are also working with many other local authorities like Hackney, Harrow, Croydon, Kensington and Chelsea.

We will act as an enabler for community energy schemes, by providing access to the learning from our innovation projects such as local storage and distributed generation. We will assist community energy companies, initially in specific places, where they seek to address consumer vulnerability. For example, we are looking at Hastings on the coast which has some of the UK's highest levels of deprivation and fuel poverty. As a contrasting urban area, we are also looking at how we can help people in Lambeth.

Outcomes:

- New partnerships set up with Brixton Energy and Community Energy South.
- We shared best practice around community energy with over 50 stakeholders at our critical friends panels.



We hold regular face-to-face surgeries for customers

Connection customers told us they wanted to meet our experts including project designers to discuss their connection project before they send in their application, to understand whether the projects are viable. These customers had used our 'Ask the Expert' service that was launched in 2012, but they needed more help and told us they would prefer this face-to-face. To help these customers, this year we held 40 face-to-face 'pre-application surgeries' where we talked them through their application and answered individual questions they had.



A face-to-face customer surgery

Feedback is very positive: **“They were most helpful and professional, certainly ‘going the extra mile’ in their interest and diligence on providing as much information as possible to give me an updated capacity review of selected areas. In fact it was one of the best experiences with a DNO in a long time.”** Green Frog Connect Ltd

Outcome:

- Over 30 customers helped via customer surgeries, with satisfaction scores of 94% from those that attended the surgeries.

We have co-designed a new quote letter with our customers

Customers told us that the letters we send them with a price for connection work were long and complex. They did not understand the options available to get the work done and said our cost breakdowns were not clear. We realised quickly that we needed to act on this feedback.

So we engaged with over 100 customers at our connections customer forums to co-design a new quote letter template. We listened to feedback, suggestions and shared draft templates with customers. Based on all of this engagement we introduced a new template that is being used with hundreds of customers each week.

Key changes to the letter were to make it significantly shorter and more visual, describing the different options for customers. The letter now links to dedicated pages on our website which give the customer more detailed answers to questions they may have.

Outcomes:

- Over 4,000 customers have benefited from receiving this simplified letter.
- Customer satisfaction with our quote process increased to 87%.

Old quote letter
(roughly 44 pages in length)



New quote letter
(now only 12 pages in length)



We have gone much further in encouraging competition for our work

Independent Connections Providers (ICPs) want to carry out connections work for customers and we work really closely with them to help them achieve this. Our share of the £330m connections market is estimated to have fallen from 74% in 2012 to around 50% in 2016.

To encourage this and provide support, we have engaged with over 150 ICPs this year, with quarterly newsletters and invitations to three forums where we explained new developments in our processes and we work with our stakeholders to identify areas for further improvement.

Stakeholders have recognised our efforts regarding the new industry Code of Practice, giving us great feedback on how we encourage competition for our work such as: **“a step ahead of other DNOs”**; **“more approachable than some and willing to listen”**. At a stakeholder workshop, representatives from leading industry groups rated our approach to implementing the Code of Practice at 9 out of 10.

Outcome:

- 11% increase in connections completed by ICPs and IDNOs in the last year.

Other outcomes achieved this year

What stakeholders told us	Action that we took	The benefit to customers
I want to see where in the UK there is capacity to connect distributed generation	We have improved our online distributed generation map three times this year based on customer feedback	Over 700 customers have access to use the map
Provide me dedicated support on my major connection	We have a team who offer account management to over 500 major connection customers	Customer satisfaction scores from Major Connections customers is 82%
I have a technical question to ask	We have helped customers through our ‘ask the expert’ service	Over 1,300 customers have been helped and have 92% customer satisfaction
I want to be kept up to date with things that you are doing across a range of sectors	We have sent four newsletters this year	Over 1,500 stakeholders receive this

5 Other stakeholder engagement activity

Stakeholder engagement is embedded within our business and we engage daily with our wide range of stakeholders. Here are some examples.

We are sharing best practice with other electricity distribution companies when forecasting resources for the Smart Meter UK roll out

Customers told us early on that they expect the installation of smart meters to go smoothly and be easy. Understanding how many engineers we need to do this is key to making this a success. We needed to engage with numerous stakeholders to enhance resource forecasting and reporting, and improve information quality. We have liaised with energy suppliers on closer working practices and worked with the meter contractors, gaining positive feedback on our work, including from the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC). We have made rapid advances to prepare for the huge escalation in this activity.

Northern Power Grid and Scottish Power Energy Networks met our teams to learn from the advances we have made so far. We also chair the Energy Networks Association "Service Termination Issues Group" and have used this and other forums to share our experience.

"You are ahead of the pack, good to see that you have a handle on performance and that you understand where it's not meeting the SLA in some areas" British Gas



A smart electricity meter

DECC commented: **"We have met UKPN on a number of occasions and have been impressed with the clarity of the progress updates we have received regarding the provision of registration data and preparations to enable communication with the DCC. Of particular note is the detailed analysis UKPN have provided regarding the management of defects discovered during the roll-out, which has been highly influential in our thinking around the provision and application of supplier roll-out profile information."**

Outcomes:

- Best practice shared with two electricity distributors and more widely through Energy Networks Association.
- Meeting the Smart Meter intervention SLA's and improving the customer journey through the smart rollout programme.

Stakeholder engagement in the heart of Central London

Given the major significance and economic contribution of the West End, the pressure from stakeholders to keep the lights on is huge. We created a dedicated central London team who engage with London theatres, major banks and larger customers to ensure they receive the service they need from us. An example of how we engage with our customers and stakeholders in Central London is during the aftermath of the major fire in Holborn.

To help avert a catastrophe, our teams engaged with numerous stakeholders. Our information officers gave practical face-to-face help to the public and local businesses, and customer champions helped provide support. We were in hourly proactive contact with local councils and the media. Our operational teams liaised with National Grid, other utilities, the emergency services and Transport for London. Our executive management team kept the Mayor's office and political representatives updated about our response.

As Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, said in praising and congratulating UK Power Networks' staff: **"The incident was a complex and hazardous situation and the cohesive working of key agencies stopped a major incident turning into a catastrophic situation. Londoners owe their thanks to all those involved for all their hard work in containing and extinguishing the fire".**

Outcome:

- Central London customer satisfaction increased this year from 84% to 86%.



Our information officers updating stakeholders

We engaged with stakeholders to support public safety and energy efficiency



See more pictures
[ukpowernetworks.co.uk/
image4](http://ukpowernetworks.co.uk/image4)

Educating the public about electricity safety is a high-priority area for us and an important component of our business plan. Our safety, health and education team arrange engagement activities and attend many public events to communicate our safety messages, especially to young people and key target groups such as agricultural workers.

A typical example is a Crucial Crew event we attended in Norfolk where we successfully engaged with 178 school children aged 10-12 regarding electricity safety and energy efficiency through a series of 10-minute group sessions. We asked the children what appliances they use which need electricity, (e.g. games machines, televisions, computers, lights etc.). We asked: "And when your parent shouts 'Dinner', what are you going to do?" Most replied "run downstairs", providing us with the opportunity to discuss the importance of not leaving appliances and lights on and why you should save energy. By the end of the session, when we asked: "And what are you going to do when your Mum or Dad shouts 'Dinner'?", the unanimous answer was: "Turn everything off!". A great example of successful engagement having lasting benefits, as we hear that such lessons stick in the minds of children.



A school safety talk

Outcome:

- We engaged with over 260,000 young people to support public safety and energy efficiency this year.

We build stakeholder engagement into all our planning for major projects

All our capital investment projects are approved by a forum of senior managers. If a project hasn't got a robust plan for stakeholder engagement, it is not approved. For example, the forum rejected a project in Elstree because plans for stakeholder engagement had not been considered. The plans were updated to include stakeholder engagement and approved at a later date.

We recognise the contribution stakeholder engagement makes to improving our customers' experience and delivering our projects on time and on budget, as illustrated by these major schemes:

1. We appointed a full time liaison officer for a project crossing the M25

The liaison officer was in place for 18 months and during the project engaged with local schools, residents' associations, Neighbourhood Watch, local councils, land-owners, the Highways Agency and Network Rail.

2. We engaged with environmental stakeholders on a project in Suffolk and Norfolk

We worked with environmental groups including the RSPB, Natural England and the Environment Agency to respond to environmental concerns, and ensured work happened outside the stone curlew nesting season.

3. We consulted from the outset for major growth in London

Whilst delivering the £50 million programme of new infrastructure for the huge growth planned in the Battersea area, we have coordinated with National Grid, Network Rail, development companies, councils, Transport for London, the GLA and property owners.



An information banner displayed at our major project sites

Outcome:

- Complaints were far lower than anticipated for this project, with no repeat complaints.

Outcome:

- Environmental stakeholders were pleased with the outcome of this project and how the wildlife was safeguarded.

Outcome:

- Working with stakeholders to meet London's growing electricity needs.

We have over 3,000 employees who engage daily with customers

Thousands of our employees talk and listen to customers every day about work on the electricity network. They vary from major customers in Central London, such as the Bank of England, to domestic customers who are affected by our work. All feedback we receive is listened to locally, then management teams look at common themes. Many domestic customers told us that power cuts at weekends are more inconvenient than during the week. So we implemented a policy that limits planned work at a weekend on networks feeding domestic customers unless it is urgent. Conversely, in Central London some business customers ask us to complete this work at weekends to avoid disruption to their operations, so in these cases we use our 24-hour shifted staff to complete work outside the normal working day.

Outcome:

- We minimised planned work for domestic customers at weekends because stakeholders told us they don't want power cuts at the weekend.

We engage closely with Government and MPs

It is important for us to help enable the Government's aims of energy affordability, security and decarbonisation. Our customers will benefit from well informed policy and regulation that keeps their bills as low as possible and reduces carbon emissions. So we play an active role in supporting policy development. This year we contacted all MPs in our area asking for their opinions on our stakeholder engagement activity and priorities. We briefed Ministers, MPs and peers about exciting new technologies such as energy storage and the move to a smarter grid and engaged with select committee inquiries. In addition we organised visits to our sites, so that MPs could meet our staff and see for themselves how well we run our electricity network.

Outcomes:

- MPs are informed about energy storage and moving to a smarter grid so they can make better informed decisions for their constituents.
- Our Smarter Network Storage case study was included in Government's National Infrastructure Commission "Smart Power" report.



Amber Rudd, Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change engaging with our employees

