



2016/17 Stakeholder Engagement  
and Consumer Vulnerability Incentive

## Part 3

### Supporting our vulnerable customers



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## Key

To help navigate this document we  
have employed a number of icons:



### Engagement

How we have engaged with  
our stakeholders



### Output

What our stakeholders have told us



### Action

The actions we have taken  
resulting from engagement



### Outcome

The benefits delivered  
to our customers



### New

New initiatives for 2016/17



### Build

Existing initiatives that were  
built on in 2016/17



# Introduction

Key

Engagement

Output

New

Action

Outcome

Build



**Basil Scarsella**  
Chief Executive Officer

customers. Part 3 of our submission sets out in detail how our strategy in this area is a key element of our social role, a role which we regard as a business imperative and a critical measure of our performance.

This year we have tested the understanding and scope of our social role and vulnerability strategy with a broad range of stakeholders and in this context I am particularly grateful to the CEO Panel and Critical Friends Panels for their feedback. Their insight has increased our appreciation of how our social role informs the delivery of a responsible, environmentally sustainable and consumer-focused service.

All of our employees, whether directly involved or providing valuable support in the background, are encouraged and empowered to keep the needs of vulnerable customers at the forefront of their minds, and I am pleased that this year, for the first time, we received formal accreditation from the British Standards Institute for inclusive service provision.

We have made excellent progress during the past 12 months towards meeting our RII0-ED1 commitment of doubling the number of customers on our Priority Services Register (PSR).

UK Power Networks provides a vital service to almost a third of the UK population. The rich diversity of our customers, and the impact societal trends and personal circumstances have on each of them, requires us to engage effectively with a broad cross section of stakeholders in order to better understand and meet their varied needs. This is especially important when it comes to looking after the needs of our vulnerable

In 2015 just over half a million customers were on our PSR; we now have over one million people registered for priority help in the event of a power cut. However, the PSR is not merely concerned with numbers. We know that many customers are medically dependent on electricity and we have expanded our partnerships this year to help us increase registrations from customers who use dialysers, nebulisers and ventilators. Other customers have a critical, short-term requirement to be included on the PSR and we have extended the channels which we use to promote the PSR in order to target new parents and GPs so we can deliver the extra support which they require when they need it.

We also recognise that it is not only those customers on our PSR who are vulnerable and a key aspect of our strategy aims to increase our understanding of vulnerability through both stakeholder engagement and careful examination of public data. In particular, we recognise that many customers of working age still have less money on average than before the 2008 crash and as a consequence we have expanded our work on fuel poverty. In addition, with government data predicting a large increase in the number of adults over sixty years of age, we have focused on understanding the implications of an ageing population on our ambition to be recognised as a dementia friendly business.

The scale and range of engagement which we have undertaken this year and the partnerships which we have created are helping us to deliver the level of service which we believe all of our customers are entitled to expect, and our vulnerable customers regard as essential, both now and in the future.

**Basil Scarsella**  
Chief Executive Officer

## Key actions and outcomes



## Our social role

Our social role underpins our objective of being a respected corporate citizen. Increased scrutiny of corporate governance, reflecting society’s expectation that businesses must be accountable and socially responsible, encouraged us to take a fresh look at our social role this year.

Our first role is to keep the lights on for our customers, and two responsibilities stem directly from that: to help the public and our employees stay safe around our network; and to understand how vulnerability affects our customers and how that influences the service and support we provide to them. Part 3 of our submission explains in detail how our vulnerability strategy is embedded in UK Power Networks.

The final elements of our social role are defined by what we believe to be the hallmarks of any socially responsible business: to protect the environment, to be a good employer and to support communities where we operate.

“I’m impressed at UK Power Networks’ ambition to go above and beyond their regulatory framework.” Jenny Saunders, Chief Executive, National Energy Action commenting on UK Power Networks’ social role.





# 01 Our consumer vulnerability strategy

Key		
Engagement	Output	Action
Output	New	Outcome
		Build

## Our consumer vulnerability strategy

Find out more here  
<http://www.ukpower-networks.co.uk/videos>

### 90%

of stakeholders were confident they could explain UK Power Networks' social role to friends and family

CFPs



### 77%

of customers surveyed agreed with UK Power Networks' vulnerability strategy

Test it with customers



### 75%

of stakeholders agreed that UK Power Networks' projects would effectively serve its vulnerable customers

CFPs



Our consumer vulnerability strategy is informed by Ofgem's definition of vulnerability:

'When a consumer's personal circumstances and characteristics combine with aspects of the market to create situations where he or she is:

- Significantly less able than a typical consumer to protect or represent his or her interests in the energy market;
- Significantly more likely than a typical consumer to suffer detriment, or that detriment is likely to be more substantial'.

We recognise through stakeholder engagement and customer feedback that vulnerable customers are more likely than a typical consumer to suffer detriment in the event of a power cut. We know that financially vulnerable consumers – specifically those in fuel poverty – are more likely than a typical consumer to suffer substantial detriment. We also understand how individuals and communities that are hard-to-reach or seldom heard, and therefore may not have access to information or support networks, are less able to protect or represent their own interests.



Hastings' fuel poverty event.



Working with the emergency services to help vulnerable customers in Kirkley.

Vulnerability is, however, complex, changeable and sometimes transitory. That is why the fourth aspect of our vulnerability strategy is to build our understanding of the emerging factors and societal trends that might make our customers more or less vulnerable.

Coordinated by a newly established customer vulnerability team, our vulnerability strategy aims to:

1. Reduce the impact of power cuts on customers who have a specific need or dependence on electricity by identifying those eligible for priority service.
2. Make our customers aware of energy efficiency and wider money-saving advice that might enable them to reduce their fuel bills, whilst ensuring support includes addressing energy debt, tariffs and benefits.
3. Understand how we can improve our communications with hard-to-reach or seldom heard individuals and communities, making UK Power Networks more accessible to them.
4. Be alert to, and build our understanding of, emerging factors that make our customers more or less vulnerable.

“Throughout the assessment it was evident that the regional demographic variations had been identified and considered when managing the needs of vulnerable customers. There is a strong focus on categorising the customers into a 'need' and not necessarily a vulnerability category. This is to ensure a more positive customer experience whilst providing the correct support for their needs based around respect and diversity.” BSI Report.

”

## Our culture

Our employees are trained and empowered to respond to customer vulnerability. When one of our customers, who relied on a stair lift to get to her bathroom, was going to be affected by a planned outage we offered her a hotel room. However the customer was reluctant to leave her home. Using their discretion the customer services advisor arranged to provide a portable toilet and so enabled her to stay in her home during a power cut.



“Assessment of the depot identified a very customer-focused environment, with a strong emphasis of meeting the needs of vulnerable customers.” BSI Report.

”

### Sensory training

Find out more here  
<http://www.ukpower-networks.co.uk/images9>

Last year we piloted sensory training to help staff empathise with customers with a range of impairments. Co-designed with Age UK, the training is now business as usual for our customer service teams and available to all employees. We shared our approach with other organisations and stakeholders at our spring CFPs and endorsed the development of further sensory training.

### CASE STUDY – Autism: Going beyond core eligibility to support vulnerable customers

Our employees are trained to recognise vulnerability and they highlighted that power cuts had a particularly detrimental impact on people with autism, who are not currently covered by a PSR code, because of the disruption they cause to daily routines ('repetitive behaviour and routines can be a source of enjoyment for autistic people and a way of coping with everyday life' – National Autistic Society). Working with the National Autistic Society, we co-designed pioneering virtual reality training that gives employees an insight into autism. Currently developed to train our trainers, if successful, the course will become part of our customer service training.



“There was evidence to demonstrate a commitment to identifying and managing customer vulnerability and the customer journey that had been approved by the Exec, with a line of sight from operational measures and actions up through to the vision.” BSI Report.

”



## Key

Engagement

Output

New

Action

Outcome

Build

## Targets

Our 2016/17 targets reflected both our RII0-ED1 commitments and our response to last year's feedback from both the independent consultants and the panel:

## Targets supporting our RII0-ED1 commitments

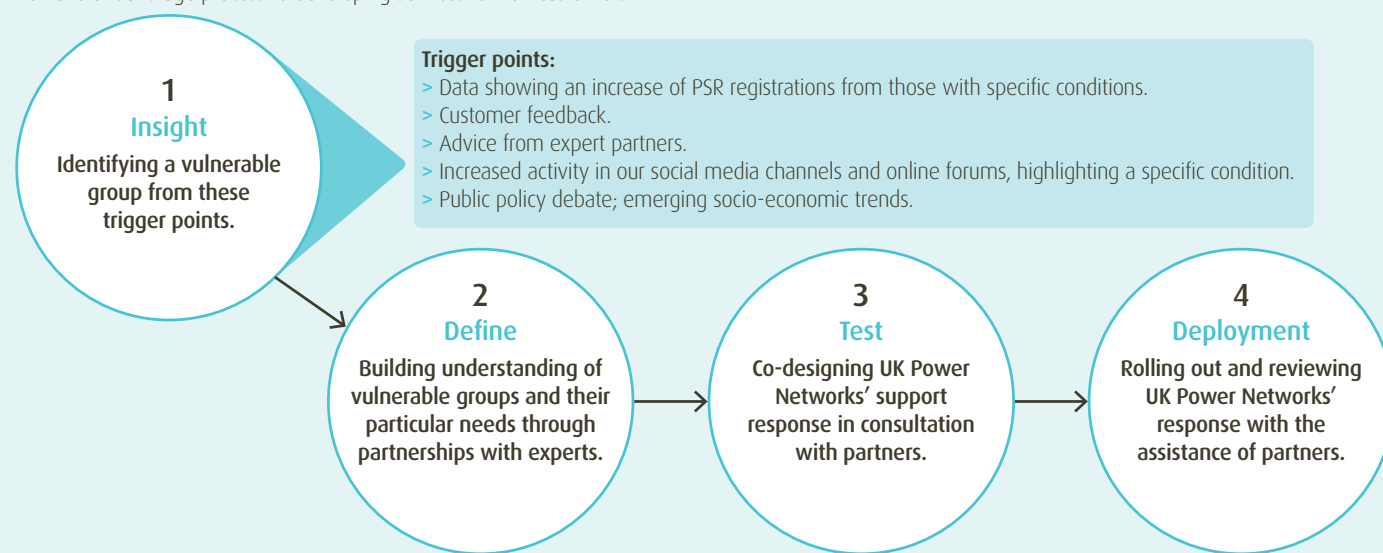
1	2	3	4
<b>Expand</b>	<b>Increase</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Provide</b>
Expand services offered to Priority Services Customers.	Significantly increase the number of customers on the PSR.	Contact 100% of PSR customers affected by a power cut.	Provide targeted energy efficiency advice to 1,000 customers.

## Targets in response to feedback on our 2015/16 submission

5	6	7	8
<b>Define</b>	<b>Understand</b>	<b>Increase</b>	<b>Align</b>
Define our social role more clearly.	Better understand the complexity of vulnerability, particularly financial vulnerability.	Increase the number of needs codes covered by our partnerships.	Align our PSR data strategy with the range of needs codes.

## Our approach to expanding and developing services for Priority Services Register (PSR) customers

We have a four-stage process to developing services for PSR customers.



## Engagement

Evolving our engagement strategy has enabled us to undertake more engagement on vulnerability and deliver more outcomes for vulnerable customers than in 2015/16. The engagement mechanisms used to achieve this have been agreed by stakeholders at our CFPs.

Engagement mechanism	Output
CEO Panel	Explored and endorsed the social role and our vulnerability strategy Social role to be added to business performance measures
Critical Friends Panels	Endorsed the social role and vulnerability strategy Prioritised customer vulnerability projects for 2016/17 Agreed that we should develop more training like sensory training
Focus groups	Explored implications of power cuts on people with dementia and their carers Direct feedback from PSR customers on our support to them during Storm Doris
Forums	Co-design of the Cross Utility Energy Efficiency and Safety leaflet Provided input to improve the accessibility of our website
Research and one-off events	Research into preparedness of vulnerable customers to cope with a power cut Face-to-face research into the needs of a range of customers with a medical dependence on electricity (e.g. those on kidney dialysis)

63 engagement events relating to vulnerability.

97 outcomes for vulnerable customers compared with 49 last year.

SGN and National Grid both now directly register customers onto our PSR.

## CASE STUDY – Cross Utility Forum

This year we have worked more closely than ever before with the water and gas networks across our three network areas. Six of the eight water companies and the two gas networks are now actively involved in our Cross Utility Forum, and together we have delivered tangible outcomes for our shared customers.

## Outcomes

- Joint promotion of the PSR, including common branding of the PSR with the water companies.
- Production of a Cross Utility Energy Efficiency and Safety leaflet.
- Co-delivery of community outreach activities.
- Cross Utility input into design and content of our Power Cut emergency pack.



Working with other utilities.



# 03

## Our vulnerability programme

### Key

Engagement

Action

Output

Outcome

New

Build

### CASE STUDY – Faith and Power

Drawing on our previous research with black and minority ethnic groups that suggested that in certain communities trusted sources are important when disseminating information, we designed and delivered a pioneering new project, 'Faith and Power', in partnership with the London Sustainability Exchange (LSx). The project engaged hard-to-reach or seldom heard groups about preparing for, and getting help in power cuts and saving energy.

Energy 'champions' from the Government and NEA's Big Energy Saving Network helped design the project's key messages, reviewed existing UK Power Networks' literature, and created a questionnaire to help us increase our understanding of these customers. This work formed the basis of a 'communications toolkit' using messaging specifically designed for an Islamic audience. See: <http://bit.ly/2pmDK5H>

“If you come and tell me “don't waste energy” I know I shouldn't, but if you bring this in a clever way, in a religious way, people will think “Oh I shouldn't do that.” Customer from the Bengali community.

“I can see us working more closely with UK Power Networks to deliver advice to our clients about the Priority Services Register and the projects they are working on... I can see a lot of potential there for partnership work, and sharing knowledge which is really important. Groundwork London.

The toolkit has been used by community champions from the Somali Enfield Association and the Islamic Foundation for Ecology and Environmental Science to visit mosques and communities delivering advice on lowering energy bills, free services such as PSR, warm home discounts, grants and understanding the benefits of smart meters.

The project was well received by stakeholders at the joint DNO workshop on vulnerability and has been shortlisted as a finalist for the Utility Week Stars Awards – Constellation Award for collaborative work with a customer community.

Find out more here  
<http://www.ukpowernet-works.co.uk/images10>



Engaging with Faith groups.

“The network that I help organise, the Big Energy Saving Network is over 180 organisations across GB, who support vulnerable consumers and are always on the lookout for more resources that they can use to support vulnerable consumers but specifically faith groups. BEIS representative.

### Outcomes

- 40,624 people received messages from the project.
- 193 PSR registrations.
- 1,433 energy behaviour changes pledged.
- 60 mosques, Islamic organisations and non-Islamic organisations that work with the Muslim community contacted.



## 3.1

### Priority Services Register – Reducing the impact of power cuts on customers who have a specific need or dependence on electricity

Stakeholders said we should continue to promote the PSR.

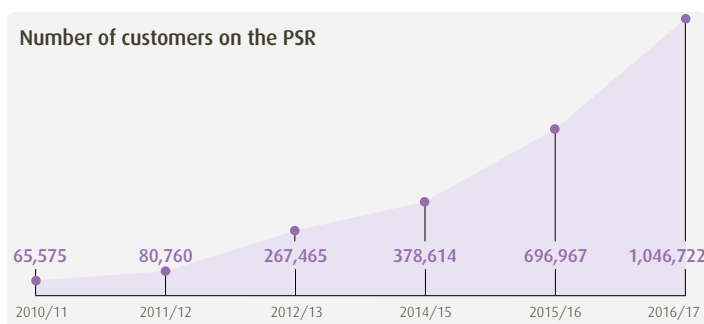
#### Our PSR data strategy – knowing who is vulnerable in a power cut

Quality of data plays a huge part in delivering excellent service to our customers. The increase in scam calling and mis-selling in recent years has left many people, especially vulnerable people, concerned about unsolicited calls. At our CFPs in 2015/16, stakeholders told us that they did not want us to call customers on the PSR to check their details, because this could be mistaken for cold calling.

We do not want to add to the anxiety of our vulnerable customers and therefore do not make cold calls. Instead, we maintain the accuracy of our PSR data through innovative awareness raising campaigns, working with partners and validating our PSR contact data to ensure it is up to date.

#### Outcomes

- 1.7m contact details checked against our PSR in our annual data cleanse.
- 195,041 records removed after confirmation from the customer that the record was obsolete.
- 127,627 records updated with new contact information.



#### Targeted and flexible

Our approach is not about volume alone. Using our own and publicly available data, we identified needs codes that were under-represented on the PSR and targeted our promotion at those groups. In particular, we targeted codes covering customers with a medical dependency on electricity. For example, having identified that the proportion of customers on our PSR with a kidney condition was lower than that for the UK population, we engaged the British Kidney Patient Association (BKPA) to increase awareness and take-up of the PSR.

Because we know that vulnerability is complex, personal and difficult to categorise, our customer management system gives us the flexibility to add temporary records for any customer who considers themselves to be vulnerable during a power cut, even if they are not covered by a needs code. In addition, this year for the first time, our annual media campaign promoted the PSR specifically to new parents via an advertorial on Netmums to make parents of under fives aware that they could register for priority help in a power cut. See: <http://bit.ly/2oF2lwC>

We also recognise that not every vulnerability will be captured by a needs code. Our culture encourages employees to identify additional needs, such as autism.

#### Outcomes

- 66% increase in PSR registrations from those on kidney dialysis.
- 122% increase in PSR registrations from those using a nebuliser.
- 125% increase in PSR registrations from those with a ventilator.
- 38,372 customers are currently registered as having transitory needs.

“There was evidence on identifying the needs of customers, including a strong focus on diversity and inclusiveness via data-led decision making. Additionally, consideration had been given to additional categories of wider vulnerable customers, e.g. social disorders. BSI report.



- Stakeholders told us that they do not want us to cold call customers.
- We ran a multi-channel campaign to increase awareness of the PSR.

### Outcomes

- 17% awareness of the PSR (2016: 12%) +5%.

### Leaflet to 8.2m customers

At the suggestion of stakeholders, we included information about the PSR in our leaflet to our 8.2m customers promoting the new single emergency number, 105.

#### Outcome

- Over 30,000 responses from customers to join the PSR or update their records.

### Email to 3.5 million customers

We emailed over 3.5 million customers with information about the PSR.

#### Outcome

- Over 15,000 responses from customers to join the PSR or update their records (2014/15: 2,000, 2015/16: 15,000).

### Tweet from TheSolarShed



**Solar-Power** @TheSolarShed  
And the Award for the 'Most Helpful Company' goes to @UKPowerNetworks for this email they sent today.  
Top marks #preppers

### Online and social media advertising

Targeted social media advertising on sites for parents, disabled people and carers.

#### Outcome

- 173 new registrations.

### Shopping centre promotion

We held events in six London shopping centres in areas with high levels of deprivation: Lewisham, Edmonton Green, Barking, Waltham Forest, Walthamstow and Haringey.

#### Outcome

- 231 new registrations.

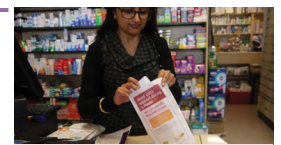
### Pharmacy bags

We promoted the PSR on 500,000 prescription bags targeting areas of financial deprivation, large numbers of over 60s and areas of poor health. The campaign's reach was 1.4 million customers.

#### Outcomes

- A sample survey of 11 pharmacists who used the bags found:
- All 11 were impressed with the level of support offered.
- Six of the 11 pharmacists said they were likely to tell their vulnerable customers about the support they can get.

**Elderly people are likely to get more prescription medicine than younger people and consequently the prescription bag is a good avenue for UKPN to advertise their service.** Female, 50-59, Eastern Power Networks.



PSR promoted on pharmacy bags.

## Partnerships to promote the PSR

Find out more here  
<http://www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk/images12>

We and our stakeholders believe working with trusted partners is an effective way to encourage people to join the PSR.

### Working in partnership with Health Services

#### GP surgeries

Working with GPs to promote the PSR to vulnerable patients.

#### Outcome

- 10 GP surgeries promoting the PSR to patients on surgery screens and posters.

#### Patient groups

We identified medical conditions with a dependency on electricity (pulmonary health and physiotherapy, pulmonary fibrosis, cardiac health, kidney dialysis and lung conditions) and built relationships with patient groups for these conditions.

#### Outcome

- Seven pulmonary clinics registered customers to the PSR.

### Working in partnership with local and parish councils

Building on our successful partnership with Islington Council, we approached 39 councils across our three network areas about the PSR, and provided materials to help them sign up residents directly. Alongside our work with parish councils is now business as usual, and we contacted 500 parish and town councils in fuel poor and rural areas about promoting the PSR in 2016/17.

#### Outcomes

- 14 local authorities agreed to promote the PSR by distributing leaflets or asking care workers to promote PSR registration.
- Havering Council sent a digital newsletter promoting the PSR to 115,000 residents.
- In Denton, Norfolk, parish councillors went door to door to vulnerable households in the parish.

### Working in partnership with the utilities

Our Cross Utility Forum identified an opportunity to make it easier for customers to sign up for both our PSR and the gas and water companies' PSR at the same time. We have introduced a PSR application form on our website that allows customers to register for priority treatment during a water outage.

#### Outcome

- Over 26,152 customers have been given the option to sign up to other utilities' PSRs.

Find out more here  
<http://www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk/images11>

### Working in partnership with councillors, Assembly members and MPs

We emailed all the local councillors, GLA members and constituency MPs across our three network areas to ask them to promote the PSR through their newsletters, surgeries and social media.

#### Outcomes

- 95 councillors agreed to promote the PSR to their constituents.
- 2,083 visits were made to the PSR sign-up page as a result of the councillor mailing.

### Working with schools

Targeting faith schools, special educational needs, and schools in areas of fuel poverty, we drafted an article on the PSR for school newsletters.

#### Outcome

- Article sent to 3,140 schools.



### Working in partnership with fire and rescue service

We have built on our strong partnerships with the fire services this year. Using our vulnerability map (that uses publicly available data to map socio-economic and demographic data) we identified Kirkley near Lowestoft as an area with high levels of deprivation. We held a joint event with Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service, National Grid Gas Distribution, Southern Gas Networks (SGN), Essex & Suffolk Water and Suffolk Warm Home Healthy People to promote the PSR, safety and energy efficiency.

#### Outcomes

- We now receive direct referrals from five fire services.
- Other fire services are investigating direct PSR referral.
- Established cross utility approach to PSR and energy efficiency promotion.

### Working in partnership with communities

We work with two of our partners, London Sustainability Exchange (LSx) and Community Energy South (CES) across all areas of vulnerability. We work with LSx to understand how we can improve our communications with the Muslim Community on a range of issues including the PSR and fuel poverty and are working with CES to provide face-to-face advice on energy efficiency and the PSR.

#### Outcomes

- LSx-193 new registrations to the PSR.
- CES-507 new registrations to the PSR.



## 3.2 Fuel poverty

75% of stakeholders agreed that UK Power Networks' engagement projects effectively serve vulnerable customers.

We believe that customers in poverty are more likely than a typical customer to suffer detriment if prices increase. This has particular relevance to us as fuel poverty rose in all three of the regions served by our networks according to the Government's 2016 Fuel Poverty Statistics. We therefore strive to maintain our position as the lowest cost DNO alongside our work on fuel poverty.

Last year we launched You and Your Home, our energy efficiency programme developed in partnership with Citizens Advice. This year stakeholders at our autumn CFPs suggested we work with other trusted organisations alongside Citizens Advice. We have therefore expanded our work to help tackle fuel poverty in 2016/17.

### You and Your Home

Our You and Your Home programme is an information and advice service that we have built on since last year that offers customers a range of energy saving tips, and advice on energy tariffs, winter fuel and warmth payments and the option of a face-to-face session with a Citizens Advice money matters advisor.

#### Outcome

We referred 1,175 customers to Citizens Advice. All 1,175 were sent packs and 114 had in-depth face-to-face or telephone conversations, receiving in depth support from experienced money matters experts. Support includes addressing energy debt, tariffs and benefits. The total benefit to those customers was £28,377; the average benefit was £249.

Recognising that many of our PSR customers may have needs that require them to use more electricity, we included You and Your Home information in our 'Welcome to the Priority Services Register' pack sent to 12,800 households.

We commissioned market research with 85 households to evaluate the impact of the information. The research found:

- 70% of the customers found the tips helpful.
- 20% checked to see if they were entitled to Winter Warmth Payments.
- 37% of the customers adopted at least one behavioural change. We estimate this equates to a £45 per year saving per household and a total saving of £213,120 if 37% of the 12,800 adopted one change.
- 13% checked to see if they were on the best tariff. We estimate this equates to an average saving per household of £200. If replicated across 13% of the 12,800 households sent the information this would equate to a combined saving of £332,800.

### Community Energy South (CES)

Using our vulnerability map CES targeted the poorest areas in our South East region. CES provide a trusted face-to-face advice service about energy efficiency and independent energy bill support, and together with CES we ran Energy Cafés across the region, providing customers with You and Your Home advice.

#### Outcomes

Number of customers who attended Energy Café consultations	2,371
One-to-one consultations that included a bill checking service	1,420
Customers switched on the day to a better energy deal	79
Potential savings identified through bill checking at Energy Cafés	£40,485
Number of customers identified for Warm Home Discounts (WHD)	275
Total WHD saving for 275 customers @ £140	£38,500
Customers identified for ECO assistance	136
Value of additional support offered to customers (e.g. debt write off)	£66,413

### CASE STUDY – Energy Café

An older, hearing impaired customer visited the CES Energy Café for face-to-face advice about her recently installed smart meter and her payment schedule. Advisors at the Energy Café contacted her supplier and helped her switch to a fixed tariff paid by Direct Debit. CES also registered her for the Warm Home Discount and the PSR.

Find out more here  
<http://www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk/images13>



### Future bill payers

Community Energy South and UK Power Networks working with the Energy Heroes schools programme have supported the delivery of the programme across Essex and East Sussex. Supporting the maths and physics curriculum for 9-10 year olds, pupils conduct energy audits of the school and their own homes with the aim of saving 10% on energy costs.

#### Outcomes

- Energy Heroes programme delivered in eight schools.
- Developed Energy Heroes material for scouts and youth groups, piloted with the Eastbourne Woodcraft Folk group.

### Cross utility partnership working

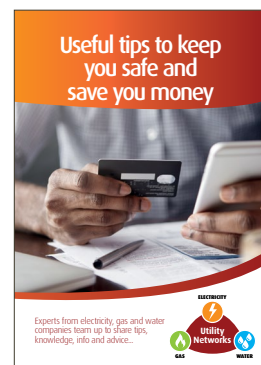
Our work with the other utilities is now business as usual. Our customer surveys, for example at shopping centre and fire service events, tell us there is 99% support for the utilities to work together to help vulnerable customers. Our partnership approach has won support from the trade association for the water industry, Water UK.

#### Outcomes

- Decision to split emergency pack from energy efficiency pack.
- Co-designed Cross Utility Energy Efficiency and Safety leaflet.
- Endorsement for a new 12 month 'utility networks' engagement programme.

### London Sustainability Exchange (LSx)

The focus groups we ran as part of our Faith and Power project with LSx identified a lack of understanding about the energy market and significant concern about the cost of energy. LSx, with other community partners, helped us to develop the Faith and Power toolkit to support face-to-face engagement on energy efficiency measures and ways to address fuel poverty.



#### Outcomes

Total numbers of customers who attended consultations	776
Average saving (behavioural change and benefits from switching/WHD)	Ave. per customer £82.14
Total number of one-to-one consultations which include a bill checking service	652
Customers who switched on the day to receive a better deal	87
Saving to customers identified as having the potential to switch	Ave. per customer £14.21 Total £11,030
124 customers who were identified for £140 WHD	£17,360
Number of behavioural change pledges	1,433
Estimated value of behavioural changes pledges	£35,358




## 3.3 Hard-to-reach and seldom heard


Key  Engagement  Action  Output  Outcome  New  Build

The third aspect of our vulnerability strategy considers how we can improve our engagement with hard-to-reach and seldom heard communities and individuals.

### Faith and Power

 Our work with LSx takes a ground-breaking approach to overcoming communications barriers in a hard-to-reach community. Taking the learnings from four focus groups with Bengali and Somali Muslim men and women, we designed and delivered the Faith and Power programme that engages the Muslim community on preparing for an emergency, getting practical help in a power cut and on energy efficiency.

#### Outcomes

-  60 mosques, Islamic organisations and non-Islamic organisations that work with the Muslim community contacted.
-  40,624 people received messages via the newsletters and personal advocacy within the community.
-  Faith and Power tool kit – used and published by the BEIS Big Energy Saving Network and other outreach programmes.
-  Faith and Power Programme has been shortlisted for the Utility Week Stars Awards – Constellation Award for collaborative work with a customer community.

### Church of England dioceses

We know from previous research that many customers prefer to receive advice from trusted sources. We therefore contacted the Church of England dioceses in our regions to ask them to carry information about the PSR in their diocesan newspapers.

#### Outcome

-  Three dioceses carried articles about the PSR.

### Non-English speakers

The app we piloted in 2015/16 to help our field staff communicate with customers who do not have English as a first language is now business as usual, and has been rolled out to all our operational employees. This year, in response to customer feedback, we added Arabic and Punjabi to the app. The addition of Browsealoud to our website, which includes language translation, has further improved our ability to communicate with our customers who do not have English as a first language.


#### Outcome

-  Think customer app to 3,436 employees.

**“Hello, I have just downloaded this app. It will be very useful. I am a site technician and I am sure this app will come in to its own with language barriers and our multi-cultural society. I will mention it at the next team talk. Site technician.”**

### Rural and coastal

We work with organisations such as the Rural Service Network, the Rural Coffee Caravan (Suffolk) and the new Kent Coffee and Information project to promote the services we offer to customers in geographically isolated areas.

-  We prioritise our on-site support for planned and unplanned power cuts based on a number of factors including transport links and whether the area is served by the gas grid.

## 3.4 Understanding vulnerability

Find out more here  
<http://www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk/videos7>

Our engagement programme built with stakeholders enables us to increase our understanding of the complexity and changing nature of vulnerability.





Find out more here  
<http://www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk/images14>

### Dementia

Following a significant increase in the number of people on the PSR registering against the dementia needs code and our awareness that an ageing population is likely to have implications for the services we provide, we wanted to deepen our understanding of the needs of people living with dementia. We approached leading reminiscence charity Age Exchange to facilitate a focus group of people living with dementia to explore what a power cut might feel like for them.

We have committed to becoming a dementia friendly business and all our customer service leaders and the Executive Management Team have completed a dementia awareness programme which will roll out across the company in 2017/18.

#### Outcomes

-  Focus group identified safety and cold as primary concerns during a power cut.
-  Focus group identified resetting of electronic equipment as a particular worry.
-  75 employees completed dementia awareness training.
-  UK Power Networks is working towards being a dementia friendly organisation.



Dementia focus group.

### Accessibility

Following a discussion at our partner forum about website accessibility, we ran a focus group with disability organisations to understand how we could improve the accessibility of our website. We identified access for partially sighted customers as a priority and worked with Browsealoud to add software that speaks written text.

#### Outcome

-  Partially sighted customers can use Browsealoud to access our website.



### Customers with medical dependency on electricity

We conducted ten in-depth interviews with customers with a range of medical dependencies and surveyed over 1,000 customers after a fault to understand the experiences of these customers. Those on home dialysis, people with severe mental health problems or physical impairment or with certain mobility issues experience an almost immediate impact from a power cut.

Dialysis users told us that the availability of clean water was a priority in an emergency. We shared this information with our cross utility partners and two water companies are now exploring this issue with the British Kidney Patient Association.

#### Outcome

- Shared learnings with all eight water companies that cover our regions.

### Community learning

We have benefited hugely from participating in ‘information sharing’ events run by Essex Fire & Rescue Service. We, along with charities and community organisations, move from table to table in a fast-paced information exchange about the services we each offer and the needs of particular groups. These exchanges enable us to increase the support we can offer customers by growing our knowledge of where we can signpost customers to access help relevant to their needs.


#### Outcomes

-  Increased our involvement in local communities.
-  Increased our understanding of local vulnerability.
-  Increased knowledge of where to signpost customers for relevant help.

### Mapping deprivation in our region

Our vulnerability map is populated with a broad range of data that enables us to identify specific or combined deprivation, know where our PSR customers are and therefore geographically target our engagement and projects to those areas where they will have the greatest impact. We draw on a range of sources such as the English Indices of Deprivation 2015 and consider factors such as employment, health, age, access to services and dependent children.

#### Outcome

-  We target our vulnerability work to areas of particular need and prioritise our on-site support during outages and community outreach events to these areas.



# 04 Services for vulnerable customers

Engagement	Action
Output	Outcome
New	Build

- 69% of stakeholders agree that UK Power Networks should develop a specific service for every type of vulnerability.
- Guided by stakeholders and feedback from the independent consultant's report we reviewed the services we provide against the PSR needs codes.

## Services offered to PSR customers

Contact Channel	Information Services	Tailored Services	On-site support
Dedicated contact number Online Report it form Social media (Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and <b>NEW</b> – Facebook Messenger) Language line Video chat PSR proactive call service Proactive SMS Web chat Text phone <b>NEW</b> – Browsealoud web access	PSR Welcome Pack PSR Welcome Pack – multi language PSR Welcome Pack in Braille PSR Welcome pack in Large Print Helpful advice videos including BSL translation Proactive Weather Alert messages Voice and SMS outage contact Proactive Council alert scheme <b>NEW</b> – Proactive Weather alert service to community leads and charity partners	You and Your Home Power Cut Emergency pack Refrigerated medicine cool bags Password scheme Dedicated team managing support services during outages Existing sensory training (Age UK) Existing awareness training Royal Association of Deaf People (RAD) <b>NEW</b> – Notifications in appropriate formats for planned outages <b>NEW</b> – Awareness training for customer-facing teams (Dementia Friends and Autism)	On site Customer Champions teams providing support and information British Red Cross and Community support teams including Local Authority teams Consumables including blankets, torches, hand warmers, hot water and hot meals Refrigerated medicine cool bags <b>NEW</b> – Winter Warmth Pack <b>NEW</b> – Emergency lighting <b>NEW</b> – Small batteries and domestic generators for medical equipment Hotel accommodation and transport Bespoke intervention as required e.g. temporary toilets, travel tickets to help bring family support

The support we offer to vulnerable customers is not always something that appears on a list, and listening to what our vulnerable customers say to us is our best guide to how best we can meet their needs. If a service is not relevant or suitable to a customer's particular need we do not offer it.

### Power Cut Emergency pack

Feedback from our partners and our own employees identified that customers who are medically dependent on electricity were not sufficiently prepared for power cuts. In our 2015/16 submission we proposed our new Power Cut Emergency pack would include 'practical tools from other utilities'.

- However, further feedback from our cross utility and partner forums told us that we should separate power cut information from wider utility information. The forums helped shape the contents of the revised emergency pack that includes items that enable the customer to prepare for a power cut such as a plug-in torch that comes on as soon as the power is cut and a power cut checklist.

### Outcomes

We surveyed just under 100 PSR customers who received the Power Cut Emergency pack:

- 90% felt more prepared for a power cut.
- 93% said they were likely to use items from the pack.



Power Cut Emergency pack.

“Thank you very much for the power pack delivered today, the contents will be useful in any emergency and are very much appreciated. You do not get much for nothing these days, but more importantly, the thoughtfulness and concern are most welcome. Customer correspondence.”

### Expanded Customer and Community Support vehicles

- Stakeholders voted 'Expand the Customer and Community Support vehicles to all of our regions' as the number two project we should invest more in.
- We therefore introduced a second Customer and Community Support vehicle and expanded the vehicle service to include planned outages in targeted areas.

### Outcomes

- Customer and Community Support vehicles deployed 166 times, helping 3,052 customers.
- 3,090 hot drinks and 1,951 hot meals served.
- Piloted the use of Customer and Community Support vehicles in planned outages. Deployed 41 times.

## CASE STUDY

### Helping vulnerable customers prepare for Storm Doris

The Partnership Forum and anecdotal feedback from our operations teams told us that vulnerable customers had in the past been unprepared for the power cuts that severe weather can bring.

- In preparation for Storm Doris we alerted 65,614 PSR customers to the forthcoming storm and explained what we were doing to prepare for the storm.

### Outcome

- Calls to the customer service centre from PSR customers were 32% lower than the average of all events in 2016, including Storm Katie.

To understand more about the experience of our vulnerable customers during Storm Doris we later convened a focus group of PSR customers in Bawdeswell, a small rural village in central Norfolk, where storm damage had left customers without power for over 24 hours. Participants welcomed the pre-storm preparation advice and two customers identified a particular issue with the provision of generators.

### Outcomes

- We will introduce a new Autumn/Winter newsletter to PSR customers with advice on preparing for power cuts.
- We changed our process for deploying generators to those who are medically dependent.

“I just think, considering the amount of damage and everything, your whole workforce worked extremely well, I think they worked extremely hard. Member of public affected by Storm Doris who attended our focus group to review our performance following the storm.”

### Emergency button pilot for 2017/18

To improve how we help vulnerable customers in events such as Storm Doris, we are exploring the concept of an emergency button for vulnerable customers. When activated the button would immediately alert us to a power cut in that property. We tested this concept with the CEO Panel who welcomed the proposal but highlighted that it might not be suitable for all vulnerable customers. We will hold focus groups in 2017 to explore this concept further.



Helping a customer from our Customer and Community Support vehicle.



# 05 Our partnership strategy

## Key

Engagement

Output

New

Action

Outcome

Build

68% of stakeholders agree that UK Power Networks should develop specific partnerships for every type of vulnerability.

Partnerships are central to our vulnerability strategy. Partners enable us to identify gaps in our understanding, build our knowledge and shape the services that we deliver to vulnerable customers today and in response to societal trends. The majority of our partnerships span our vulnerability strategy, supporting our work on PSR, fuel poverty and hard-to-reach or seldom heard communities. Following stakeholder feedback and our monitoring of You and Your Home we decided to expand the number of partners delivering energy efficiency advice. In addition we have sought partnerships with organisations whose client groups are covered by one or more of the existing PSR codes, and now have a partnership in place for each PSR code.

16

new partnerships  
in 2016/17

“Someone needs to be aware of the individual vulnerabilities... and this can only be done through joint efforts and partnerships. (Male 60-69 SPN)  
Test it with customers March 2017.”

“A positive and proactive process to identifying new partnerships is in place, with outreach activities sampled as being effective. Future partners will be established based around customer needs and vulnerability codes.  
BSI Report.”

We work with a wide range of partners		NEW	NEW		
				NEW	NEW
	NEW				NEW
	NEW	NEW	NEW	NEW	
		NEW	NEW		NEW
	NEW				
	NEW	Fire services	Housing associations	Hungry Turns	NEW
		Local councils	Parish councils	Water companies	

## Mapping needs codes to partners

We map all the needs codes in the PSR to our partners, to identify any gaps in our partnerships:

		PSR Needs Codes (New)											
Medically Dependent Equipment (MDE)	1	Chronic/serious illness											
	2	Heart, lung & Ventilator											
	3	Dialysis, feeding pump and automated medication											
	4	Oxygen Concentrator											
	5	Nebuliser and Apnoea monitor											
	6	MDE Electric Showering											
	7	Careline/telecare system											
	8	Medicine refrigeration											
	9	Stair lift, Hoist, Electric bed											
	10	Oxygen Use											
Safety	11	Poor sense of smell											
	12	Physical impairment											
	13	Unable to answer door											
	14	Restricted hand movement											
	15	Pensionable Age											
Mobility	16	Families with young children 5 or under											
	17	Blind											

When selecting new partnerships we consider how the partner supports our vulnerability strategy. For example, our partnership with the British Kidney Patient Association enables us to increase awareness of the PSR among a specific customer segment who would be critically affected by a power cut and helps us improve our understanding of vulnerability. Other partnerships enable us to plan in response to societal changes. Recognising that an ageing population is likely to mean an increase in the number of our customers living with dementia, we sought a partnership with Alzheimer's Society to help us improve our understanding of the needs of these customers.

We identify a clear rationale for selecting a new partner and select those that will deliver most impact. The table below shows the process we followed to select some of the new partnerships we initiated this year 2016/17.

Vulnerability	Rationale for selection	Development/understanding/co-design	Action
Autism	Customer service teams noticed increase in requests for help from customers with a family member with autism	Partnership developed with National Autism Society, co-designing training	Co-designed virtual reality training for customer-facing employees Increased awareness of autism
Dialysis patients	Expert feedback from stakeholders	Partnership with British Kidney Patient Association and dialysis machine providers, to understand the needs of these customers	Developing training for dedicated team on needs of home dialysers Shared learning from British Kidney Patient Association interviews
Pulmonary patients	Expert feedback from stakeholders	Partnership with Breathe Easy to raise awareness of PSR	Seven pulmonary clinics registered customers to the PSR Following our talks at the clinics, nurses handed out PSR forms, and then sent them on behalf of their patients to us
Dementia	Increase in PSR registrations from those with dementia	Partnership with Alzheimer's Society, Age Exchange and co-development of pack	Pack trialled and redeveloped to support those with dementia Dementia Friends programme rolled out Involvement in local dementia cafes





We were delighted to receive accreditation from the BSI for inclusive service provision this year. BSI carried out a full audit of our stakeholder engagement and vulnerability strategy against the requirements of BS 18477:2010 Inclusive service provision, and judged that UK Power Networks fully complied with the requirements.

The audit built on the gap analysis in November 2015 and focused on UK Power Networks' arrangements to implement and meet the requirements of the standard.

**“the team at UK Power Networks should congratulate themselves on the work undertaken to deploy and implement the requirements of BS 18477:2010 so effectively throughout the business processes included in the scope of the audit” BSI.**



We were pleased to continue to retain the Action on Hearing Loss accreditation: Louder than Words. Louder than Words™ is a nationally recognised accreditation for

organisations striving to offer excellent levels of service and accessibility for customers and employees who are deaf or have a hearing loss.



AccountAbility's review and assessment of our stakeholder engagement and consumer vulnerability performance against AA1000 Stakeholder Engagement Standard (SES) (2015) found that:

**“UK Power Networks has been seen to place particular emphasis on understanding and addressing the company's social role and how to most effectively deliver to vulnerable customers... A highlight, corroborated by both partners and customers, is the work focused on financial vulnerability and the topic of fuel poverty. Extending the successful work under the You and Your Home campaign, UK Power Networks has developed new partnerships with local experts to foster stronger face-to-face customer engagement and enhanced opportunities for cost savings for customers.”**

## Value for money – measuring the benefits

Being sustainably cost efficient is one of three key elements of our corporate vision. The balance between keeping costs as low as possible and providing the right level of service is therefore at the forefront of our decision-making. Our social role gives extra weight to supporting our vulnerable customers such as people with medical dependency on electricity, those in fuel poverty and those who are hard-to-reach or seldom heard. At the same time, we have a responsibility to spend in a cost-efficient manner on behalf of all our stakeholders.

### Joint research

We therefore brought the views of customers into how we measure value for money of the programmes and services we delivered in 2016/17. We conducted research this year that helps us understand this delicate balance and ensure we are reflecting our customers' priorities with regard to their appetite for spending on services for customers, especially our vulnerable customers.

Working with National Grid Gas Distribution and Western Power Distribution, we commissioned a specialist research company, Accent, to conduct a quantitative study of 400 households and businesses to:

- Establish customer priorities between a range of service improvements in different categories and
- Learn from customers what (notional) monetary value they place on these improvements.

### What we learned

The study established our customers' willingness to pay for certain projects and initiatives. We then compared the cost of the projects and initiatives we delivered in 2016/17 to deliver specific outcomes with how much customers said they would be willing to pay for those outcomes (Value to customers). The difference between the cost and the willingness to pay enables us to establish the cost benefit to our customers. The highest willingness to pay was reserved for service initiatives to help vulnerable customers and those affected by fuel poverty.

In the vulnerability category, the strongest value was placed on initiatives that identify new vulnerable customers not known to the network operator. Our projects to identify new vulnerable customers combine a desire to understand more about the specific needs of defined groups of vulnerable customers with practical measures to increase penetration of the PSR among vulnerable groups, and the value to customers of these initiatives far outweighed the cost of delivering them in 2016/17.

Turning to fuel poverty, customers were willing to pay the highest amount for improved targeting of fuel poor customers, expert referral schemes and community outreach. We have developed a number of projects, both targeted and community based, where the notional value to customers compares very favourably to the cost.

Category	UK Power Networks projects	Total cost (£)		Value to customers		
		Cost of projects	Sub-totals £		£	Benefit to customer £ (value less cost)
Vulnerable customers	Shopping centre outreach programme	14,000	67,124 or 1p per customer	Identifying new vulnerable customers not already known to networks	3.79	3.78 per customer
	Mailing to 500 parish councils	11,000				
	Pharmacy bag PSR promotion on 500,000 bags	15,000				
	Focus group for customers with dementia and their carers	4,100				
	Face-to-face interviews with customers medically dependent on electricity	4,100				
	Faith and Power project in partnership with London Sustainability Exchange	18,924				
Fuel poverty	Special You and Your Home mailer to 8,000 customers	Nil – as sent in an existing mailing	78,500 or 1p per customer	Improved targeting of partnership outreach schemes	6.02	13.72 per customer
	Providing the You and Your Home service in partnership with Citizens Advice	53,000		Developing referral schemes with expert partners	4.20	
	Partnership with Community Energy South resulting in 1,420 one-to-one consultations with customers	25,500		Developing community outreach schemes with charity organisations to identify and support fuel poor customers	3.51	

We wanted to understand whether the willingness to pay levels changed once specific projects were discussed around a table with stakeholders rather than over the telephone. So we went further and ran our own focus groups where stakeholders confirmed the broad levels of willingness to pay that we found in the quantitative study.

Services for vulnerable customers and targeted support to help customers manage their energy bills were valued particularly highly by the focus groups.

**“It's important that vulnerable people are aided. How do you put a price on something like that. Female 30-35.”**

**“You have customers who are more vulnerable than others who would need support during an outage. If the electricity gets cut off you don't want people dying, being ill or being exposed to risks. Male 40-45.”**

**“My highest was helping customers find out if they were on the right tariff. Female 35-40.”**

**“I would put [fuel poverty advice] above customer service, as, touch wood, I don't need to speak to my electricity company very often. Female 30-35.”**



