

SGN

Your gas. Our network.

Stakeholder Engagement Submission 2016/17

Dedicated to keeping our
customers safe and warm



"SGN is strongly committed to engaging with young people and investing in their futures. Our partnership has encouraged over 1,000 young people to think about challenging sustainability issues and develop innovative, entrepreneurial solutions with the help of their business mentors."

Jen Baughan, Director,
Solutions for the Planet



"Please convey our thanks to SGN for an efficient service. Despite some unforeseen technical hurdles, the staff were efficient, professional, and, above all, friendly and good-humoured. Following their expeditious clean-up the road has never looked better."

Customer



"As one of the millions of people in Scotland relying on gas, I was very pleased to hear directly from SGN about the work they do to keep our supply network safe, secure and reliable."

From senior management to the newest apprentices I could see for myself the pride they took in their work, the attention they paid to safety and the importance they also attached to serving the public."

Ken Macintosh MSP, Presiding Officer,
visiting our Paisley depot

"Whether it's through fundraising and volunteering, or educating local schools and community hubs about gas safety, we believe we can make a difference."

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SGN Management Statement

This document fairly presents SGN's stakeholder engagement activities for the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017, which we are responsible for designing and implementing. The criteria used in making this assessment, which we believe are suitable for evaluating our reporting, were that this document:

- was prepared in such a way to appropriately describe our stakeholder engagement strategy, the way in which we keep stakeholders informed, the means by which we enable timely input and feedback to inform decision making, and the variety of mechanisms we use to engage, tailored to stakeholders' needs;
- includes relevant details of changes to SGN's stakeholder engagement management and activities in the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017; and
- does not omit or distort information relevant to the scope of the stakeholder engagement management and activities being described.

John Morea, Chief Executive Officer



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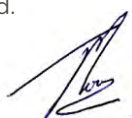
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John Morea, Chief Executive Officer



Welcome

Our vision for the future is to keep our customers safe and warm by leading the way in energy delivery. We believe leadership can only be earned by working collaboratively with our stakeholders to produce better outcomes for everyone. We ask for our stakeholders' input into our strategic priorities and we shape our activities based on their feedback.

As part of our commitment to our stakeholders we look for opportunities to strengthen their voice throughout our business. I am delighted we have several new members of our Stakeholder Advisory Panel who will complement the existing members' diverse experience and work closely with members of our Executive team. During the year we welcomed a new Chair of the panel, Maxine Frerk, who brings a wealth of consumer and stakeholder knowledge.

I am very proud of the culture we continue to build which puts customers at the heart of our operations, listening to their feedback, acting on any concerns and improving their experience. Our standards of operational excellence must constantly develop too and we're passionate about embracing innovation to reduce cost, improve productivity and deliver the highest standards of safety.

In this submission we want to share with you some of the outcomes we have achieved as a result of feedback, partnership and collaboration with our diverse range of stakeholders. In part two of this document we'll give you an update on what we've been working on and explain the outcomes we have delivered to our stakeholders.

I hope you enjoy reading it and invite your views on how we can become even better at listening to, understanding and responding to your needs.



John Morea
Chief Executive Officer



"I was really pleased to be asked to chair the Stakeholder Advisory Panel as I have always been impressed by SGN's focus on vulnerable customers. Since I took on the role we have broadened the membership of the panel and strengthened the links into the business.

SGN already does a lot to engage with customers and stakeholders across the business. Including John and his Executive colleagues on the panel has made this more visible."

Maxine Frerk
Chair of the Stakeholder Advisory Panel



Ofgem criteria: The network company has a comprehensive and up to date stakeholder engagement strategy, which sets out -

How the network company keeps stakeholders informed about relevant issues, business activities, decision-making and other developments, and

How the network company enables timely input and feedback from stakeholders via appropriate mechanisms to inform decision-making

1.1 Our stakeholder engagement strategy

We have a well established stakeholder engagement strategy which sets out the way in which we listen and respond to the needs and ideas of our stakeholders to improve our decision-making and achieve better outcomes for our stakeholders and for the business.

Below is an extract from our strategy showing our key principles and approach:

Key principles



Inclusive

We identify and engage with a broad range of stakeholders



Targeted

We target relevant stakeholders using the most appropriate method of communication to maximise efficiency



Transparent

Our stakeholders are clear about why, when and how we engage with them



Responsive

We deliver relevant and timely responses to the feedback raised by our stakeholders



Accountable

We consult with our stakeholders to inform our decision-making



Measurable

Our governance processes ensure our approach is appropriate, efficient and value for money



Embedded

Our principles are demonstrated throughout our business and align with our company strategy

Our approach

How we achieve it



Our commitment to involving our stakeholders is embedded in our corporate strategy, available on our website and summarised overleaf. We aim to meet our stakeholders' expectations by focusing on strategic priorities and collaboratively developing annual objectives that will help us achieve those priorities.

1.1.1 Strategic priorities and objectives influenced by stakeholders

Working on an annual cycle, we use our 'Moving Forward Together' workshops to engage with stakeholders to understand whether they believe we are focusing on the right priorities. At the workshops we share the progress we have made in the year and we ask for stakeholders' input to help us to determine the objectives for the forthcoming year.

Setting direction for 2016/17

Stakeholders influenced our priorities and objectives for 2016/17 primarily through our national workshops at the end of 2015. We had extensive contributions from stakeholders with **780** comments and **350** suggestions which senior managers assessed and analysed to identify common themes that were reflected in the objectives included in our published company strategy for 2016/17.

We sought input from stakeholders again at 'Moving Forward Together' workshops in September 2016 and March 2017 with **89%** of our stakeholders at our March workshops agreeing that we had focused on the right priorities in 2016/17.

In response to the feedback we received, we committed to maintaining our **five** strategic priorities in 2016/17. Our stakeholders ranked these priorities in order of importance, and in Part two of this document we review the progress and outcomes achieved against these priorities.



2016/17 Strategic priorities and objectives



Keeping energy affordable

Deliver our revised target to connect low income and vulnerable households to our network

Aim to achieve a more flexible specification of natural gas in GB with a potential annual customer saving of **£325m**



Improving our service

Deliver industry leading customer service through our customer experience strategy

Embed our new tailored project delivery communication process

Further develop innovative technologies to reduce disruption



Keeping the gas flowing safely

Prevent damage to our network

Develop our resilience capabilities

Improve our planned work scheduling



Supporting our communities

Develop and increase the support we can provide to customers who need it most

Continue to highlight the dangers of Carbon Monoxide

Work in partnership with communities to maximise the benefits of our activities



Sustaining our future

Investigate emerging and innovative energy solutions

Invest in and demonstrate the sustainable future of our network

Encourage future generations to explore Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) careers

1.1.2 Joined up governance

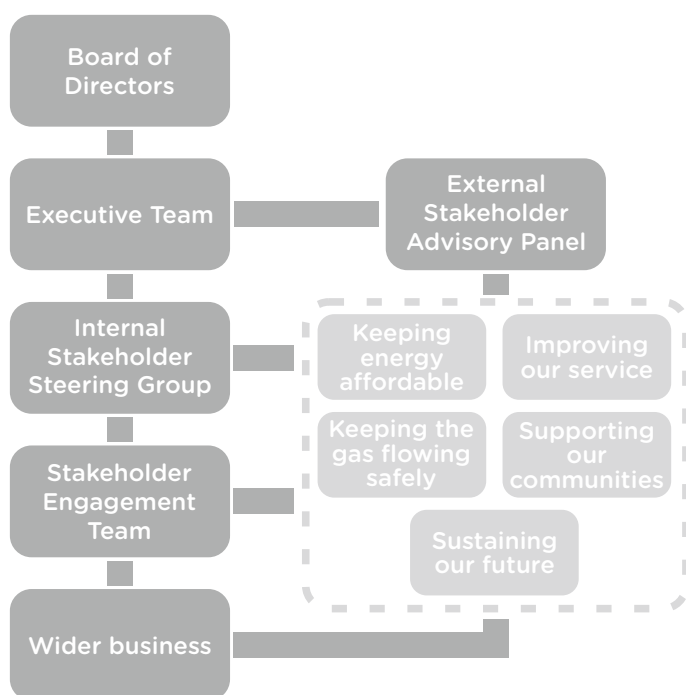
At the start of the year we had two legacy governance bodies operating; by the end of the year these were merged into one body.

SGN's internal Stakeholder Steering Group was responsible for developing and embedding our stakeholder engagement processes, and included **six** members of the executive team. This year it has approved and provided funding for stakeholder activities which are beyond business as usual making decisions based on our initiative assessment tool described on page 4.

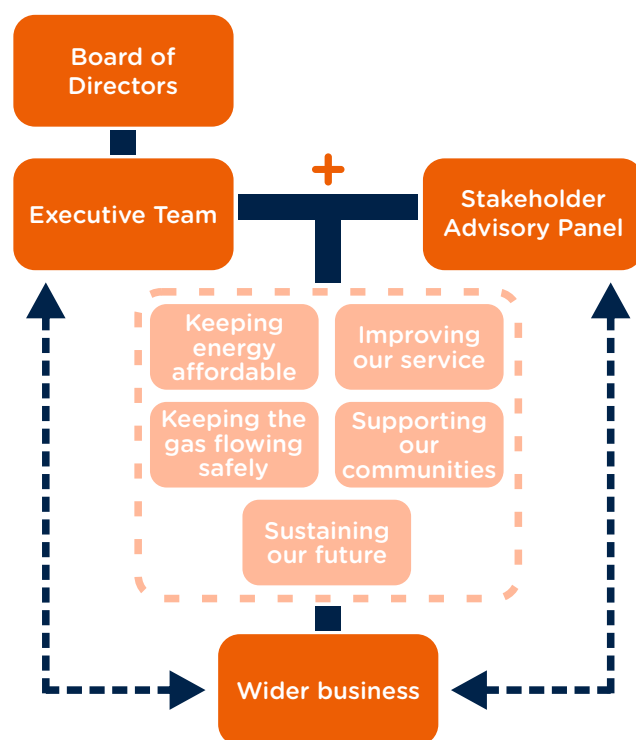
Our external Stakeholder Advisory Panel was originally formed in 2013, and provided an expert review of our effectiveness as well as providing advice to help us improve and expand relationships with stakeholders. Existing external members of the panel had a diverse range of experience and expertise on which our team could draw. This year they constructively challenged decisions we made and offered alternative suggestions, all the time encouraging us to continually improve our understanding of the needs of our stakeholders and customers.

To consolidate our governance structure, in February, we amalgamated our internal Stakeholder Steering Group and external Stakeholder Advisory Panel to form our new Stakeholder Advisory Panel. The internal members now include **seven** members from our executive team including John Morea, our Chief Executive Officer. We have also appointed additional external members this year to help to represent and support further engagement with hard to reach groups. Newly appointed members include our Chair, Maxine Frerk, formerly Senior Partner Distribution Networks at Ofgem; Audrey Gallacher, Director of Retail at Energy UK; Christine Tate, a freelance consultant with over 30 years' experience in the energy industry; Richard Lowes, an energy researcher from Exeter University. They will work alongside existing members, Maria Wardrobe, Director of External Affairs, National Energy Action; Ollie Pendered, Director of Operations at Community Energy South; Lucy McTernan, Deputy Chief Executive, Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations.

Governance structure 2016/17



Governance structure 2017/18



The integration of the two groups has strengthened the voice of external stakeholders in our decision-making. We have revised the terms of reference for both groups and combined into one, assigning responsibilities to internal and external members. The combined panel meets together every six months and will support our stakeholder engagement strategy, including:

- Ensuring our vision, values, strategic objectives and future plans are aligned, where appropriate, with the expectations of our stakeholders
- Driving the embedding of stakeholder engagement across all our activities
- Influencing and supporting our company in delivering a better service, better value for money and better engagement with all of our stakeholders
- Advising and supporting the prioritisation of stakeholder engagement initiatives and actions in the context of our policies, processes and activities.

1.1.3 Making decisions based on assessment of benefits to stakeholders

We continue to use our decision-making tool to assess ideas and new initiatives proposed by, or designed in consultation with, our stakeholders. This provides us with a cost-benefit analysis allowing us to determine the overall value these will bring to the customer if implemented.

There are three stages to how we analyse the benefits of our potential new initiatives:

- 1** The first part of our benefits analysis is aligned to Ofgem's assessment criteria and asks:
 - Does the initiative deliver measurable benefit for stakeholders?
 - Are we thinking innovatively?
 - Can it be embedded within SGN?
 - Can we demonstrate robust project management?
 - Can we share as best practice?
- 2** Next we consider the type of benefits generated and how they will be measured:
 - Customer/stakeholder benefits
 - Increased security
 - Environmental
 - Social/community
 - Cost/efficiency
 - Qualitative benefits
- 3** We then score the initiative across six criteria which include the interest and influence of stakeholders, the expected outcomes, scale, innovation and strategic fit. A maximum benefits score of 30 can be achieved.

This year 17 initiatives and ideas were reviewed by members of our internal Stakeholder Steering Group. They assessed the cost of the initiative, the benefits score and any operational considerations. Of those assessed, 14 were approved and **three** rejected.

Below is a snapshot of a few of the larger initiatives we evaluated and the rationale for approval and rejection.

Proposed initiative	Benefits score	Rationale for approval or rejection
Host a national seminar to promote the findings from our 'Opening Up the Gas Market' project as promised in our 2015/16 stakeholder submission	30 Approved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meets our stakeholder commitment to keep the gas flowing safely Platform to highlight learning from the project and gather feedback from a wide range of delegates Provides insight to contribute to key stakeholder discussions on the potential GB roll-out of European standard gas Aids in the removing of expensive processing and opening up competition Potentially leads to lower energy prices and increased security of supply
At our 'Moving Forward Together' workshops stakeholders asked us to promote the use of new technology. It was proposed we host showcase events of our latest keyhole technology, iCore	28 Rejected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential benefits from showcasing our latest technology could be greater if we share best practice further along the project's lifespan, when we have more experience of meeting stakeholder expectations in the use of the technology. Should be revisited next year
Sustainability First, a charity think-tank, asked us to be the GDN representative on Project Inspire, looking at innovative solutions to support vulnerable customers	29 Approved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meets our stakeholder commitment to support our communities and vulnerable customers Explores innovative solutions in order to access hard to reach groups Includes collaboration with partners inside and outside of our industry to understand best practice Takes forward Citizens Advice recommendations, from recently published 'Good Intentions' document, around better sharing of good practice to help networks deliver on their social obligations
Occupational therapists commented on our "amazing" locking cooker valve and our stakeholders at our 'Moving Forward Together' workshops said we should promote and highlight its effectiveness. To further support roll-out it was proposed we fund a campaign	30 Approved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meets our stakeholder commitment to develop our vulnerable customer package Increases awareness of the LCV amongst care workers and benefits end user Supports other GDNs in their commitment to undertake LCV referrals
Through the CO best practice group, hosted at ENA, and in partnership with the other GDNs we set up a fund to which charities can apply for carbon monoxide (CO) initiatives	29 Approved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meets our stakeholder commitment to actively promote the dangers of CO Opportunity to work collaboratively with other GDNs and charities Supports CO charities helping to eradicate incidents of CO and raise awareness

1.1.4 Continuously evaluating and evolving our approach

For the fourth successive year PwC has provided independent assurance on part one of our submission, demonstrating our continued commitment to open and honest reporting.

We have engaged PwC to perform a gap analysis of our current stakeholder engagement provision against the guidance contained within the new AA1000 SES 2015 standard. We are now assessing the results and recommendations of this report to inform our stakeholder engagement strategy going forward to make sure we are ready for accreditation under the standard once it is available.

We use accreditation to support the delivery of our company's strategy and seek out new opportunities for accreditation to support our ongoing priorities. This year we have been recommended for accreditation by CCA (Customer Contact Association) to its global standard through an independent audit of our customer contact operation against industry-developed and approved requirements.

Ofgem criteria: A broad and inclusive range of stakeholders has been engaged

1.2 Knowing our stakeholders

We engage with a diverse range of individuals, groups and organisations reflecting the nature of our operations and the geographical spread of our networks.

Following feedback last year we have reviewed our stakeholder mapping and categorised stakeholders on their areas of interest/influence and whether they are interested in national and/or local issues.

We undertook a comprehensive overhaul of our database, challenging who we were engaging with and the value of our relationships. As a result we have now rationalised our key stakeholders into our overall grid to ensure we engage with relevant individuals and organisations at an appropriate level.

Here's an extract of our stakeholder mapping

Government and regulators	Local interests	Consumers	Employees and investors	NGOs and charities	Business to business	Energy peers and partners
Central government European government Politician Regulation body	Community energy group Emergency and health service Highways agency Local authority Local politician Media Parish council Public transport Registered social landlord	Domestic gas user Fuel poor customer Industrial/commercial user New gas customer Road user Vulnerable customer Consumer group	SGN agency employee SGN board of directors SGN employee SGN executive team Financial institution Investment agency SGN shareholder Trade union SGN working group	Charity: • Age • Children • Disability • Environmental • Fuel poverty • Health • Housing • Income • Safety	Appliance manufacturer Construction company Engineering company Equipment provider Haulage company Service provider Surveyor Consultancy	DNO GDN IGT/UIP Engineering institution Industry group Renewable energy developer Research partner Shipper Supplier

1.2.1 Extending our reach

This year we identified we needed to widen the net beyond our known stakeholders and look to those who may have different drivers and views from our own. We have also assessed the knowledge of stakeholders on what we as a gas network are doing now, or in planning for the future and have reached out to them to engage and ensure they are well informed of our plans and have the opportunity to influence them. Stakeholders also told us they wanted engagement at a local level on specific topics they were interested in and could influence.

Engaging hard to reach ethnic communities in London

We initiated a project in January 2017 with London Sustainability Exchange (LSx) to engage hard to reach ethnic communities in London. Initial findings from an interim report provided by LSx have demonstrated that **637** people have been contacted on a one-to-one basis through culturally diverse social networks to engage on the services we provide such as our Help to Heat scheme, priority services, locking cooker valve, CO awareness, gas safety and our work to upgrade the gas network in their communities.

Developing our participation in resilience partnerships

One of the actions recommended to us during our stakeholder workshops in 2015/16, was to establish a greater degree of partnership with resilience organisations to provide a wider network of outreach and coordination during gas supply incidents. We acted on this recommendation during the year and attended a number of regional and local resilience forums, building our own understanding of government-led changes and establishing trusted relationships with partners. We hosted two mock incidents with the full involvement of resilience partners which demonstrated the importance of sharing information with trusted partners. We applied this approach and worked closely with trusted resilience partners during a gas supply outage in Scone. We surveyed resilience partners for feedback after the incident and they rated us **4.05** out of **5** overall. This is reflected in the rating of **9.2** out of **10** we received in a survey of affected customers.

Extra focus on meeting the needs of local authorities

We recognised the need to enhance our responsiveness and accountability to local authorities and highway authorities. We looked to improve our communication channels and to provide increased visibility of our planned work. In our southern network we have tasked a manager with the specific objective of managing relationships with local authorities to identify issues and develop an action plan to capture and track improvements that we make in order to respond to those stakeholder issues. Contact has been made with all **36** local authorities and we have engaged with **13** to date. We have begun to share two-year forward plans with local authorities, making our plans available on the collaborative planning tool used by some authorities. We have also hosted local depot forums in London, East Kent, Oxford, Paisley and Coatbridge.

Providing insight to policymakers

We recognise we need to widen our reach to engage all stakeholders who have interest in or influence over future energy solutions. As a result, we are now embarking on a strategy to engage influential stakeholders including politicians and policy makers to open channels for discussion and contribute our insight. Stakeholders suggested that we engage more extensively with politicians and officials and make a broader contribution to the development of energy policy; an IGT representative suggested at our 'Moving Forward Together' workshop, "You should be influencing the influencers through investment and successful reporting of innovative techniques." In June 2016 we provided oral and written evidence to the Energy and Climate Change Committee of MPs on the role biomethane can play in the decarbonisation of heat. Our evidence was cited in the Committee's final report and the government's subsequent plans to raise the biomethane tariff suggests that our contributions were positively received.

We hosted a reception at the Scottish Parliament to inform MSPs and advisors of the additional services available for vulnerable customers. Clare Adamson MSP shared information regarding our locking cooker valve with all MSPs and requested they promote our initiative. We have also hosted **seven** MSP visits to our local depots with a further **nine** MSP visits and **one** MP visit scheduled in April and May providing the opportunity to discuss future energy solutions, fuel poverty, skills for the future and additional services.

Ofgem criteria: The network company has used a variety of appropriate mechanisms to inform and engage with their stakeholders – these have been tailored to meet the needs of various stakeholder groups, and are fit for purpose in allowing a detailed analysis of a breadth of stakeholder perspectives

1.3 Expanding and tailoring our engagement mechanisms

We use a variety of mechanisms to engage with our stakeholders. We have worked hard this year to respond to earlier stakeholder feedback and increase our reach through new and existing channels embedded throughout our business practices.

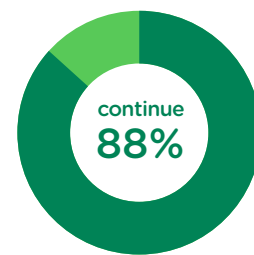
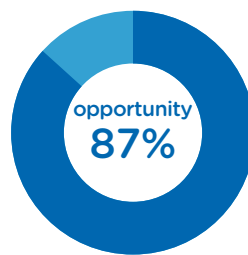
Our extensive engagement programme includes:

- Hosting **customer focus groups** to understand individual customer perceptions on service and drive improvements
- Hosting national **stakeholder workshops** to gather a breadth of stakeholder perspectives
- Extending the reach of our **local engagement** by hosting events at our depots and participating in local forums
- Improving the reach of **political engagement** by engaging politicians and policy makers
- Joining **additional member organisations** and **working groups** to further our engagement
- Promoting our extra new services at **events** and **promotional stands**
- **Speaking** at conferences
- Investing in **sponsorship**
- **Contributing articles and insight** for industry publications about SGN innovation
- Continuing to embrace **social media** and linking to other organisations to increase reach and engagement
- Embedding, maintaining and developing **partnerships**
- Running **surveys** to gather quantitative information
- Participating in **national support groups**
- **Learning from the automotive industry** with videos of connections work sent directly to customers



1.3.1 Choosing the right communication methods

Our 'Moving Forward Together' workshops were well received by stakeholders with **100%** of our participants at the **three** events we held in March reporting they found the event to be beneficial or highly beneficial. **87%** felt they had sufficient opportunity to discuss their views and **88%** said they would like to engage with us in the future, either face to face or by email.



Expanding our use of video

In order to provide information in an easily digestible format, we created a range of short videos to explain our award-winning locking cooker valve initiative, to explain our innovation projects Real Time Networks and iCore and to try to prevent damage to our pipelines by encouraging people to check before they dig. Films and links are shared with influencers such as partner organisations and local politicians and we have **4,000** views on current projects.

Videos were tailored for relevant audiences. We collaborated with other network companies and The Royal Association for Deaf people to develop videos about what to do if you smell gas and information about priority services. Since launch at the end of December there have been **170** views of videos on our website.

Learning from other industries

Taking inspiration from the automotive industry which provides customers with videos of their vehicle during repair or service, we experimented with providing a similar service to our customers during connections work. We worked with an external provider to develop video interaction software to enable our engineers to record their work. Our engineers could then send real time video clips to customers to allow them to see the work while they were not at home. Although we received very positive feedback from some customers, there were issues with not all customers able to open the files. We have therefore changed our external provider and are working to improve the functionality, providing the video by text or email and across all devices, allowing us to reach more customers.

Trialling broader communication methods

We have shared our locking cooker valve initiative with the other GDNs and we organised its national launch at the Occupational Therapy Show at NEC Birmingham, joined by our colleagues from NGN and NGG. Our stand was visited by **604** delegates, all of whom were subsequently sent further details and a link to our website and video. We looked for other innovative opportunities to promote the availability of the service and worked with Digital Film Production to show a shortened film on a large screen over three days at roadshows in Wandsworth and Southwark shopping centres. During the trial volunteers engaged with customers, handing out information and generating **45** referrals for the service. This idea has now been shared with other GDNs and we are jointly funding a CO awareness film to be shown in shopping centres across the UK.



1.3.2 Building a strong understanding of our stakeholders

Understanding and acting on customer feedback

We enhanced our use of customer feedback cards by introducing an app in January 2017 which gives customers the opportunity to complete a satisfaction survey, provide comments and also opt in for priority services online. Live dashboards give depot managers the ability to track customer feedback in real time and act quickly when necessary to provide any resolution or support needed by customers. We held customer focus groups in March 2017 to explore the experiences and needs of our connections customers. We explored the communication channels that we use and how these could be improved. The feedback that we gathered about our website design has subsequently been implemented.

Chief Executive Officer, John Morea regularly reviews customer feedback with SGN's senior operations managers and Head of Customer Experience to ensure that we learn from our customers experiences and act on their feedback.

Gathering insights to meet local needs

Attendees at our national workshops included representatives from local councils and community groups where **81%** of participants said a tailored approach to working in communities would improve how we work. We introduced our tailored project delivery tool last year building on learning gained from our holder dismantling programme, our Oban project and learning from collaboration with other GDNs. The tool was piloted across projects in both our southern and Scotland networks and is in the process of being integrated into our major work plan methodology in May. We continue to embed this process across all our planned activities with **87** assessed this year.

Listening to our employees

Through our **12** Customer Experience workshops we engaged over **400** front line colleagues to generate new ideas on how to deliver the best experience for our customers. This has led to further customer service training being delivered to our own staff and contractors and monthly customer satisfaction updates through our employee app.

Ofgem criteria: The network company can demonstrate it is acting on input/feedback from stakeholders

1.4 Acting on our stakeholders' feedback

Throughout the year we have been working with our stakeholders on the objectives we agreed were the most important and the areas we should focus on.

Here are some examples of the activities we have undertaken as a result of input and feedback from stakeholders this year, and the outcomes they've delivered. There are many more examples in Part two.



Improving our service

Objective Deliver industry leading customer service through our customer experience strategy.

They said

Through local focus sessions, and customer satisfaction feedback our customers told us they wanted:

- A fast, easy and accurate service
- A choice of communication channels

We did

We've developed our 10/10 app to enable real time feedback and an opt in service for PSR

We produced videos for deaf people on our website on gas emergencies and PSR

We have worked with the contractors in our supply chain to ensure they deliver best possible service in line with our overall customer experience strategy, delivering workshops and revised contracts including key performance indicators.

Outcome

Customer Satisfaction scores have risen in both of our networks:

Scotland from **9.13** to **9.25** and south from **8.83** to **9.01**

Our Scotland network ended the year with the highest Customer satisfaction scores of all the GDNs.

Keeping the gas flowing safely

Objective Prevent damage to our network through improved access to our mapping data and better engagement with stakeholders.

They said

Attendees at our 'Moving Forward Together' workshop in September 2016 rated 'preventing damage to our network' as the most important objective for keeping the gas flowing safely. Local authorities also told us that they would like online access to our mapping system to view the most up to date information on our assets.

Water companies such as Thames Water have asked that we share best practice, prevent incidents and liaise more closely to address the impact to our plant.

We did

We have worked with LSBUD to develop our new mapping system which provides targeted information to various stakeholder groups enabling an immediate response to enquiries.

With Thames Water we held reciprocal visits to our control centre and agreed contact protocols in the event of an incident.

Outcome

Reduced impact of network damage on customers demonstrated by:

A reduction of **6%** in the number of damages caused to our network between 2015 and 2016.

A **27%** reduction in the damages we caused to other utilities for the same period.

Keeping energy affordable

Objective

Helping low income and vulnerable households out of fuel poverty by connecting them to our network.

They said

A large majority (**84%**) of stakeholders at our 'Moving Forward Together' workshops in March 2017 agreed we should prioritise providing support for those living in fuel poverty; however there were regional differences which may reflect the distribution of fuel poor households. At our Edinburgh event **90%** of participants agreed we should prioritise fuel poverty, whereas the figures were lower in the south (**81%** in London and **66%** in Portsmouth).

In Scotland, key influencers such as Energy Action Scotland and Scottish politicians have told us they want us to continue to install fuel poor connections over and above our uplifted target (which we revised last year).

In England, key influencers such as National Energy Action asked us to promote how effective FPNES can be when there is matched funding for central heating systems, as exists in Scotland.

We did

On feedback from our stakeholders we have tailored our approach to fuel poverty because of differences in the need (a much higher proportion of fuel poverty is in Scotland), and also because of differences in the funding available for the central heating systems needed to heat the homes we connect.

In Scotland we have therefore continued to provide fuel poor connections over and above our higher revised target in line with the expectations of key stakeholders.

In England we have focused on engagement with stakeholders including BEIS, Ofgem local authorities, housing associations, and gas suppliers to promote the scheme and encourage a joined up approach to fuel poverty heating measures.

We spoke at NEA forum on 'fuel poverty and protecting vulnerable customers', and on behalf of GDNs at the Fuel Poor Energy Efficiency Group (FPEEG) dinner.

We have held discussions and consulted with BEIS on ECO3 changes on behalf of all the GDNs.

At the end of March 2017 we discussed setting up our own central heating fund to help to pay for central heating systems for fuel poor households in England.

Outcome

In England **1,002** householders have been provided with a free or discounted gas connection.

In Scotland **2,984** households have been provided with a free or discounted gas connection. We exceeded our revised target for fuel poor connections by **161%**.

Supporting our communities

Objective

Highlight the risks of CO poisoning and promote the use of CO alarms.

They said

Our stakeholders and the partners we work with have said they would like to make sure the message is spread as widely and consistently as possible. They also want us to include more schools in the school poster competition. Fire and Rescue told us they are no longer supplied with CO alarms. They were delighted we could supply them to be fitted for the most vulnerable people they see during their home safety visits.

We did

Through our links with organisations such as RoSPA we have increased the number of schools we now engage with and promote the school poster completion. Together with the other GDNs we have received **674** (**120** in our area) entries from children.

We have provided an initial stock of **50** CO alarms to a number of local authority aligned fire and rescue home safety fire officers with the agreement they will report back on how many and in what circumstances they were fitted.

This year, through our sponsorship of RVS we have raised awareness of CO dangers through their winter wellness campaign including sponsoring the leaflet and our staff supporting their local hubs to give one to one advice.

We have promoted awareness of the dangers of CO again through our schools education programme, by going to individual schools and also by participating in safety centres to educate children. Along with the other GDNs we have taken over the running of the schools poster competition to further promote awareness to school children.

Outcome

Knowledge of CO in our network increased by **13.5%** this year among customers (measured by a survey of **1,400** customers).

30,000 young people have been engaged via partnerships and schools programme on gas safety.

300,000 older people were reached through the RVS 'Get ready for winter' campaign.

The reach of the school poster competition in our networks increased to **120** entries.

Sustaining our future

Objective

Invest in and demonstrate the sustainable future of our network.

They said

Policy makers have told us they want to see heat/energy decarbonised in the future and some of them do not promote gas as part as of that future. Others look to us to work with them to utilise the gas network to facilitate low carbon energy. At our workshop in March 2017 an attendee said “Ensure greening the gas is prominent in SGN’s future strategy”.

We did

We provided insight to policymakers through responses to consultations such as: Ofgem’s consultation on a smart, flexible energy system; National Infrastructure Commission call for Evidence on the National Infrastructure Assessment (NIA); providing evidence to the Energy and Climate Change Committee; chairing the ENA Gas Futures Group KPMG report.

Our CEO has spoken at the Utility Week Live Summit and our MD for Scotland met the chair of energy select committee to provide insight into the role that the gas network can play in future energy scenarios.

We have also engaged MSPs at events and site visits on the role and future of our pipes and people.

Outcome

A further **29,000** homes (equivalent) supplied by biomethane this year, increasing our total to **162,000** (equivalent) and on track to meet our target of **250,000** homes (equivalent) supplied by 2021.

A meeting with the Scottish shadow energy minister, Alexander Burnett to discuss our hydrogen research is planned for early May.

Future of engagement

At our ‘Moving Forward Together’ workshops in March 2017 **89%** of the attendees agreed that our strategic priorities should remain the same and we should continue to focus on them in the 2017/18 regulatory year.

86% of the attendees thought setting up expert panels on subjects such as fuel poverty, future of gas and support for vulnerable customers was the right thing to do, with a number of them putting themselves forward to participate in the panels.

99% of attendees felt their organisation could work in partnership with us in one way or another.

The feedback from stakeholders at our March 2017 workshops was discussed by the Executive team at a strategy planning day in mid April 2017 and will be incorporated in an updated corporate strategy which is under development. At a meeting of the combined Stakeholder Advisory Panel in early May 2017, external experts and members of the Executive team plan to analyse the feedback and suggestions from the workshops and share outputs with relevant senior managers to inform planning and decision-making. Our annual engagement plan for 2017/18 includes **two** ‘Moving Forward Together’ workshops in February 2018 at which we will report back to stakeholders actions we have taken in response to their feedback and ask for input for the following year’s priorities and objectives.

As a result we are:

- incorporating stakeholder feedback on our priorities into our corporate strategy
- including expert panels within our annual stakeholder engagement plan
- focusing on enhancing existing partnerships and developing new ones.



Part two

In part one we highlighted improvements to our engagement strategy we've implemented as a result of feedback.

These improvements have enabled us to work together with even more stakeholders particularly those challenging communities who have not engaged with us before and may have a different perspective from us. As a result, we have been able to deliver even better outcomes for our customers and stakeholders.

We continue to put people at the heart of everything we do. Last year we rolled-out core behaviour training and stakeholder engagement toolkits to our staff. This has helped us to recognise the benefits of working in partnership with our stakeholders and to deliver the outcomes that are important to them.

Our company strategy reflects the priorities important to our stakeholders and the objectives we pursue under these priorities are as a direct result of the input and feedback we receive. All our objectives are progressed and achieved by working with and feedback from our stakeholders.

What's the value?

In the coming text, we've set out some of the valued outcomes we have achieved for our customers and stakeholders as a direct result of feedback, partnership or collaboration. We have set these out in the order which our stakeholders have told us is most important to them.

89%

of stakeholders agreed that we had focused on the right priorities in 2016/17

Keeping the gas flowing safely

The elements rated by our stakeholders as key to 'Keeping the gas flowing safely' were preventing damage to our networks, aligning our processes with resilience partners' expectations and improving how we manage our planned work.

Our damage prevention toolkit

Damage Prevention Group

Our stakeholders told us at our national workshop in September 2016, preventing damage was the most important objective for us in Keeping the gas flowing safely. Recognising this, our cross-company Damage Prevention Group reached out to suppliers and partners to deliver the improvements our stakeholders want to see, including:

New online mapping tool

We tailored a self-service website 'Linesearch Before You Dig (LSBUD)' which provides targeted information to stakeholder groups who make online enquiries.

We initially surveyed existing users of our system to determine the service they expected and the method of engagement they preferred. We also engaged with the other gas networks to find out what systems they were using and to learn from best practice. National Grid was using LSBUD for its high pressure pipelines. Following internal workshops the LSBUD system was determined to be the most efficient and cost effective system to meet our stakeholders' needs.

We receive around **30,000** enquiries per year; our original process was taking on average **15** days to respond. The on-line solution ensures an immediate response to customers' enquiries.

Previously **700** developers and local authorities held DVDs of our mapping data and were sent an update every **three** months. The new system provides immediate on line access to the most up-to-date and accurate information available minimising the possibility of damage to our network.

30,000 enquiries



originally
15 day
response time

now
immediate
response

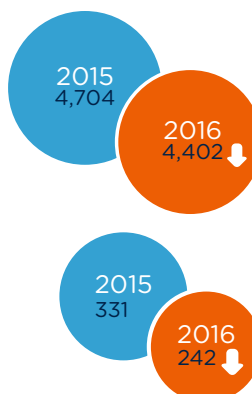
Partnering with agricultural colleges

Reviewing previous incidents, we identified one of the challenging groups we needed to engage more with is the farming community including rural colleges; academics with interests in land development and young farmers. Following consultation with the National Farmers Union, Scotland and Scotland's Rural College we put together an innovative proposal which influenced them to add our pipeline safety information to the agricultural course structure, aimed at educating future landowners and people who will be working on the land our pipes run through. We are delivering training in partnership with the college who in turn will include this into their own training provision. This reaches **3,000** students per year across **six** campuses in Scotland, and we are investigating options to follow suit in our southern network, incorporating any best practice.

Better working with other utilities

Customers and stakeholders at our national workshops have told us to work together with other utilities to reduce disruption. Feedback included: 'share engagement best practice with other utilities'. We've held meetings with Thames Water focusing on both our companies' regulatory requirements, operational improvements, communications and increase support for vulnerable customers. Water ingress is the most disruptive and lengthy gas outage we face, so we've created direct links between our operational teams to improve response times from both parties. We've also joined up our communication efforts, establishing a protocol to provide updates to Thames Water which holds customer details so it can mass communicate with affected customers by text message providing updates on progress.

The improvements our efforts have made



In 2015 the number of damages caused to our network totalled **4,704**; in 2016 this dropped to **4,402**, approximately a **6%** improvement.

In 2015 we caused **331** damages to other utilities (electric, water, telecoms etc); in 2016 this dropped to **242**, approximately a **27%** improvement.

Resilience – working in partnership

Mock incidents

Stakeholders who support local communities during a crisis said they want us to work more closely with them to share knowledge and improve mutual support to provide an even better service for local communities affected by a major loss of gas supply. We've developed relationships with over **100** key local resilience partners to learn how to improve our processes and to enable improved communication and engagement in the future.

We held **two** full day interactive mock incident events in our Sussex and Dunfermline depots with local resilience partners. Acting on feedback we're making changes, one of which is to inform trusted partners earlier in the event of an incident. We also hosted local resilience partner events in our Paisley, Coatbridge, Oxford and East Kent depots.

Regional resilience partnerships

As a Category 2 responder we have become an integral part of the newly formed Scottish Resilience Partnership working with other responders, partners and community groups providing input to the review of how multi-agency groups, partners and community groups can co-ordinate support for communities to deal with a crisis.

"...That day is just what we, the responders, needed. It brings experiences and realities which I am passing on at the Police College today"

David Johnstone, Emergency Planning Officer, Clackmannanshire Council

Benefits for customers:

- ✓ Better co-ordinated responses to incidents
- ✓ Better preparation for incidents
- ✓ Better community support from a network of trusted partners, particularly for vulnerable customers

We put this into practice during our incident in January when supplies to around **1,500** customers, many elderly, were lost in Scone, Perthshire due to water entering our network.

"I'm pleased to say SGN has been active in promoting and supporting the early identification of people who may be at risk during an emergency situation."

Kevin Sewell Chair, East of Scotland RRP People at Risk Working Group

Scone incident case study

- ✓ A designated stakeholder manager made early contact with the local resilience manager to provide trusted partner information over and above our public messaging, agreeing a support and communication plan and followed up with regular detailed updates with partners ahead of public updates.
- ✓ We liaised closely with the electricity network operator to mitigate the extra demand for electricity during the gas outage.
- ✓ We linked with local social media channels (community Facebook) and community groups to disseminate information quickly and accurately
- ✓ Regular communication updates included radio and three national TV appearances and website updates including video blogs from the site
- ✓ We worked with the local elected MSP, deputy First Minister John Swinney, including hosting a site visit
- ✓ We wrote a follow up article about the incident in the local community newsletter 'Destiny' and a quarter page colour ad thanking the community for their support
- ✓ Our operational, customer experience, communication and stakeholder leads participated in the local resilience group review of the incident.

After the incident we tried the innovative approach of carrying out a survey of partners to see how we performed and where we can improve. This approach is now being incorporated as best practice following all major gas outages.

We asked our trusted partners on a scale of 1-5 (with 1 being poor and 5 being very good) how they would rate:

Our relationship with them	3.83
Our ability to identify and work with multi agencies	3.80
Our use of local support	4.03
The content of our communication	4.23
Our communication methods	4.23
The frequency of our communication	4.03
Our ability to prepare, respond and recover during the incident	4.20

We also surveyed local customers who were affected and received over **150** responses. We asked questions about the quality of information and how and when it was provided, our impact, speed of repair and the skill and professionalism of our people. Those surveyed gave us an overall rating of **9.2** out of **10**.

"Customer service was first class. Very informative and considerate. SGN can only be commended for the service they provided to the village of Scone. Thank you."



An extensive blog "In a crisis: don't leave your customers out in the cold" from a Scone resident who was also a PR professional gave a detailed analysis of the handling of the situation concluding with: "Hard-hats off to the Communication team and the SGN staff. They were informed, visible and VERY responsive, both online, in person and in the media – going the extra mile to keep residents up to date and safe, and ensuring that after this incident, everyone in the village is talking about how well it was handled."

Linda Allan, Volpa PR and Scone resident

We looked at how our customers received up to date information to help us ensure we are focusing on the right methods. The results were:



44%

Website



27%

SGN representative



19%

Letter



7%

Social media



3%

Other (press etc).

Working in partnership

Fire and Rescue

The National Operational Guidance Programme (NOGP) works with experts from a wide range of organisations to develop best practice guidance that helps UK Fire and Rescue services to respond to incidents safely and effectively. NOGP approached us last year for our expert insight into dealing with gas emergencies.

At a meeting at our head office with our Gas Control Manager we were able to provide detailed information on:

- Dealing with gas emergencies
- Setting up exclusion zones
- Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) emergencies

Following this, the NOGP published a new guidance document for 'Utilities and Fuel'. This is now available to all **52** Fire and Rescue services across the UK, supporting circa **50,000** firefighters and is also available for international fire services to use as best practice.

"Achieving this is due in no small way to the knowledge, professionalism dedication and commitment you have given in producing guidance we believe will be seen as good practice throughout the service."

Nick Collins, Head of Programme, NOGP

Neighbourhood Alert

Our stakeholders said we needed to improve our communications with customers.

Brought to our attention by one of our own engineers who had experienced its benefits first hand, we were the first GDN or utility to use this service enabling updates to be provided for customers who sign up in their postcode area (so far **130,000** users have signed up). We've used it **six** times in an incident and once to highlight the issue of a bogus caller.

We used this for the first time in an incident in Bramley, Guildford, Surrey when we were commended by the Local Resilience Partnership for augmenting our existing communications channels.



Winner - Bronze Award, Sustainability First Project Inspire, Safety and peace of mind category.

Western Isles Emergency Response Vehicle

For the last 20 years we've been one of the partners in the Western Isles Emergency Planning Co-ordinating Group.

With **36** partners (including Salvation Army, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue, CalMac Ferries, SSE and SEPA), the Salvation Army proposed a plan to construct an emergency response vehicle in Stornoway which could be used by all members of the group to support Western Isles communities.

We contributed **£10,000** to the funding of this vehicle which will be available to us during any gas incident in Stornoway and for the wider community in any incident affecting them.

Protecting customers from cyber threat

We take the threat of disruption to our customers very seriously. In the last year we have taken significant steps to protect the data we manage from the threat posed by cyber criminals, including:

- Achieved **Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation**, as recommended as best practice for businesses to our CEO by MI5
- Protected our network through the use of Industrial Defender, a leading provider of cyber security solutions for control systems
- Trained **242** of our staff on cyber security awareness through SANS, 'Securing the human' programme
- Created a dedicated employee Information Security intranet site
- Achieved **ISO27001 security framework accreditation** for our SGN Smart business, and as a result of the benefits seen we're seeking to replicate this for our Gas Control Centre

Our improved approach to planned work scheduling

This year we've replaced a total of **1,003km** of metallic gas mains (Scotland - **303km**, southern - **700km**), bringing our current volume of plastic mains up to circa **70%** (Scotland - **74%**, southern - **67%**).



1,003km of metallic gas mains replaced



current plastic mains up to circa **70%**

To ensure our project plans are robust and best identify the pipes that should be prioritised for replacement, we have re-run our planning model using the predictive analytics tool we invested in last year. This means we are taking a holistic approach, targeting the pipes most at risk of failure. This enables us to move from being reactive to proactive, targeting ageing iron mains for replacement before they fail and providing benefits including:

- ✓ **22% reduction in external mains and service escapes**
- ✓ **2.2% reduction in shrinkage gas costs**

Through various engagement channels we continue to receive feedback from local authorities, roads and highways authorities and other utilities, that early sight of our mains replacement plans is vital to improve co-ordination and minimise the impact of our work on local communities.

A strategic programme has been introduced following this feedback to improve communication channels and to provide increased visibility of our planned work:

Strategic Engagement

- Lane Rental Governance Group - Transport for London (TfL), Kent
- Energy Networks Association
- Greater London Authority - 2050 Infrastructure Group
- Streetworks Governance and Steering Board

Tactical Engagement

- Annual engagement with Highways authorities (HA)
- Visibility of workload - two years
- Regional Highway Authorities and Utilities Committees

Operational Engagement

- Monthly performance meetings - Co-ordination
- Workload review at HA level
- Ad hoc drop in centres for local residents with local authorities

One example

In our southern network we have appointed an engagement manager to give one point of contact to all **36** local authorities in our area. Following initial contact so far we have engaged with **13** authorities to understand the impact we have on their area, the things we do well, and areas for improvement. One early outcome from this was during engagement with Bracknell Forest Council, a concern was raised about how we were asking for permission to work in the highway; this was quickly picked up by the local manager who met with the council and agreed to change our process to suit.

Sustaining our future

Our stakeholders, including government officials and consumer bodies, tell us the gas network has a part to play in the long term future energy mix. They want to know more about the future solutions we're developing and the benefits they bring.

Innovating for future energy solutions including green gas Biomethane – Influencing policy

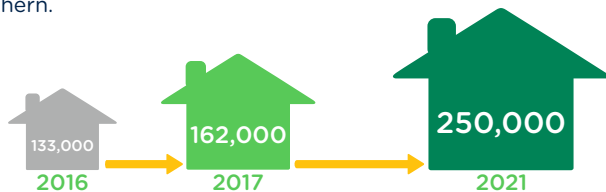
Recognising the interests of future stakeholders, in June 2016, we gave oral and written evidence to the then Energy and Climate Change Committee of MPs as part of its inquiry into 2020 Renewable Heat and Transport Targets. Our evidence centred on the key role biomethane had to play in helping to meet the target to get **12%** of UK heat from renewable sources by 2020. We also met the Committee Chair, Stornoway MP Angus MacNeill. Our messages featured prominently in the Committee's final report; we were quoted and separately praised for our collaborative

messaging with DNO Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks.

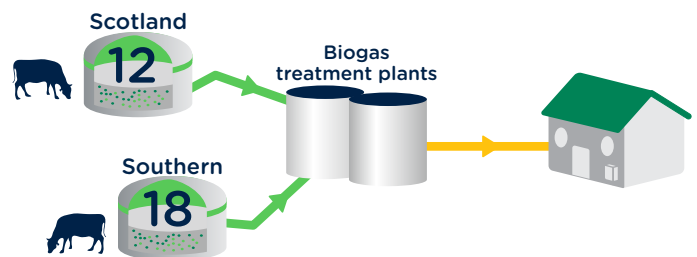
The government's response to the 2016 consultation on RHI, which included raising the biomethane tariff back up in summer 2017, suggests some of the messages we gave and subsequent recommendations to government, were accepted. In the Committee on Climate Change's report 'Next Steps for UK Heat Policy' it states "increasing volumes of biomethane injection into the gas grid is a low-regret opportunity to reduce emissions now."

Our target:

We set our target to have **250,000** homes (equivalent) supplied by biomethane by 2021. We are still on track to achieve this target with **162,000** homes (equivalent) now connected which is up **29,000** since last year. To achieve this we added another eight entry points taking us to **30** sites, **12** in Scotland and **18** in southern.



Homes (equivalent) supplied by biomethane



Colin Thomson

Decarbonisation of heat and the Hydrogen option

Our Investment Strategy Manager, Colin Thomson, has chaired the Energy Networks Association (ENA) Gas Futures Group (GFG) since 2014. A key deliverable is the report '2050 Energy Scenarios - The UK Gas Networks role in a 2050 whole energy system.' The report highlighted that solutions to the decarbonisation of heat challenge, utilising our existing gas network infrastructure, are likely to provide the highest value to customers.

Colin said: "Since the report was published BEIS has said it has gone back to the drawing board to re-assess all the evidence on the leading option(s) to decarbonise heat, which we hope will best serve the interests of our current and future customers."

We've also responded to the Scottish Government's Heat Strategy consultation, leading to meetings with the Scottish Government's Energy team in spring 2017. Scottish Government's energy strategy has specifically stated its support for an SGN hydrogen demonstration project in Scotland.

In leading the GFG we are able to trial different approaches across GDNs, sharing learnings to facilitate broader and more efficient understanding across alternative sources around suitability, timescales costs etc. We've taken learning from desk-top exercises on a **100%** hydrogen network and are now investing in a **£2m** feasibility study in advance of a hydrogen demonstration project, which will be the first of its kind, and provide findings which will be scalable to the UK. We will consider the whole gas supply chain, including transportation, storage, injection, distribution and utilisation.



Stuart Forrest

Our network fit for the future

To make sure we act to ensure our network will be fit for future energy solutions, we work closely with local authorities and developers to understand their current and predicted gas demand.

Stuart Forrest, Network Planning Manager, said: "My team has embarked on an engagement programme with developers and local councils to understand their plans, and more importantly their energy needs."



Case study:

We invited the Thames Estuary Commission to our Horley head office to understand if the current gas network could cope with the demands of proposed developments in North Kent and south east London. The commission emphasised it sees gas as the main energy source in their developments now and in the future. We were able to overlay its plans with our network maps to agree a plan for our network to be fit

for purpose, and any reinforcement work could be planned to engage affected parties. We've built on this partnership to ensure our network delivers for future demands.

Seeing this approach as best practice, we've created a team with the specific role of examining demand forecasting in areas projected to have high levels of growth and to develop clear long-term strategies for these networks to share with local agencies.

Getting smart

We are leading the way in supporting the delivery of the government's smart meter roll-out across the country, guiding our colleagues from other network companies through the complexities of the programme, to ensure customers, particularly vulnerable customers, aren't adversely affected.

We continue to be recognised as the leading GDN on the UK's Smart metering programme with our primary focus being to represent our customers' interests at every level of the programme and the industry:

- ✓ We are the only GDN present at the Ministerial Steering Committee where protecting customer safety continues to be our mantra. We represent our stakeholders' concerns around safety during this huge programme at the highest level, both within BEIS and in central government through our representation on the Gas Safety Group and one to one meetings with ministers, BEIS and Ofgem. We also interact with and listen to senior representatives of consumer groups and suppliers within these forums.
- ✓ We lead the industry in our representation as the only GDN on the Smart Energy Code, which governs smart metering operations, the Smart Metering Operational Working Group and the Safety Sub-Group, ensuring specific safety and customer service concerns and issues are aired and tackled on the ground. We have been acknowledged and thanked by the other network companies for our collaborative work in leading smart metering security by advising and supporting the other networks in the work required. We meet directly with the large suppliers in order to support their roll-out plans.
- ✓ We have undertaken extensive work around information gathering, communication and training of our staff, industry and suppliers/installers to help educate and ensure customers have the best possible experience. Our customers' safety is always of paramount importance and we ensure it is protected at all times. We have implemented a 'smart marker' on our data capture systems to capture any installation issues. We have provided input to and updated the industry's training material and we have worked with both National Grid (Cadent Gas) and our own customer contact teams to better identify smart metering issues in order to provide a better installation experience for our customers.

"I wanted to say a very big thank-you on behalf of Wales and the West Utilities for your leadership and professionalism in helping us achieve our RDP obligations by the 21 September. The success of this has also been noted by BEIS who said it was great achievement. It was certainly a tortuous journey and without your help and drive, I'm sure that we would have struggled to complete the project on time."

Steve Hanman, Commercial Manager, Wales and West Utilities



Encouraging STEM careers



Victoria Richardson-Burton,
Digital Development Manager

Our stakeholders tell us we should be investing in a skilled workforce, focused on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics). They support our strategy to work with schools and colleges to raise awareness of the opportunities in the energy sector, particularly network companies.

Our investment in a future-proof plastic network and alternative sources of gas will only be sustainable if we, our stakeholders, partners and the wider industry, invest in the right skills and development to maintain a flexible and agile workforce fit for the future challenges.

Through our Solutions for the Planet partnership, we have been able to reach communities with which we would normally find it hard to engage. The Quwwat-UI-Islam School, mentored by our Digital Development Manager, won the national competition at the Palace of Westminster. The winning team created 'Vitaliite' a new illuminated water bottle that clips on to a bike frame, and launched a campaign where the money from each sale goes to WaterAid. The students are now moving this forward to manufacturing stage.

Our education programme delivers:

- ✓ Partnership with Solutions for the Planet – **1,500** students engaged in STEM activities looking for sustainable solutions to community, environmental and carbon monoxide (CO) issues
- ✓ Partnership with Girlguiding – **900** guides and brownies learning around STEM and CO awareness
- ✓ School presentations, careers events and apprentice events

Following on from Solutions for the Planet we have offered pupils the opportunity to have work experience with us, with **two** schools taking up this opportunity so far.

"We're incredibly grateful for the support Victoria has given the school over the past few months. We were honoured that she was chosen for Quwwat and she has made a great impact on the girls."

Rokaiya Boodi, Humanities teacher,
Quwwat-UI-Islam

Keeping energy affordable

Playing our part in alleviating fuel poverty is another important priority for our stakeholders. They also support our work to achieve a wider specification for gas to reduce expensive processing costs for all GB customers.

Actions to help vulnerable and low income households in fuel poverty

The Fuel Poor Network Extension Scheme (FPNES) – Help to Heat

Last year we reported we had voluntarily increased the target number of fuel poor customers we could connect to our network by **35%** based on feedback from partners and stakeholders.

Our position is a unique one managing disparate gas networks in Scotland and the south of England whether in geographic, demographic or legislative terms. Although our overall strategy is the same and stakeholders in both networks rate tackling fuel poverty as a priority for us, we need to align our strategy in each of our networks to address the specific needs.

We collaborate with partners in Scotland to tackle fuel poverty together. In our southern network although partners, such as housing associations want to participate in the scheme, they do not have the government funding to support the installation of the central heating systems.



84%

of stakeholders agreed we should prioritise support for those living in fuel poverty

So what are we doing in our southern network to address this?

- ✓ We promote our Help to Heat scheme to ensure all those who can benefit are aware of it.
- ✓ In London, we've engaged through London Sustainability Exchange (LSx) to promote the services we provide. LSx's model uses trusted and knowledgeable partners with local access to engage with hard to reach communities, helping people discover information and services they may not have been previously aware of. Each engagement is monitored and specific outcomes provided for analysis. Initial findings from an interim report demonstrated **637** people have been contacted on a one-to-one basis through culturally diverse social networks.
- ✓ We work with housing associations to identify which households are most at need.
- ✓ We engage with suppliers including ScottishPower, SSE and E.ON to leverage funding where possible from existing schemes.
- ✓ Our Executive is considering the provision of an extra Help to Heat fund for the forthcoming year which could be matched and blended to finance central heating measures in order to maximise the number of households taken out of fuel poverty in our southern network.

Meanwhile in Scotland we:

- ✓ Continue to work in partnership with IGT, ES Pipelines, and Scottish Government agents Warmworks investing almost **£300,000** for **269** fuel poor connections in two mains extension schemes and existing households within IGT areas.
- ✓ Installed a mains extension to a Park Home site in Haddington, liaising with the park home owner, the residents association and individuals to provide **64** residents with a new gas supply. In addition we covered the cost of connection for the communal hall for the site which encourages a sense of community and helps residents feel less isolated.
- ✓ Following our influencing of Ofgem to include District Heating in the FPNES last year, we have been able to further support Aberdeen Combined Heat and Power to install a scheme in two tower blocks containing a total of **172** flats. The project is due to be completed by August 2017 with a further tower block of **50** flats due to start in May 2017.

Additionally we chair and participated in a number of fuel poverty groups and events, including:

- ✓ Presenting at the Energy Action Scotland and National Energy Action conferences which led directly to discussions with BEIS on ECO funding for central heating systems.
- ✓ Representing GDNs at the 'Off Gas Grid Advisory Group' reporting into the government committee on fuel poverty contributing to a government report.
- ✓ Presenting on behalf of the GDNs at the All Party Parliamentary Fuel Poverty Energy Efficiency Group dinner calling for government to provide funding for central heating systems; attended by 81 guests including **11** MPs and **two** Peers.
- ✓ Chairing the monthly GDN/Energy Saving Trust/BEIS meeting on EST referrals leading to **51** extra fuel poor connections across all the GDNs.
- ✓ Chairing the GDN collaboration working group on fuel poverty.

This year we have progressed our performance against the eight year targets, **17,130** for Scotland and **10,367** for southern. We've installed **14,402** free connections in Scotland, and **4,545** in southern, delivering overall potential energy savings of **£10.6 million** since 2013.

Working with partners including housing associations, Warmworks, IGTs and park home owners, this year, we have helped to take **3,986** households out of fuel poverty leading to potential energy savings of **£2.23 million**.

'Opening Up the Gas Market' - Oban and beyond

Over the last three years we've been conducting a ground-breaking, award-winning research project in Oban ('Opening Up the Gas Market') to prove we could use a different variation of gas safely. Already used in mainland Europe, the gas requires further processing to meet our national standards in the UK which are based the composition of North Sea gas. With more diverse sources now in use, this standard increases the cost of imported gas. Our trial in Oban set out to demonstrate that the national standard could be revised to open up the gas market and lower prices for customers.

Oban was an ideal location for this trial as vehicles transport liquefied natural gas (LNG) for customers there rather than via a connected mains network, making it easier for us to alter the supply and perform a comprehensive assessment.

Here's a reminder of the phases:

Stage 1 - We surveyed **100** premises in Oban to record details of gas appliances being used (ie boilers, gas fires and cookers), carried out free visual gas appliance safety checks and provided free carbon monoxide alarms to thank people for their time. We identified the **six** most common appliance types for laboratory tests to see how different mixes of gas perform.

Stage 2 - We visited every gas customer in Oban, and tested **three** different mixtures of bottled gas on their appliances.

Stage 3 - We introduced the wider specification of gas into the whole Oban network for a year (around **1,100** homes and businesses), revisiting over **200** properties to check appliances were still working properly.

Faced with the challenge of security of supply for LNG for remote towns in Scotland - Wick, Thurso, and Campbeltown we were able to mirror the process developed in Oban to maintain supplies to a further **5,800** properties.

In October 2016 we held an event in London attended by over **90** delegates including Ofgem, BEIS, IGT suppliers, politicians, academics, consultancies and representatives of other interested parties across Europe to share our learnings from the Oban project including:

- ✓ Insights into effective engagement with local communities
- ✓ Robust data sets on appliance types and condition
- ✓ Learnings around carbon monoxide and the use of alarms (see page 10 for an extract of the findings)
- ✓ We've helped form the IGT Gas Quality Working Group made up of representatives from the entire gas chain.

Improving our service

Our customers have told us 'Improving our service' continues to be a priority for them and it's therefore integral to our company strategy. We've committed to providing industry leading customer satisfaction across our core services by developing our front line staff, introducing new communication channels, and investing in innovative technologies to minimise disruption. We continue to work together with communities to tailor our projects to suit local areas, embedding our project impact assessment tool to engage early with community stakeholders to lessen the impact of our work on customers and road users.

Update on improvements to our customers' experience

We regularly evaluate our service levels and feedback we have received from customers and stakeholders to inform our customer experience strategy. Customers and stakeholders want a fast, easy and accurate service through a choice of channels, making it easier for them to engage with us.

As a result, this year we've further developed our three year project plan implementing an enhanced experience for our customers. The success of these has been demonstrated by the improvements in our customer satisfaction and complaints resolution performance.

Customer Experience Roadshows

To help us to understand how to improve our customers' experience at a local level, we engaged with **400** of our frontline staff through **12** workshops in August and September. The results of a questionnaire issued in advance of the workshops shaped the format and provided a platform to review, share and discuss what works, what doesn't and to generate new ideas. Following this we were able to:

- Form a new strategy taking into account local issues
- Identify further customer service training for all business areas including contractors
- Thoroughly review our training package by an external expert company
- Set up dedicated customer satisfaction monthly updates through our employee app

Behavioural change

Last year we implemented a change to our complaints handling procedure, seeing a concerted effort to **resolve all complaints within one day**, and ensuring **customers receive a call within one hour from a local manager**. We've also delivered further training and workshops for our frontline staff to reduce the number of complaints we receive; this approach enabled us to continue to deliver industry leading customer service.

We initially set an ambitious target to resolve **50%** of our complaints in one day but exceeded this with **70%**. This year we've increased this to **74%** of complaints resolved in one day.

We've reduced customer complaint numbers this year by **11%** and by **40%** since 2012/13. Not only is this improving the service we deliver to customers, it's also delivering cost benefits for our company, saving approximately **£80,000** this year.

Contractor buy-in

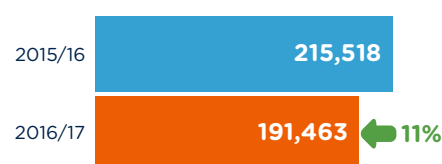
In our southern network our contract partners deliver **95%** of our planned replacement works. Customer feedback told us we needed to work with our contractors to improve our service in this area. As a result we hosted a workshop with contractors and new contracts were implemented with significant changes and a strong focus on project management, leading to improved service and efficiency. We're incentivising them to live insert gas mains reducing the number of planned interruptions our customers face, and to also deliver outstanding customer service. Since the introduction of the new contract in September an **8%** improvement has been seen in live insertion. Customer satisfaction for planned work in our southern network has also increased from **8.43** in September 2016 to **8.63** in March 2017.

Customer Experience Management

Based on feedback from our customer focus sessions, we've developed a customer experience management solution to enable us to measure our customers' experience during their journey with us. It overlays our current systems and initially using videos, social media and email and we have reduced the number of customer calls by over **24,000** equating

to **11%**. Next we will introduce live chat, call me back, co-browsing and two-way SMS. We're hoping these improvements will deliver even more benefits for our customers, by providing them with a wider variety of channels to engage with us. We'll be providing an update on this in the coming year.

Call reduction



Video updates – learning from others

Taking inspiration from the car industry, we worked with Miituu to develop video interaction software for our own customers during connections work, allowing our engineers to record the area they're working in before, during and after the completion of their work. This software enabled our engineers to send real-time video clips to our customers to let them see and hear what happens next if they're not at home.

We also used it to send clips to our reinstatement teams so they turn up with the right materials first time, saving time and improving efficiency.

We've recorded **67** videos via Miituu, **38** of which were received by customers. Following the roll-out of the pilot, our customers fed back how much they liked this new approach.

For example customers in Aldershot said: "Fantastic! Thanks – great service". We're the first GDN to try this approach and are sharing the learning from our experience.

Following the pilot it was clear there were issues with customers viewing the video, it was too labour intensive and would not work on all devices. Therefore, we're now working with 'CitNOW' to understand how to improve video messaging functionality. Video can be sent by SMS or emailed, so we can reach more customers and better fit with our in-house systems.

Working in collaboration

Consumer bodies and charities told us we should make our services accessible to customers with specific needs. By working collaboratively with the other GDNs and RAD (Royal Association for Deaf people) we created videos for deaf people. We published these on our website in December 2016. To date, the gas emergency video has had **70** views and the Priority Services Register information (PSR) video, **101** views.

10/10 app

Last year we were replacing our 10/10 cards with an app enabling customers to complete a survey, provide comments and also opt in for priority services on the doorstep. Following pilots in our Solent and Paisley depots with **101** frontline staff participating, we proved the concept and rolled it out to all our depot areas by January 2017. A live dashboard means our depot management team can track customer feedback in real time and act on it immediately if necessary as well as recognising our engineers who are providing an exceptional service. TV screens show an immediate picture of what is happening on site, tracking performance in real time. Since going live, we have received **2,300** customer returns, **99.1%** of which are happy or very happy with our service.

"We fully embraced the app from the start, it gives us real time feedback of our customers' perception immediately after we've been on site. The scores we're getting are excellent which shows our teams are ensuring the customer is satisfied by utilising the app in the field."

Feedback from a depot manager

Customer satisfaction performance

Scotland

2015/16
9.13

2016/17
9.25 ↑

Southern

2015/16
8.83

2016/17
9.01 ↑



Recognised for excellence in customer service

- ✓ 2016 UK Business Awards – two awards for our 10/10 customer satisfaction programme
- ✓ CCA Global Excellence Awards – Emerging Leader Award for our Head of Customer Experience
- ✓ Silver Award, 2016 UK Customer Experience Awards
- ✓ Gold Award in the Utilities category at the UK Complaints Handling Awards – Feb 2017

How tailored project delivery is making a difference

Last year we introduced our Gold, Silver, Bronze project categorisation. This project assessment tool is initiated during the early stages of any of our planned works such as mains replacement, major projects, and holder dismantling programmes. The project assessment tool allows us to identify everyone who should be engaged, particularly hard to reach groups, when they should be engaged and define what level of engagement is required, depending on the nature of our works.

In the initial trial, stakeholder feedback told us the categorisation of Gold, Silver, Bronze could be perceived as delivering a graded level of service. Our assessment tool was an attempt to **tailor our service** for each community we operate in, so as a result of this feedback we have dropped the Gold, Silver, Bronze description and now refer to **'Tailored project delivery'**.

This enables us to have a structured approach to how we identify who our stakeholders are, how we engage and communicate, and fundamentally, how we

manage our projects. Following our initial trial we have further developed the concept taking on board feedback. In the last year we have:

- Incorporated the project assessment tool into our existing major work plan methodology (CDM)
- Fully assessed **87** projects using the tool this year

81%

of our stakeholders at our workshop agreed that tailored project delivery is improving how we work in local communities

Here are two examples of projects where the tool has made a significant difference to how the projects were developed working together with the local community.

Kennington holder reinforcement project

To prepare for the abandonment of our gas holders adjacent to the KIA Oval cricket ground we needed to reinforce the existing network to maintain security of supply for the local area.



- Before starting, we engaged with **20** key stakeholders including the local MP, **four** Lambeth Councillors, TfL, KIA Oval (Surrey Cricket Ground), local schools and the local Police, Fire and Rescue and Ambulance services to explain what we were doing and understand the impact it would have on the community.
- We also engaged with local residents and businesses; this included bespoke leaflets and a drop in session at the KIA Oval

As a result of early engagement:

- Phase 1 of the project was carried out in collaboration with Lambeth Council who aligned its resurfacing programme to coincide with our works
- Access was maintained to a community art gallery. They needed 24 hour access; this was achieved by constructing an access bridge over our excavation
- The work plan was changed to accommodate building work taking place at a local school and to maintain access to its entrance during the week
- We adjusted our schedule of work to take into account major events at the KIA Oval thus minimising disruption and safety risks for their customers

Old Town, Edinburgh

We needed to re-route and replace a **120** year old large diameter metal pipe with modern plastic. The pipe runs through the Old Town of Edinburgh. A high profile, and potentially disruptive project affecting not only royalty and politicians but residents, businesses, shop owners, hotels and visitors to this historic area of the capital city.

- Initially, we engaged with the City of Edinburgh Council to agree a six month plan for this work, taking into account other work in progress across the city centre and forthcoming major events such as the Edinburgh International Festival. Before the eight phase plan was approved we engaged with Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue and local bus companies to incorporate their views.
- An overall engagement plan was then agreed including:
- An information booklet detailing the history, our commitment to record artefacts through engagement of an archaeologist, the scope of the work including the various phases and road closures. This was delivered to **1,800** residents and businesses by the project managers who also had face to face discussions with affected customers
- An exhibition stand about the project was available at our evening reception at the Scottish Parliament followed by personal emails to **129** MSPs and **four** councillors including links to our website and project booklet.
- A storyboard was created on our hoarding telling the story of what we are doing, why, where and the phased approach
- Other communication mechanisms included targeted tweets to local journalists and drop in sessions to support relationship building between key stakeholders and the site project manager

As a result:

- A café offered its premises for project meetings and meetings with stakeholders, giving us a local meeting place
- The Radisson Blu hotel hosts our drop in sessions with its managers becoming knowledgeable and engaged advocates for our project, which helps both us and their own residents to manage and mitigate the impact of the work
- A Police Liaison Officer has been appointed to cascade the information on our behalf to their Police Scotland commanders and other high level key stakeholders

Other results from implementing the project impact assessment tool

- In Edinburgh, **20** vulnerable residents were offered transport to the shops via mini-bus as early engagement with the Councillor and sheltered housing provider told us residents couldn't get to the shops due to the closure of the local bus stop.
- In an area where our project impacted **2,000** residents, the **26** Parent Teacher Association members were fully briefed on the project and became local advocates. The head teacher also emailed leaflets and links to our website to parents and teachers from the area, widening the reach of our communications.
- On a project where a number of small businesses were impacted by our work, our finance team met with business

owners at the local MSP's office, giving them the opportunity to ask questions about our compensation scheme and seek assistance with completion of the forms.

- We worked with our replacement contractor to support the Cuxton Christmas Carol Concert. Through our combined sponsorship the village were able to purchase and erect a Christmas tree and buy decorations and hold a carol concert. We also assisted on the night of the event with general set up; we were even asked to turn the Christmas lights on. The Parish Council Chairman said: "It was only through the contribution made by you and WCB Utilities we were able to hold the event."

Communication with stakeholders

As part of our tailored project delivery we engage with a variety of key stakeholders about our planned works. This year we have engaged the following stakeholder groups to inform and update them about work in our networks

Stakeholder	No. engaged
MP	37
MSP	173
Councillors	190
Emergency services	43
Public transport	15
Education	60
Other	2,368
utilities, businesses, residents', local authorities, highways agencies, associations etc	

Impact of innovative technologies in reducing disruption

Over the last few years our stakeholders tell us we should focus on seeking out, trialling and implementing innovative techniques and technologies to continue to reduce disruption and become more efficient.

In our previous submissions, we've detailed a number of innovative technologies including Core and Vac, Keyhole technology, Long handled tooling, PE risers and the improvements they have delivered. This year we highlight the benefits of two new innovations now deployed across our networks, CISBOT and iSeal.

CISBOT

CISBOT is a robotic tool that seals leaking joints in cast iron gas mains without interrupting the flow of gas.

The table shows some examples of the reduction in cost and disruption we have seen using CISBOT instead of conventional replacement methods.

Local councils are in favour of CISBOT, and we have received positive feedback from the public.

Project name	Project length	Reduction in cost	Reduction in duration	Reduction in excavations
Great Suffolk Street, London	1,352m	£181,182	204 days	40
Phipps Bridge Road, London	238m	£107,586	30 days	7
King's Road Brighton	2,482m	£982,357	378 days	74

iSeal

iSeal is a safe, versatile and innovative method for repairing leaking joints on metallic gas pipework systems, specifically risers on multi-occupancy buildings.

Previously when leaks occur on a gas riser it would have to be disconnected and re-layed leaving occupants without gas for days or weeks at a time.

The new system uses a sealant which is inserted into a leaking joint, forming a gas tight seal on the inside of the pipe, eliminating the gas leak and associated risk.



Doug Rickard

The work can be done while the gas is still live, avoiding any need to interrupt the gas supply.

In London, where **80%** of the riser population is, engineer Doug Rickard has used this tool and the new techniques over **50** times this year. Each job is different, but every gas riser has the potential to feed from **two** flats to over **100**.

He said: "At Christmas I was called to help repair a riser, feeding **10** flats, which had developed a gas leak. The senior managers on site believed the gas supply would need to be disconnected, but using this kit I repaired the fault without needing to disrupt the gas supply. It saved our customers a huge amount of

inconvenience and worry at this time of year, with the added bonus of a large cost saving for SGN."

By being able to safely repair gas risers while still live, our customers experience minimal inconvenience. Here's a comparison of jobs where we're re-layed a riser and where we've completed an iSeal repair following gas emergencies.

Method	Number of properties affected	Length of time off gas	Cost
Relay riser	17	4 days	£15,500
iSeal	10	0	£200

The results - existing and new innovative techniques have led to improvements and savings including:

- **20%** reduction in planned interruptions to customers supplies
- **17%** reduction in the duration of the interruptions

Supporting our communities

This priority reflects the importance our stakeholders put on the active role we play in the communities where we work and particularly the extra services we provide for people most at risk.

Identifying and supporting customers with additional needs

Locking cooker valve

This year we have achieved our ambition to extend the locking cooker valve service across all GDN footprints.

The locking cooker valve is a simple safety device our engineers can fit for people who are vulnerable - perhaps suffering from dementia - to prevent fires and explosions and to give their families peace of mind. After first getting the idea from the charity Dying to Keep Warm, we have, with its support, been developing the service over the last three years:

- ✓ **Year 1** - we carried out a pilot to prove the concept
- ✓ **Year 2** - we worked with local partners to trial the service in three of our depot areas and rolled-out to both our networks
- ✓ **Year 3** - we achieved our ambition to extend this service across all GDN footprints and instigated the national promotion campaign



Promotion

This year we've invested **£25,000** to kick off our promotion campaign. We've made short films along with our original partners from Scottish Fire and Rescue and the Community Mental Health Team - Older People (Dundee Health and Social Care Partnership) which we've been able to target for different uses. For example, a three minute version is used where we have speaking slots and has commentary from ourselves and partners describing the service and its value - we used this at our Parliamentary Reception and Winter Readiness community events.

We can also show a silent version at our event stand with subtitles to explain the service. We used this at the EAS (Energy Action Scotland) conference where we were the main sponsor giving us the opportunity to engage with delegates and promote the service with interest being shown from a broad range of attendees including housing associations.

In addition we've designed a new leaflet with input from our partners and distributed over **5,000** of these this year and uploaded it to our website. Customers can apply not

just for our network but can click on a link to any of the other network areas, continuing to spread the word about this valuable service for vulnerable people. All of this has enabled us to pull together a national campaign to work towards our next ambition of ensuring all agencies, trusted partners, family carers etc are aware of the service and can call on it as and when required. It means we can now work with national organisations such as Gas Safe Register, suppliers, and national charities to promote our services through their communication channels.

Some examples of promotion this year:

- We hosted an evening reception, sponsored by Clare Adamson MSP, Chair of the cross-party Accident Prevention & Safety Group. As part of our presentation we promoted our Locking cooker valve initiative and we asked for all MSPs to highlight the service on their Facebook pages. With Ms Adamson's backing, our message and film are now on all **129** MSPs Facebook pages.

- We presented to Department of Work and Pensions Safe Working Homes Group (Age Action Alliance) – as a result the service is promoted on Age Action Alliance and NEA's websites
- We initiated our national campaign with the support of National Grid and NGN at the Occupational Therapy show at the NEC in Birmingham. Our exhibition stand had **604** visitors
- We created a one minute version of our film to show during our community engagement campaign which shows on a large wall TV screen at shopping centres around the country with staff on hand to provide further information. In March the film was shown at Wandsworth and Southwark shopping centres with over **45** requests for an LCV to be installed.

To share the successes and challenges as we embed this service, we've also set up a 'Good Practice Group', chaired by recognised gas industry safety leader, Chris Bielby, and comprising of members from all GDNs, Gas Safe Register and the Gas Safety Trust.

So far we have installed over **100** valves (with a further **47** in planning), a number which we expect to grow now the service is available across GB enabling much more active promotion of the service.



For our work in this area we won three awards this year:

- RoSPA Scotland – Scottish Chamber of Safety – National, Safety and Environment Performance Improvement Awards – winning the Silver Punch Bowl
- Sustainability First – Project Inspire – Safety and peace of mind - Gold Award
- AGSM – Gas Safety Initiative of the Year – SGN Locking cooker valve

In addition we were shortlisted for the Gas Industry Awards – IGEM/EUA – Safety Award.

Priority Services Register (PSR)

Through collaboration in the cross-industry CSIWG (Customer and Social Issues Working Group) and subgroups we agreed with Ofgem that gas network companies (GDNs) should promote, signpost and refer customers to the PSR so they can benefit from the extra services that can be provided.

As a result the GDNs agreed from 1 January this year to create an easy to find web page showing customers what the PSR is and how they can apply. Our web page provides an online form where the

customer can apply for referral to the register.

We've also promoted the service in other ways including:

- Leaving our Careline cards with all customers we visit enabling them to call and register for referral
- Enhancing our 10/10 app to allow customers to provide their details for referral with our engineer on the doorstep
- Developing our 'Looking after you in winter' leaflet as part of our support for

customers in areas where we are replacing our pipes to include signposting to our Careline to register for PSR. During the campaign **7,500** leaflets have been issued

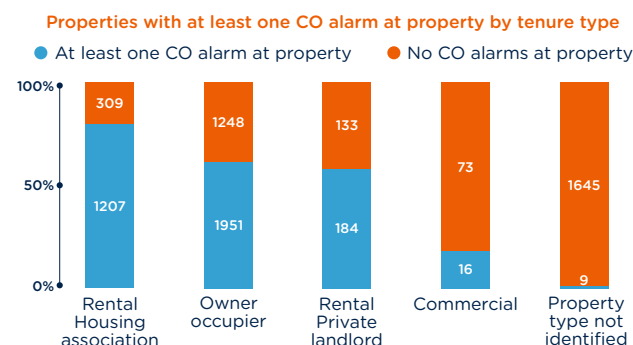
- Raising awareness via our sponsorship of the Royal Voluntary Service's 'Winter Wellness Campaign'
- Information provided to customers during gas outages

Since 1 January we have directly referred **600** customers.

CO awareness

Throughout our innovative 'Opening Up the Gas Market' project and project in remote Scottish towns, we have collected data from circa **6,800** homes, to help us to understand the types of properties in which CO alarms aren't fitted. Also, for properties with an alarm fitted, is it fitted correctly and does the householder have their appliances regularly serviced? This large data sample provides robust evidence on which to base our own work and to support the development of UK-wide collaborative strategies.

Here is an extract of the report:



- The results suggest users who do not regularly have their appliances checked or maintained are less likely to install a CO alarm
- An alarming anecdote from a customer indicated they were inclined not to get their appliances serviced if they were protected by a CO alarm

Additionally:

- This year again we have delivered CO awareness training in local schools especially those where we are working nearby and continued to support four safety centres in our networks. Awareness training provided to over **30,000** school children
- We support RVS through hub visits and its 'Get ready for Winter' campaign; **100,000** service users reached each month
- All gas networks survey customers quarterly to test their knowledge on CO. This year, in our network, we surveyed **1,400** customers, with knowledge increased by **13.5%**
- As a result of participation in the Scottish Parliamentary Cross-Party Safety Group we are providing fridge magnet information leaflets and CO alarms to Fire and Rescue Community Safety Officers for use during their Home Safety visits. This year we have provided circa **1,000** and our partners have told us about some of the most vulnerable households they have helped and fitted an alarm.

Dementia awareness

90% of stakeholders agreed training our own staff to recognise signs of dementia is important.

We continue to make sure all our front line staff are dementia awareness trained. This year we have extended the training to a number of partners including Warmworks, Changeworks, Glasgow Old People's Welfare, Manor Housing Association, E.ON, Energy Savings Trust, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Dumfries and Galloway Handyvan partners, Angus Care and Repair and Home Safety Scotland.

Introducing Sustainability First – Project Inspire

This year we were invited to be the GDN representative on Project Inspire managed by the charitable think tank Sustainability First. Other partners in the project include, ScottishPower, E.ON and EDF, Western Power Distribution, Smart Energy GB, Toshiba, Ofgem and BEIS. The purpose is to share and seek out national and international innovation and technologies which particularly help the most vulnerable customers.

In depth studies have been carried out and projects shortlisted and judged in April 2017 with a conference planned to share the winning and other ideas with a wider audience later in the year.

Forward look

Keeping the gas flowing - Damage prevention

We're working on a new mapping system (Geofield) for our frontline engineers, ensuring our own staff have access to the most up to date maps, including those of other utilities. This will enable updating of maps from the field minimising disruption further.

We'll continue to develop our 'prescriptive analytics tool' which is about having a broader business modelling tool with the capability for multi-inputs.



Sustaining our future - Smart metering

We're introducing a triage desk at our Operations Control Centre to manage the impact of the smart meter roll-out on our core business activities. We have showcased this model to other GDNs who are now adopting this approach and we will host a visit from BEIS when fully operational.

Keeping energy affordable - Opening Up the Gas Market - Oban and beyond

We're now in discussion with the HSE, IGEM, BEIS and suppliers to use the findings to support a change to legislation allowing a wider specification of gas to be used in GB without the cost of expensive ballasting - a potential saving of **£325m** per year - and potentially opening up the specification of gas to include hydrogen.

We're sharing the data on carbon monoxide and alarm use through the GDN collaboration group to inform our CO awareness messaging strategy.

We're sharing the data on appliance type and condition with Energy UK to inform the smart meter roll-out programme of potential issues and prevalence.

Improving our service - impact of innovative technologies in reducing disruption

We're continuing to trial innovative tools and techniques to reduce disruption including small diameter pipe insertion and iCore

Supporting our communities - Locking cooker valve

We're engaging with Southampton University which would like to carry out a study on the societal value of the valve. The study is looking to evaluate the valve in preventing bed blocking for the NHS and reducing the number of people who need to go into care.

Through relationships with trusted partners we're exploring the best routes to improve the reach of this service. Tackling the issues of mistrust of a free service from an energy company and the difficulties in reaching disparate NHS and local authority service providers.

Supporting our communities - CO

Learning from National Grid (Cadent Gas) - we'll deliver the Safety Seymour programme to **30** schools in the next academic year to six and seven year olds.

Collaborating with the other GDNs we have met with the organisers of three top Festivals - Glastonbury, Reading and Leeds, and agreed a 2018 Festival CO awareness campaign, with a launch at Portcullis House on 6 June this year.

We're reinventing our CO awareness in power cuts campaign with all DNOs.

Dementia awareness

As the Care Commission training has been changed and doesn't fit our requirements anymore, we've spoken to our colleagues at British Gas to understand the training it is providing. As a result we have now signed with Alzheimer's UK to provide training and encourage all our staff to become dementia friends. This new programme will start in summer 2017 and will be included in our induction programme for all new recruits.





Contact us

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5 Lonehead Drive
Newbridge, EH28 8TG



Smell gas?
0800 111 999



"As the cold weather sets in, older people need to start thinking about how they can stay safe and well in winter, and preparation plays an important part in that. Our Winter Wellness leaflets, supported by SGN, and joint community events have really useful advice and information about what services are available to older people."

David McCullough,
Chief Executive,
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"I took as much back from it as the kids did. I'm inspired to get outdoors more and try new activities and I'm trying to follow the teachings of the course to stretch my comfort zones. I genuinely feel I've a different outlook on everything."

Faye Tester,
mentor, SGN

"The mentors were amazing with the pupils, encouraging them through activities such as abseiling and rock climbing. They gave the students time to reflect and by the end, it was clear they had grown in confidence, made new friends and overcome challenges."

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